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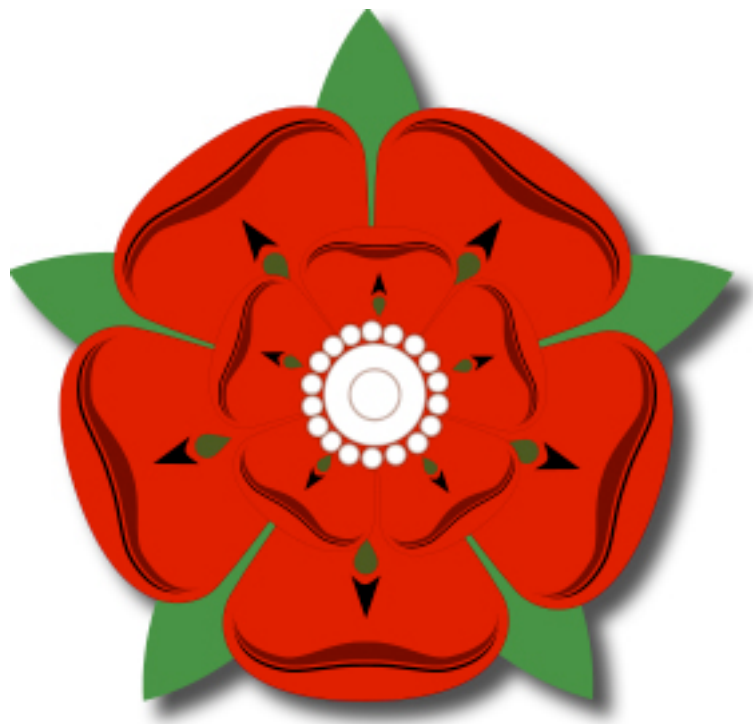
of

Philosophy

Volume Two | Issue One

Spring 2014

LANCASTER JOURNAL

OF

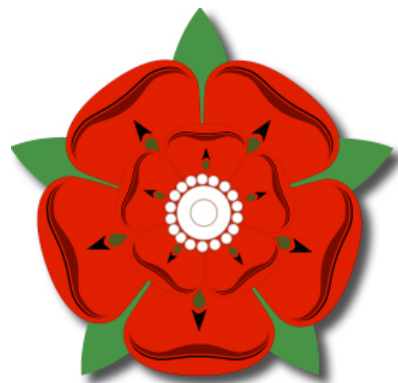# PHILOSOPHY

Volume Two | Issue One

Spring 2014

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www.lancasterjournalofphilosophy.co.nr

Contents

Editorial

Welcome to the second publication of the Lancaster Journal of Philosophy. This publication represents a great deal. It represents that the journal has become national, with the papers included within this issue hailing from all across Great Britain. Such a feat gives testimony to the editors that have worked so hard in promoting the journal, and their time spent reviewing the number of high quality papers we have received. This issue also represents our first inclusion from an academic staff member, Professor Daniel DeNicola, who has very kindly submitted a contribution on his time spent at Lancaster University as a Visiting Fellow. Professor DeNicola is professor of philosophy at Gettysburg College in the United States – in part that technically means the journal has gone international as well! This progress over the past six months since our first publication, gives the journal credence and support that I never thought possible when the idea of it was first conceived. My hope is these early strides the journal has taken are only precedent for what is to come. I sincerely hope the journal establishes firmly its national presence in the next few publications, alongside its promotion across seas to other philosophy communities. For this journal represents, more accurately, the coming together of diverse ideas to be discussed, debated, and engaged with, in the spirit of learning from others and sharing knowledge. The greater the audience, the greater the opportunity for this to happen.

This issue contains five papers, each varied in topic and excellently thought-provoking. We begin with the inclusion from Professor DeNicola. A few postgraduate students at Lancaster University have sought to expand their learning opportunities, by creating reading groups that discuss material outside of the general syllabus. Oliver Thorne, an editor for the journal, has been instrumental to this end. Professor DeNicola helped lead a reading group on Ancient Greek philosophy, with his submitted paper reflecting the involvement he had with the group. His paper discusses a wide-range of topics regarding Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, providing a great introduction for those who are less familiar with these great philosophers' works. The journal's second paper also has its roots in another reading group at Lancaster University, this time on Martin Heidegger. Janet Mordike presents a novel theme: whether Heidegger could have written his seminal work *Being and Time* in English. Mordike aptly discusses whether certain languages are more capable for articulating philosophical thought than others. Mordike's central question, on whether Heidegger could have formulated his thought through the English language, makes for fascinating reading.

Third, we look at Max Skipper Griffiths' contribution to the philosophy of science – a defence of evolutionary psychology. Griffiths presents a convincing case for why certain arguments against evolutionary psychology have been misplaced. In response, Griffiths frames a sound reply to why these criticisms are ungrounded, providing a persuasive counter as to the promising future evolutionary psychology still has as a distinct subject. Following Griffiths, Saloni Kapur's paper looks at international relations theory, investigating the philosophical underpinnings of the English School, and the consequences this has for its application in the study of terrorist deradicalisation programmes. The subject matter of Kapur's paper is highly pressing and pertinent within the study of international relations. Kapur provides an excellent analysis regarding what benefaction the English School can offer in the exertion of their thought.

We end with Madeleine Hyde's paper that addresses the important subject of how we can know if the person we are communicating with understands our utterances – how can we be sure there is genuine communication? Hyde, who provides an accessibly written piece on this complex philosophical debate, competently discusses this absorbing enquiry. I hope the reader will stand alongside me here, in admiration the broad range of philosophical themes

that are spread throughout this journal issue. From Plato to international relations theory, Heidegger to evolutionary psychology, this is certainly an issue I believe we all can find something to take away and learn from. Perhaps it is an opportunity to begin the study of something never before considered. Either way, I hope you enjoy this issue.

Thomas E. Randall
Head Editor of the Lancaster Journal of Philosophy

Reflections on Reading Plato and Aristotle in Lancaster[1]

Daniel R. DeNicola

I. Text and Context

While serving as a Visiting Fellow at Lancaster University, I was asked to lead an informal seminar on Classical Philosophy. It was to be a reading group of postgraduate students and staff, focusing on two foundational texts of Western civilization: Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. I happily accepted. The resulting two-hour, weekly sessions over Michaelmas Term were lively times of philosophical effervescence, full of probative questions, interesting interpretations, diverse evaluations, vigorous debates, and shared insights. Postmodernists engaged in the holy act of *Interpreting the Text*, we nonetheless strained to grasp the "true meaning" of the texts, to extend our range of charitable understanding across twenty-four centuries of linguistic and cultural difference, and then to examine that meaning in light of our contemporary context and personal perspectives. However successful that collective exercise may have been, it was certainly provocative.

The *Republic* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* are majestic and magisterial. Masterworks of two philosophical patriarchs, they come to us through the labors (and filters) of generations of scholars who unearthed, preserved, transliterated, translated, corrected, edited, annotated, and commented upon them. Their ideas are woven deeply into Western culture; they have each generated a vast and still-expanding scholarly literature, and they are surely among the most frequently taught texts in the contemporary world. They are, of course, very different texts: their authors, despite studious decades together, are famously different in philosophical outlook, creating a rivalry that established opposing polarities of thought. The two texts differ in genre and style, in purpose and topics, in methods and vision, in presuppositions and conclusions. Yet both are concerned with the elaboration of normativity, with how the governance of the good might be manifested in our lives. And both texts argue that some possible lives and some possible human arrangements are better than others. Indeed, both project ideally good lives.

By contrast, my purpose in this little essay is quite modest. I won't offer a grand vision, not even an exegesis of any portion of the texts; nor will I attempt to distill our conversations. Instead, I propose to reflect briefly on three broad, braided themes from these works: the hierarchies of the worthwhile, the place of the philosophic life, and "doing philosophy" as an activity. All of which will suggest reflexive observations about their inspirational source – our group reading of Plato and Aristotle in Lancaster – with which I will conclude.

II. Hierarchies of the Worthwhile

It is one thing to find an activity worthwhile, but quite another to claim it is more worthwhile than something else. We tolerate, sometimes are even buoyed by, the fact that our fellow human beings find so many different activities to be not just pleasurable, but worthwhile. From football to opera, from poetry to social media, from philately to philosophy – it is a dazzling array, a sustaining profusion of apparently good things. We might debate their extrinsic value, their utilitarian payoff; but we hesitate to dispute claims that they are also valuable in themselves, because we will soon be led into the mysteries of justifying intrinsic

value. In a way, the forceful claim that something has intrinsic worth, that it is valuable for its own sake, seems an attempt to end debate, to assert that further justification is otiose. Claiming that two very different activities both have intrinsic value sets up an uneasy truce; the question then is whether there are two different values or two manifestations of the same value in play. But claiming that one activity is better than the other, "higher" or more worthwhile, is an incitement; the more worthwhile gains a normative pull over the less so, hegemony of the better over the not-so-good. It is a comparative judgment, one that assumes some discernible difference in the amount or level of goodness of things. It is a judgment that seems, in the negative sense, judgmental.

For Plato, all value devolves from a transcendent unity, an ideal of the Good that is also the ideal of the True and of Beautiful.[2] This supreme and ineffable ideal subtends many hierarchies; hierarchies which, in reverse movement, serve as ladders of perfectibility. The *Republic* alone presents progressive levels that are ontological (entities from shadows to the highest Forms possessing increasing reality, permanence, and perfection); epistemological (increasingly reliable objects, forms of knowledge, and ranges of expertise); political (forms of social arrangements that range from tyranny to the just *kallipolis*); social (from artisans to the philosopher-king); psychological (from the body and its appetites to the mind in its rational splendor) – and more! Such hierarchies determine the comparative worth of pursuits: working with the hands is less noble than working with the mind; painting is lower than mathematics. While those activities that help a soul ascend these ladders (especially dialectic) are certainly worthwhile, nothing is better than the rare moment of knowing the Form of the Good (*noesis*).

Whereas Plato's vision is structural, Aristotle's is functional. Whereas Plato's conception of goodness is a transcendental ideal, Aristotle's is a dynamic sense of flourishing. And what determines and draws forth flourishing is a *telos*, an inherent goal or "final cause." The entire cosmos and all within in it are understood teleologically. Within this system, those activities that conduce to the end have extrinsic value; the *telos* itself has intrinsic value. In addition, *teloi* are nested; they may become means to or components of other *teloi*, displaying a grand hierarchy we have come to call "the Great Chain of Being." Aristotle delineates special periods of time in which we can realise our *telos* (pursue activities for their own sake): leisure. The optimal life will flourish in having the greatest scope for and experience of the most worthwhile activities of which it is capable. Aristotle argues that wise use of our reason is our generic human *telos*, and that theoretical reasoning (*theoria*), a knowing contemplation, is the pinnacle of human experience.

The confident presumptuousness of such judgments has not gone unnoticed. A particularly vociferous attack was authored by philosopher-turned-politician, Oliver Letwin.[3] He briskly examines and rejects various bases on which to establish such a hierarchy. Though he acknowledges that there are grounds for judging one poem better than another, one football game better than another, Letwin asserts that there is no ground for judging poetry as more worthwhile than football or *vice versa*. Practices cannot be ranked. He declares, "the hierarchy of activities is […] no more than myth." And the myth is not harmless. Letwin claims, "the myth does […] have a tendency to provoke shame and guilt, and thereby to undermine a person's sense of the importance of standards in each of the activities he undertakes." It has "a capacity not only to mislead intellectually but also harm morally."

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[2] Goodness (*agathou*), truth (*aletheia*), and beauty (*kalón*) are nowhere in Plato's writings explicitly connected as a doctrine of ultimate value, yet both the transcendence and unity of these values underlies the entire body of his work. The *Republic*, of course, centers on the relationship between the first two.
[3] O Letwin, *Ethics, Emotion and the Unity of the Self*, Croom Helm, London, 1987. This attack occupies Chapter 2, and the quoted passages in this paragraph are found on p. 28.

In Letwin's view, the moment at which such an evil is born is the dividing of the soul (*psychē*) or self into "higher" and "lower" parts.[4] In fact, he sorts philosophers into two types: those that partition the self, he calls "Romantics"; those that retain an integrated self, he calls "Classicists." Plato is, in his account, "an archetypal philosophical Romantic": one who finds the human condition unsatisfactory; who seeks release from the "ultimate disjunctions" of human existence, the liberation of a true self from its degrading baggage; one who is nostalgia for our real home. Aristotle, by contrast, is a Classicist, who sees the material and the abstract merely as two perspectives; who maintains a unified self, in which body and mind, passion and reason, are integrated; who sources value within, not beyond, human experience.

Letwin is undeniably painting with a very broad brush – he also labels Kant and Freud as Romantics, and Hegel as a Classicist – but the image is telling. He portrays the divided self as the origin of hierarchies of activities; that partitioning does not, however, provide justification. He reviews and soundly rejects a list of purported bases for judging "higher" and "lower" activities. Though I cannot defend the point here, I find that Letwin argues dismissively and precipitously; and, were his arguments valid, they would undermine the claim that any activity is worthwhile, not just that one is objectively better than another. Moreover, I think Letwin may have misjudged the pivotal point. After all, Aristotle – Classicist though he may be – indulges in an extensive attempt to rank forms of life and the activities they involve; in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he sets our specific criteria for his judgments. Rather, I believe the key to such hierarchies, the place to start, is the phenomenon of intrinsic value, not the divided self. In fact, the latter may well derive from the former. That something is intrinsically worthwhile seems self-evident to those who experience it, and impossible to justify to those who do not.

III. The Philosophic Life

Nearly all Classical philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, are keenly concerned to convey a conception of the good life. By implication if not explicitly, they tell us what is of value, what we should seek and praise, and how we should live. Their advice gains depth through their analyses of human nature, through their speculative visions of the cosmos in which we dwell, and through their projections of the ultimate grounds of the human prospect. For most of these thinkers, philosophy is a way of living – and the good life is a philosophical one.

If today we think of Socrates as the iconic philosopher, it is due to Plato. It is Socrates' trial and execution that spur Plato to his philosophical writing; all his works save one (the last work, *Laws*) honor Socrates through their use of dialogue in which Socrates himself is usually chief interlocutor. His writings present episodes of the philosopher in action, and for Plato philosophy is personal: the character of his interlocutors is revealed in their philosophising, and they are shaped by the philosophy they espouse. Philosophy is not a body of esoteric knowledge, but a fierce and consuming art that has urgency and moment, and is unsettling when engaged in with genuine conviction.

Plato's *Republic* is a philosophical disquisition on whether being a just or moral person is worthwhile; and, if it is, is it justified extrinsically, intrinsically, or both. It soon takes the form of an elaborate thought-experiment. It is serious play. As though placing figures in a dollhouse, Plato has his interlocutors envision the just person and arrange an optimal setting, the just state. In this, the first utopian tract, the optimal lives of all citizens depend on the wisdom of the philosopher. Plato elevates the philosopher as the one who is truly wise, and who therefore is in the best position to shape a life and a society. One doesn't stumble into enlightenment. The philosophical life is demanding. The long first phase entails

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[4] *Ibid.* The argument concerning the divided soul and Romanticism *vs.* Classicism occupies Chapter 1.

intense training and the devoted search for truth; for the rare one who apprehends truth and its goodness and beauty, the second phase requires living out the impact of that apprehension, structuring one's life and even one's community in light of that vision. For Plato, an encounter with the Form of the Good, True, and Beautiful is not merely a startling flash of understanding; it is a transformative experience, and we are different as a result. Seeing the truth ennobles us and improves us; we acquire a small spark of its goodness and beauty.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle articulates a rich conception of virtues and vices. He identifies two types: moral and intellectual. Together these form an ecology of character that is conducive to a good life – more precisely, to a flourishing life of happiness and self-actualisation (*eudaimonia*) in which we actively employ our highest capacities with excellence. But although Aristotle celebrates the interpretation of the good life as a life of practical wisdom, he ultimately argues that the purpose of practical wisdom is to facilitate theoretical wisdom. In short, philosophising is the most worthwhile human pursuit of all.[5]

This claim that the philosophic life is the optimal life, or that only a philosophical life is a good life, is one source of the charge of elitism often made against these thinkers. After all, the capacity for and interest in abstract philosophical thought are not distributed equally; the consequence is that access to a good life is not equitably available. Moreover, the fact that accomplished philosophers pronounce this claim suggests bias and arrogance: leisured, male aristocrats opining that the best life is the life of the leisured, male aristocrat. There is surely a weighty portion of truth in that charge. Of course, philosophical engagement requires security and peace and time for reflection – as both philosophers acknowledge; one cannot philosophise when mere survival is the concern. But it is not so much the account of what is required for a philosophical life that is objectionable; nor is it the claim that a philosophical life is good; it is the claim that such a life is the optimal life, the one truly good life.

There may, however, be something going on besides the arrogation of values. When we take seriously the question, "What is the good life?" we may find ourselves in a predicament parallel to the one who asks: "Why should I be rational?" To ask the latter question seriously is to search for reasons, and therefore to be already "playing the game" of rationality; it begs the question in the sort of transcendental way exploited by Immanuel Kant. Rationality seems to be a necessary presumption of the question. Similarly, when we consider "What is the good life?" we are thereby engaged in philosophical inquiry and beg the question as to whether its pursuit is worthwhile. Taking an activity to be worthwhile is, of course, not the same as claiming it is the most worthwhile of activities (the *summum bonum*); far less is it the claim that, as such, the activity should define a life.

Neither Plato nor Aristotle imagines that we could compartmentalise our philosophising as one worthwhile activity among many – a component of the good life, but not necessarily the *summum bonum*. Both men believe that the highest good will in fact become the defining focus of a good life, so pervasive as to characterise a life and to give life to character. We cannot dabble in the highest good; it claims us when we pursue it seriously. Both men believe that the good ramifies in our lives. Their versions of this ramification of the good differ, however. Plato's notion is that the Form of the Good attracts us (through our *eros*) and inspires our imitation of it (*mimesis*); it alters our soul, which alters our life, which in turn may alter our community. The truly good "governs," giving a life both integrity and liberation. For Aristotle, it is the *telos*, our natural fulfillment that orders our efforts, summons our virtues, and shapes our life and our community. The activity of reason is our self-

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[5] These judgments are especially interesting when one considers that both intellectual men were clearly committed to practical projects: they each founded and led a school, and their efforts were strong enough to create institutions that survived them. Philosophical activity was at the heart of these institutions, but there were surely practical matters that frequently required attention. I especially marvel at Aristotle, who – given his brilliant and polymathic output, given the diverse collections and activities of the Lyceum, and given his own researches – must also have mastered time management.

actualisation, and its exercise requires much of our moral and intellectual character. In both versions, the ramification of the good pulls us to a philosophic life.

IV. Philosophy as an Activity

The hegemonic advocacy for the philosophical life as the good life might well be seen as self-deceptive. Aristotle explicitly argues for self-sufficiency as a criterion in determining worthwhile activities; the contemplative life, the life of theoretical wisdom (*sophia)* is crowned the optimal life, in part, because it is the most self-sufficient. Yet the time, space, and opportunity for philosophy are, he acknowledges incidentally, dependent upon practical reasoning and the efforts of others. Philosophising depends on, among other factors, education, leisure, sustenance, shelter, relative peace and security – all of which depend on excellences in the practical and productive activities of others. It takes a *polis.*

Both philosophers argue that the good life for individuals requires a good community. Plato affirms this mutual dependence in the *Republic*, an insight that problematises the path to the establishment of his *kallipolis*: the just state requires optimised citizens, who are quite improbable unless they were reared in a just state. But in the *Republic*, he clearly ranks the thriving of the state of greater importance than the happiness (*eudaimonia*) of any individual or class.[6] Aristotle eschews such totalitarianism, yet the good community remains essential for the good life. It serves as the nurturing and formative context for individual character and the theater in which virtues and vices are displayed. Especially when combined with the *Politics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics* portrays the good life not only as contributing to the sustaining of a good community, but also as formed and expressed in communal engagement.

To what extent, then, is philosophy an individual or a group activity? Is the philosophical life one of solitary contemplation or is it one of dynamic social interaction? There is a deep tension in these ancient philosophers between the individual and the communal aspects of philosophy. At its core, the conflict arises from the pairing of a subjective and individualistic epistemology with a communitarian arena for the good life.

The dominant epistemological metaphor in Classical philosophy is that knowing is a form of seeing. The apprehension of truth (*noesis*) is an occasion in the mental life an individual, a private epiphany of insight – though a potentially transformative event with a range of manifestations. Even when a truth is unfolded in a series of steps – as, for example, in a Euclidean geometrical proof – there is the presumption of an individual consciousness that assents to each deduction, silently affirming the logic of each step and the validity of the conclusion. Enlightenment dawns within one soul at a time. Philosophising is an activity of and within individual minds – a lonely and, in a Socratic mode, heroic activity.

For Plato and Aristotle, we are individualised by our souls. From Socrates onward, the soul (*psychē*) is the moral and intellectual center of personhood, and the health of the soul is a major, if not the primary, concern of philosophy. The normative project – whether seen as character formation, flourishing, transcendence, or escape from earthly strictures (salvation) – is a project for individual souls. The *Republic* presents the soul's career as one of epistemological and moral development that extends even beyond a single lifespan.[7] For Plato, the soul seems to bear an individuality that is deeper than gender or relationships or even memory; yet it is more than a purely ontological individuality, because it retains a cumulative normativity. For Aristotle, the human soul defines a type of being. The good life – a flourishing of the soul supported by a healthy body – may be profiled generically; it derives from a perfection of human nature. The Aristotelian soul is the gendered structure of the human body that enables all its vital capacities. Yet the soul also facilitates a character that is

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[6] Plato, *Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, IN, 1992, IV, 420b.
[7] See the Myth of Er, *Republic*, X, 614-21.

individual; its development, excellences, and happiness are individual. For both men it is the mind with its ability to cognise and to reason, the most wonderful aspect of the person, that gives us our stature in the cosmos.

These reflections suggest that philosophising is a private activity of individual souls or minds. Philosophy arises wondrously within individuals, is carried on by individuals, and aims to improve the lives of individuals. Yet this is not the whole story, for there are strong elements in Classical philosophy that suggest it is a collective pursuit with communitarian aims.

One might immediately point to Plato's use of dialogue. He began his work in thrall of Socrates for whom philosophical dialogue with others was a deep need, a mission, and a life's work. Philosophy consisted in purposeful conversation with others. Plato, *pace* Socrates, also pursued philosophical thinking through writing, though in dialogue form to capture the give-and-take of multiple thinkers' viewpoints. Admittedly, this style faded over his career: the dialogues became more a discourse of his own dialectical thinking, less a vivid record of different people's viewpoints. But taken as a whole, the Platonic corpus celebrates philosophy as dialogue, as an activity that requires a community, or at least an attentive group of responsive thinkers.

None of Aristotle's early dialogues is extant, and judging from what has survived, they may not be representative of his mature views. Yet even Aristotle's analytic tracts usually situate his thought within the larger community of philosophers, those thinkers who addressed the same issues in the past. He routinely makes astute use of the testimony of other philosophic researchers. He elevates a sense of a philosophical conversation that transcends time and space. Aristotle, more than any other ancient thinker, envisions philosophy as a richly diverse yet continuous, critical tradition.

Both Plato and Aristotle institutionalised philosophy by founding their respective schools. Though Plato's Academy emphasised education and Aristotle's Lyceum emphasized research, both provided venues for philosophising. Plato's intellectual progenitor, Pythagoras, established the pattern of gathering an adult group to pursue philosophy; but, although his "brotherhood" conducted significant research, it also seems like a charismatic cult of like-minded believers. The "schools of thought" in Classical philosophy often coalesced in real institutions or communities: the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Neo-Platonists all organised philosophical communes. Epicurus' Garden and Plotinus' school were not simply designed to propagate their philosophical doctrines; they were also embodiments of a philosophical way of living, the good life in community.

The tension between philosophy as individual and communal reveals a lack or dissonance between treatments of the moral and the intellectual. What is missing is a communal epistemology. Aristotle may come closer than Plato to this idea, or at least his views are more compatible with the possibility. He distinguishes a category of intellectual virtues distinct from moral virtues. His consideration of moral virtues and vices – their nature and varieties, how they may be acquired, how they may be practiced and modeled – is extensive and elaborate. Though these are settled qualities of individual characters, the family and the political community are, as I noted, essential as the incubator of these virtues and the arena in which they are displayed. The intellectual virtues, by contrast, though crucially important for the optimal life, are given a truncated treatment. These virtues and vices of the rational soul are likewise qualities of individuals' minds. But the family and the political community comprise a moral, not an intellectual arena. At best, society is seen as a venue for the application of practical reasoning, not an interactive intellectual community.

We might say the Greeks had an epistemic community in practice, but not in theory. Perhaps we are simply left with the notion that philosophical activity must display a rhythm,

an oscillation between the private and the communal, between ruminating and apprehending at one time, and collegial interaction – listening, sharing, responding, and debating – at others.

V. Reading Plato and Aristotle in Lancaster

Any voluntary, faithful reading group presumably has judged the activity worthwhile. The group may include scholars for whom familiarity with the focal text may have utilitarian benefits for their later career's work. But there is a phenomenological difference, I believe, when we engage in something in which we find intrinsic value. Our sense of time alters: we don't feel the need to "get through" the experience, because we are already at the goal. We experience a flow in which we are immersed in the activity, our energies are focused, and time passes without our notice, except as interruption or boundary – when we feel the pressures of the obligatory. Plato once compared this state to being a free man, rather than a slave.[8] This phenomenology is especially vivid when it is a shared engagement, when a group is valuing the experience intrinsically. That gives the group its effervescence. But what exactly is shared?

A shared valuation of the reading experience does not imply shared perspectives and evaluations of the text. But in our case, the group was reading texts that celebrate the philosophic life, that claim the good life is philosophical. Were not we, then, while busily engaging in philosophical discussions about Plato and Aristotle, tacitly endorsing their claim? No. Valuing philosophy as an activity does not entail valuing particular philosophical conclusions – even about philosophy, since the nature of philosophy is itself a philosophical issue. In fact, many participants dissented vigorously from the visions of the good life dilated by Plato and Aristotle, and others proposed qualifications or amendments to these visions. There are at least three possible points of divergence: (1) One may argue that these philosophical patriarchs go wrong in assuming a monistic or unified theory of value; that worthwhile activities do not form a single hierarchy capped by a *summum bonum*. (2) One may argue that both men falter when they make the extrapolation from worthwhile activity to good life; that a good life is not defined by the sustaining of the highest human state or activity. (3) Or one may argue that the good and true simply do not ramify in the ways and patterns envisioned by these thinkers. And here the critiques widen: perhaps they are mistaken about the most worthwhile activity; maybe their constructions of the social order, of education, of human nature are misguided; or perhaps these specific errors devolve from other metaphysical or epistemological defects. Though we well might dissent in these ways – and all were represented in our group – we need not deny that engaging with these texts philosophically was worthwhile. Such an experience might surely be embraced as part of the "good" in a good life.

The texts are, in the end, provocations to philosophise. "Doing philosophy" or philosophising is a complex activity. To speak of it as a single activity (identified with *dialectic*, *theoria*, or whatever) may be misleading. Contemplating, reasoning, apprehending, analysing, clarifying, proposing, refuting, and offering counterexamples, and so on, are all distinct activities. Each and all can be aspects of philosophising. To "do" these is effectively to be a citizen of an epistemic community, a particular kind of regulative, epistemic community that is philosophical. It is in such a community that the intellectual virtues are formed and employed. Curiosity, attention to detail and nuance, the ability to grasp other's perspectives, a sense of salience, respect for evidence, intellectual humility, expressive courage – these and others are virtues that underpin the doing of philosophy with excellence. To comprehend the activity of a philosophical seminar we not only need a conception of worthwhile activities, an understanding of textual explication, and knowledge of the various

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[8] *Theaetetus*, 172d-e.

activities of philosophy; we not only need to understand the epistemology of individual insight. We also need to understand the group as a regulative epistemic community and the intellectual virtues (and vices) that may be displayed therein. In short, we need an epistemology adequate for philosophy itself.

Could Martin Heidegger have Written *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) in English?

Janet Mordike

ABSTRACT

Examples from the Macquarrie-Robinson translation of Martin Heidegger's Sein und Zeit are used to support the assertion that English is somewhat deficient as a vehicle for Heidegger's philosophy. Parts of speech, neologisms and the idiosyncratic use of existing words are used as illustrations, with particular reference to the existentiale Rede. Heidegger's own view that the German language is particularly suited to philosophy is confirmed by an example of his application of etymology to ontology. Nevertheless, in the experience of a post-graduate reading group at Lancaster University, the Macquarrie-Robinson and other well-commented translations of Heidegger's work are of undoubted value in providing non-German speakers with access to his creative ideas.

I. Introduction

This short reflection is based on the experience of a postgraduate reading group whose chosen text was the Macquarrie-Robinson translation of Martin Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time). A need for constant recourse to the original German text, in particular at the instigation of Heidegger scholar Laurence Hemming, begs the question of how easy it is to understand Heidegger in translation and whether Heidegger's ideas can be represented adequately in English at all. Firstly, the grammatical structure of German allows some fine distinctions that may not exist in English or any other target language. Secondly, the profoundly innovative nature of Heidegger's philosophy led him to introduce neologisms. This can mean that a translator has to coin a new word or expression in the target language. Finally, Heidegger also appropriates and adapts existing German words and uses them in idiosyncratic ways. This can mean that the customary translation is misleading and the translator may have to be imaginative in order to preserve the true content. A brief appraisal of these three aspects, bearing in mind the theory and practice of translation, together with a closer study of the concept of *Rede*, which elicited a particularly lively discussion in the reading group, suggest that English is a deficient vehicle for the transmission of Heidegger's philosophy and French is no better. This raises the question of whether the role of language for thought is so vital that a person's philosophy is shaped even circumscribed by that person's native tongue. Heidegger's notion that language speaks, revealing the nature of things by recourse to etymology, appears to support this contention.

II. Points of grammar

Possibly the most striking example in *Sein und Zeit* of how parts of speech can function differently in German and English is the significance of the present active infinitive and the participles. Inevitably the verb "to be" has a pivotal role in Heidegger's thought. In German the infinitive of the verb "to be" is *sein*, the present participle "being" is *seiend* and the past participle "been" is *gewesen*. Whereas in English the noun associated with this verb is the present participle, or gerund "being", in German it would normally take the form of the infinitive S*ein* (as in *das Ende allen Seins*: "the end of all being"). As well as meaning the act of existing or existence itself, both "being" and *Sein* can also mean the object that exists. However, philosophical German can also use the present participle *seiend* as a noun-

equivalent: *ein Seiendes*, while the past participle *gewesen* yields *ein Wesen*, both translatable as "a being". In short, the act of existing, existence itself, and the physical object which exists are in English all expressed by "being" whereas German distinguishes *Sein*, *Seiendes*, and *Wesen*. English can make the distinction only by the use of upper or lower case, the indefinite article, "a being", or the plural form, "beings".

This becomes important where Heidegger needs to make fine distinctions in his initial exploration of the structure of "Being". Even in German he is quite explicit. Thus in *Sein und Zeit* he states, "*'Sein' ist nicht so etwas wie Seiendes*",[1] translated by Macquarrie and Robinson as "'Being' cannot have the character of an entity",[2] and further "*Das Gefragte* […] *ist das Sein, das, was Seiendes als Seiendes bestimmt, das, woraufhin Seiendes* […], *je schon verstanden ist*"[3] is rendered "what is asked about is Being, that which determines entities as entities […] that on the basis of which entities are understood."[4] Although the meaning of "entity" is itself somewhat equivocal, it derives from the Latin verb *esse* "to be", present participle *ens*, and must therefore be a good compromise, particularly in view of Heidegger's explanation of substance: *dieses Seiende ist das ens perfectissimum*[5] (this entity is the *ens perfectissimum*). That the translators, Macquarrie and Robinson, themselves clearly appreciate problems of ambiguity in English is clear from a footnote in their translation.[6]

III. Neologisms

Where Heidegger wants to introduce a totally novel concept he can manipulate German easily to create new word forms by processes of derivation or fusion. An important example involves the use of different prefixes. In his exploration of Being-in-the-world, Heidegger distinguishes two types of attitude characterising encounters with objects and entities in the world. A thing that is immediately to hand to be used for a purpose without necessarily being analysed or understood is described as *zuhanden*, "ready-to-hand". In everyday German this word might appear on a letter meaning "for the attention of". The corresponding compound noun, *Zuhandenheit*,[7] translated as "readiness-to-hand", has been coined by Heidegger to signify a particular mode of encounter. The alternative, secondary mode of encounter to "readiness-to-hand" is "presence-at-hand", *Vorhandenheit*. Objects that are simply observable are said to be "present-at-hand" or *vorhanden*, which in everyday German means available in the sense of being "in stock". In this case, the well-established, hyphenated English translations are more than satisfactory in expressing the content and preserving the morpheme 'hand'. 'To-hand' and 'on-hand' would have been neater but not as explicit.

Another neologism, *Be-find-lich-keit*[8], has a similar compound structure. In addition to *sein*, German has a number of other verbs signifying being or existence including *sich befinden*. The subtlety of meaning is contained in the morpheme 'find'. *Ich befinde mich*, "I find (or consider) myself", implies a sense of discovery and personal awareness. *Befinden* has a sense of state or condition, for example, of embarrassment (*sich in Verlegenheit befinden*) so that Heidegger's neologism *Befindlichkeit* has commonly been translated "state-of-mind". This, however, loses the sense of discovery that the being has of its condition and limits this condition to a mental state rather than a holistic mode of being. "Mood" as a temporary state of mind or feeling is a tempting alternative. Paul Gorner uses "affectedness" which has a

[1] M Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 1976, p. 4.
[2] M Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J Macquarrie & E Robinson, Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1962, p. 23.
[3] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 6.
[4] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 25-26
[5] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 92.
[6] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 22.
[7] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 74.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

sense of being under the influence of feelings.[9] All, however, sacrifice the idea of finding which is so strong in the German. Since the golden rule of translation is to preserve content with as little distortion as possible and convey emotional flavour and impact,[10] translation of *Befindlichkeit* by an English neologism "foundness" could well be justifiable.

Another particular feature of Heidegger's world is *das Man*,[11] a noun derived from the impersonal pronoun *man.* Although the equivalent impersonal pronoun "one" can be used similarly in English to represent a person of undefined identity or people in general, it tends to sound pretentious and belongs in the vocabulary of Nancy Mitford or Oscar Wilde. The German *man*, like the French *on*, acts as the subject in sentences beginning *man sagt* or the French equivalent *on dit*, which in English are translated using the passive voice "it is said" or vaguely as "they say". Although these pronouns all take singular forms of the verb they hint at an indefinite plurality so that *das Man* is translated by Macquarrie and Robinson as the "they". This fails to conserve the nuance of "we" that is part of *man* and *on* (*on y va*, "let's go"). The English-speaking reader can readily comprehend the "they" as an amorphous social construct, akin to people in general or a peer group, the influence of which it is hard to escape. Yet the translators have been driven to choose between two equally unsatisfactory solutions: the inelegant "they" or the untranslated source word "*das Man*". Either way the target language has proved inadequate.

IV. Appropriations

As well as creating what amounts to completely new words and expressions to match new concepts, Heidegger frequently uses existing words in an unusual way. Unfortunately this may mean that the translator is tempted to adopt an unjustified interpretative role. Maquarrie and Robinson counter this by the use of numerous footnotes, many more than are found in translations of the work of other German-speaking philosophers, explaining in detail why they have chosen a particular English word to represent the German. A notable example of this is Heidegger's use of the word *eigentlich* to express "own-ly"[12]. *Eigen* can mean "own" or "personal" in *Eigenantrieb*, "self-propulsion", or *Eigenbedarf,* "personal requirements". However, in common parlance *eigentlich* has the sense of "true", "real" or "actual". Only the English word "proper" (as in proper name or property) is able to translate the flavour of "own-ness" which Heidegger wants to communicate. He wants to explain an inauthentic mode of being in which the self sacrifices its "own-ness" or *Eigentlichkeit* to the *Man*, the "they". Macquarrie and Robinson subtly translate *eigentlich* with "authentic", preserving the *eigen* with "aut". Unfortunately, however, "authentic" itself has the primary signification of genuineness or legality rather than "ownness". This can be confusing for the English-speaking reader and creates an apparent paradox whereby the authentic can be both true and false. Back-translation, a criterion for faithful translation, of "authentic" would tend to yield *echt* rather than *eigentlich*.

The prime example of appropriation of an existing word for particular use, and one that has resisted translation into English is *Dasein*.[13] In everyday German, *Dasein* can be translated into English in several ways according to context: by "presence", *im Dasein des Papstes* (in the presence of the Pope), by "life", *daseinsmüde* (tired of life), or by "existence", *der Kampf ums Dasein* (the struggle for existence). However, none of these captures Heidegger's preoccupation with the constitution of the word, sometimes hyphenated

[9] P Gorner, *Heidegger's Being and Time: An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, p. 6.
[10] EA Nida, and CR Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, R. E. J. Brill for the United Bible Societies, Leiden, 1974, pp. 105; 118-119.
[11] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 113.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

as *Da-sein*. Unfortunately *da* is rather elusive. Again, according to context, it can be translated by "here", *da bin ich* (I'm here), or "there", *wer ist da?* (who's there?). Since both "here" and "there" imply spatiality, translation of *Dasein* by "being-here", "being-there", "here-ness" or "there-ness" fails to express its true sense, namely, of a being in the world with unique capacities for awareness and understanding (*Befindlichkeit* and *Verstehen*). Indeed, Laurence Hemming points out that Heidegger himself took great exception to the French translation of *Dasein* as "*Être-là*". The solution in English has been to preserve the German word *Dasein* as a philosophical concept rather like *Weltschmerz* and *Schadenfreude*, both of which defy direct translation. This is justifiable where the source language concept is not lexicalised in the target language or is semantically complex.[14]

V. *Rede*

One word that provoked considerable discussion within the reading group, and which Macquarrie and Robinson themselves admit is difficult to translate, was *Rede*. Indeed on several occasions they feel obliged to translate it by the expression "discourse or talk".[15] Yet in the same way as Heidegger takes great care to define what he means by *Welt* (world),[16] so he dedicates several sections to the meaning of *Rede*.[17] It is the importance of *Rede* as constitutive of *Dasein* that makes this part of the book so compelling and an understanding of it so crucial. The crux of *Rede* is that it is of the world and takes place in the world, not in a vacuum. It is essentially communication (*das Beredete* [...] *ist* [...] *immer angeredet*,[18] the talked over is always talked to). Unlike trivial conversation, its aim is to articulate understanding and what it means to be in the world, so it always has sense and meaning. It is ready-to-hand where individual word-things are simply present-at-hand. As communication, *Rede* is vital to the concerned being-with of being-in-the-world and to the sharing of understanding and feelings. Significantly, as well as talking, *Rede* includes hearing and choosing to remain silent when a person has something to say and the capacity to speak. Listening attentively is the ultimate in solicitude. In his clarification of *Rede* as an *existentiale* or character of being, Heidegger reveals what he thinks it means to be truly human. Not just an animal capable of vocalisation but a being constituted not only by feeling and understanding but also by *Rede*, discourse or talk, neither of which translation truly suffices.

VI. Etymology

There is, however, something fundamental that might deter Heidegger from writing in any language other than German. This is his belief that language reveals the nature of things. In a later work (1951) he claims that language speaks when human beings respond with authentic and painstaking listening.[19,] He means language in its true nature not what he calls the unrestrained babble of spoken, written and broadcast words that reverberate round the globe. Human beings, he maintains, are not the shapers and masters of language, it is language itself that is master.[20] Does he mean a primeval language that shaped the lives of the earliest human beings? Are echoes of this language to be found above all in German?

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[14] M Baker, *In Other Words*, Routledge, London, 1992, p. 20.
[15] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 203.
[16] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 64-65.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 160-170.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 162.
[19] M Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", in A. Hofstadter (trans.), *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1971, p. 146.
[20] Martin Heidegger, "…Poetically Man Dwells…" in A. Hofstadter (translator), *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper and Row, New York, 1971, p. 216.

One example of this line of reasoning can be found in *Sein und Zeit* §I.2,[21] but better elaborated in a lecture, "Bauen Wohnen Denken" (Building, Dwelling, Thinking), given in Darmstadt in August 1951.[22] In this essay, Heidegger, fascinated by the origin of words, approaches "being", that is the way human beings "are" on the earth, from an etymological viewpoint based on linguistic links between *bauen, būan and bin*. In looking to answer the question of what it means to "dwell", he first needs to link "dwelling" unequivocally with "building", both of habitations and of places where human beings feel at home. He states that the modern German *bauen* "to build" comes from Old High German *būan*,[23] to dwell, inhabit, but also to cultivate. *Būan* itself comes from the Indo-European **bhu* or **bheu*, to be, become, emerge, and also occurs in Old English, for example, in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, meaning to dwell, inhabit. Heidegger admits that the "real meaning" of *būan* is lost in modern German apart from a trace in the word for neighbour, *Nachbar*, literally "near-dweller", as in Old English *nēahgebūhr* and Old High German *nāhgibūr*.[24] He goes on to suggest that a linguistic link between *bauen/būan* and "being" is provided by *bin* and *bist* the first and second persons singular of the verb "to be": "am" and "are". *Bin* comes from Old High German *bim* which has the same Indo-European root **bhu* or **bheu* as *būan*[25]. This is the linguistic basis for Heidegger's argument that dwelling is really building because dwelling involves the human activities of cultivation and construction. Building and dwelling are then the way human beings 'are' on the earth as mortals.

If, as Heidegger maintains, dwelling as building is the human being's everyday experience of being on the earth, then it is the habitual, the customary.[26] This, as Heidegger points out, is beautifully expressed by the word *das Gewohnte*, the dwelt, from the past participle of modern German *wohnen* to dwell. He explores this further with reference to *wu[n]on* (Old Saxon) and *wunian* (Gothic) from which *wohnen* derives. In Old English *wunian* has the sense of remaining but also of being accustomed to something. Heidegger claims that *wunian* means to remain in peace in a preserve of peace. This, he proposes, finds expression in a phrase from the poetry of Hölderlin: *dichterisch wohnet der Mensch*, "poetically man dwells". For Hölderlin too, dwelling is the basic character of human existence. For Heidegger, poetic creation, which lets us dwell, is a kind of building,[27] and the nature of poetry and of dwelling can be told only by language. Whether or not it is possible to argue a philosophy of being from the Indo-European heritage of the English "to be" as Heidegger does for the three stems of the German *sein*[28] is a question answerable only by a thinker of the calibre of Heidegger himself.

VII. Translation into French

If English is seen as lacking, it is instructive to note how French deals with similar problems of translation. Like German it can use the infinitive "*être*" and the participle "*étant*" as verbal-nouns signifying the entity that is and so is able to preserve the distinction between *Sein* and *Seiendes*. It can also translate *das Man* directly as "*le on*". The Gallimard translation of *Sein und Zeit*,[29] however, gives disappointing renderings of neologisms such as *Zuhandenheit*, *Vorhandenheit* and *Befindlichkeit*. It assumes that French has the resources and potential to communicate effectively. However, Mona Baker points out that elements of meaning or

[21] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 54.
[22] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", pp. 145-161.
[23] CD Buck, *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1949, p. 591.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 1348.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 635.
[26] See also Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 80.
[27] Heidegger, "…Poetically Man Dwells…" p. 215.
[28] G Steiner, *Martin Heidegger*, Fontana/Collins, Glasgow, 1978, pp. 47-49.
[29] M Heidegger, *L' Être et le Temps*, trans. R Boehm and A De Waelhens, Gallimard, 1964.

morphemes like "hand" and "find" are significant when dealing with neologisms in the source language.[30] By translating *zuhanden* as "disponible" (available) and *vorhanden* as "subsistent" (extant) it loses the link with "hand". In spite of having an equivalent to *sich befinden* in "*se trouver*", *Befindlichkeit* is translated as "*le sentiment de la situation*", which like the English "state-of-mind", forfeits the link with "find". Furthermore, where English associates *Befindlichkeit* with a mental state, in French it is associated with feeling or sensation. According to Heidegger himself, the French have actually admitted to him that, when they begin to think, their own language proves inadequate and they have to use German.[31]

VIII. Conclusions

To date, *Sein und Zeit* has been translated into nearly thirty foreign languages. Its influence on thought worldwide is largely due to the knowledge and hermeneutical talent of its many translators. They have undertaken a task, which, in view of the "very sharp precision of conceptual articulation" and "extraordinary terminological rigueur" of the work, is described by Christian Ciocan as heroic.[32] English at least shares a common Indo-European-Germanic parentage with German, which facilitates mutual understanding. Had Heidegger been writing in English rather than German, he could no doubt have manipulated words equally well to suit his own ends. Nor would the minimal differences in syntax have disturbed him. Furthermore, Heidegger's knowledge of classical languages, particularly Greek, sets him free from the constraints which might have been imposed by monolingualism. Above all, it is his concern for clarity and comprehensibility that would probably have allowed Heidegger to express himself in any language he chose.

However, as well as inflectional morphology (declension of nouns and conjugation of verbs), the German language exhibits a derivational morphology, where one part of speech gives rise to another with or without affixes, or where affixes modify the sense of the root morpheme. It also has a highly developed fusional or almost agglutinative character, which allows new compound words to be built up by concatenating elements of meaning or morphemes.[33] Although this can create challenges for the English translator such as the textbook example, *Donau-dampf-schiff-fahrts-kapitäns-dienst-handy*,[34] it provides the philosopher with a toolkit that sets his or her mind free for creative communication. It may be no coincidence that Japanese, the first language into which *Sein und Zeit* was translated in 1939-40, is an agglutinative language.

Reading Heidegger in German is an inevitably different experience from reading him in translation. According to Albert Hofstadter, the style of Heidegger's thinking "comes out of the German language and partakes of that language's genius."[35] In an interview with *Spiegel* magazine in 1966,[36] Heidegger himself asserts that the German language is well equipped as a vehicle for thought because of its close relationship with the language of the Greeks. In this context Laurence Hemming suggests that many of Heidegger's neologisms in German are in fact German renderings of Greek terms, for example *mitsein* from "synousia". Heidegger also maintains that it is as difficult to translate philosophy from one language to another as it is to translate poetry[37] and that, in contrast to the translation of scientific work,

[30] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[31] M Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe, Vol. 16: Veröffentliche Schriften 1910-1976*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 2000, p. 679.

[32] C Ciocan, *Translating Heidegger's Sein und Zeit*, Studia Phaenomenologica V, 2005, p. 10, accessed on Academia.edu on 10/1/2014.

[33] A Fox, *The Structure of German,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990, p. 134 ff.

[34] J Meibauer, *Einführung in die germanistische Linguistik*, Verlag JB Metzler, Stuttgart, 2002, p.33; [(river) Danube steamboat captain's works mobile (phone)].

[35] A Hofstadter, "Introduction" in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1971, p. xvi.

[36] M Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe, Vol.16*, p. 679.

[37] M Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe, Vol.16*, p. 680.

literal renditions of philosophy modify the original ideas. He suggests that Greek philosophy was subjected to such a significant transformation when it was translated into Roman-Latin that any satisfactory reflection on the basic ideas of Greek thought is hampered even today. Indeed, in Heidegger's view, "the rootlessness of Western thought begins with this translation."[38]

All these arguments against translation are thought provoking. Nevertheless, for all its compromises, Macquarrie and Robinson's English version of Heidegger's *magnum opus*, *Being and Time*, together with its indispensable excellent footnotes, notes, glossaries and indexes, provides the English-speaker with a reliable study guide to Heidegger's philosophy and access to the thought of one of the twentieth-century's keenest and most creative minds.

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[38] M Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", in A Hofstadter (trans.), *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper and Row, New York, NY, 1971, p. 23.

A Defence of Evolutionary Psychology

Max Skipper Griffiths

ABSTRACT
In this essay I shall argue that despite its apparent strength, literature critical of evolutionary psychology (EP) is not fatal to the EP discipline. I argue that much of the best work in EP is not guilty of the methodological flaws its sceptics take to characterise the field as a whole. In particular, I present a critical and constructive response to objections leveled against two of EP's main theoretical and methodological underpinnings: the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA) and the forward (and reverse) engineering methodology.

I. Introduction

Over the past few decades, philosophers have developed a range of overarching critiques of evolutionary psychological research in which they have argued that evolutionary psychology (EP) hypotheses are *inter alia* devoid of strong and reliable scientific content.[1] In what follows, I give counter arguments to some of the main criticisms levelled against the EP discipline. I concede – firstly – that EP hypotheses are evidentially incomplete and of a limited post hoc nature; however, I argue that EP's conceptual and methodological underpinnings are vindicated by its ability to generate fresh and novel predictions about human cognition and behaviour. If I am right, and my following argument is accepted, EP's heuristic capacity, generated by its robust methodology, allows for exploration into hitherto unknown areas of research. This not only reflects the fruitfulness of its methods but also sheds considerable light on how literature sceptical of EP is often misguided and incomplete in its claims. In §II, I identify some of the main conceptual tenets of EP. In §III, I outline the EP methodology. In §IV, I look at objections made against the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA) and the methodology in EP, and give responses. I conclude in favour of EP against its critics.

II. Key Concepts

Let us begin by thinking of EP as working from within an adaptationist framework. Roughly, this adaptationist framework refers to the hypothesis that natural selection selects a trait or adaptation – an inherited trait selected for doing a task because it solves an adaptive problem and confers a fitness advantage, in terms of reproductive success – in order to solve a specific adaptive problem. It uses this evolutionary analysis to generate hypotheses about psychological phenomena, explaining the existence of the adaptation in question in terms of its having a beneficial effect, and therefore giving a functional explanation for its existence. Natural selection, in this context, serves as a causal apparatus linking together the advantageous effects of an adaptation with its existence. We can categorise this reasoning into two parts: (i) the function of a specific psychological adaptation (what the trait is selected for), and (ii) the form of that function (how the trait works). As I will show, this is relevant when thinking about the EP methodology.

In addition, there are four main tenets of EP (as according to the Santa Barbara School perspective), which we shall now consider. First, there is the EEA. This concept refers to the

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[1] See for instance: R Lewontin, *Human Diversity*, W. H. Freeman and Company, New York City, NY, 1995; SJ Gould, "Deconstructing the "Science Wars" by Reconstructing an Old Mould", *Science*, Vol. 287 (5451), 2000, pp. 253-261; DJ Buller, *Adapting Minds: Evolutionary Psychology and the Persistent Quest for Human Nature*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2005; and, P Kitcher, *Living with Darwin*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009.

"statistical composite of the adaptation-relevant properties of the ancestral environments encountered by members of ancestral populations, weighted by their frequency and fitness-consequences."[2] The constitutive aim of the EEA is therefore to identify the times when our ancestral environment had an affect on the development of specific adaptations in the Pleistocene epoch (the period from approximately 1.8 million to 10,000 years ago).[3]

With the second tenet, it is argued that during the Pleistocene, in response to specific adaptive problems in the EEA, different psychological adaptations evolved through a process of natural selection, leading to a "massive modularity" (MM) of psychological mechanisms in the brain. These are specialised, domain-specific psychological mechanisms selected for because they solve a recurrent adaptive problem. Each module therefore serves a specific function, with many considered universal amongst modern day humans because they are regarded to have reached fixation.[4] In addition, there is the third tenet of gradualism – the notion that evolutionary change, with regard to complex adaptations, happens at a gradual rate – and the fourth tenet universalism, which is the notion that all members of a species share psychological adaptations.

III. Forward and Reverse Engineering Methodology

Evolutionary psychologists use two main methods to utilise this conceptual framework in order to formulate adaptationist explanations about specific psychological mechanisms. The first of these approaches – "reverse engineering" (or the predictive approach) – works by reasoning from the present to the past (or the EEA). According to this approach, you take an existing (psychological) trait (i.e. its "form") and work out what kind of adaptive problem in the EEA that trait would be selected for in order to solve that problem (i.e. its function). The second of these approaches is the "forward engineering" approach. According to this method, you think of an adaptive problem that a psychological trait would have been designed to solve. This reasons from the past (the EEA) to the present. It is important to note that with this forward reasoning there is also the possibility of finding additional mechanisms. This is how commentators both sympathetic and sceptical of EP, as well as evolutionary psychologists old and new, think of the EP methodology.[5] Its engineering strategy forms the cornerstone of adaptationist research in EP.

There are a number of criticisms that have been levelled against these most salient features of EP just described. A complete vindication of these would require dispensing with all of the problems facing this framework, including the MM, gradualism, universalism, and so on.[6] Such an undertaking lies beyond the scope of this essay. Instead, in what follows I shall deal with objections levelled against two aspects of this framework: the EEA and the EP methodology. It is to this that I now turn.

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[2] J Tooby & L Cosmides, "The Past Explains the Present: Emotional Adaptations and the Structure of Ancestral Environments", *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 11, 1990, 375-424, p. 387.

[3] J Tooby & L Cosmides, "Evolutionary Psychology: Conceptual Foundations", in D M Buss (ed.), *Evolutionary Psychology Handbook*, Wiley, New York City, NY, 2005.

[4] Many narrow-sense evolutionary psychologists have endorsed and defended these positions. See for instance: DS Wilson, "Adaptive Genetic Variation and Human Evolutionary Psychology", *Ethology and Sociobiology*, Vol. 15 (4), 1994, pp. 219-234; K Sterelny, *Thought in a Hostile World*, Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2003; and, Buller, *op. cit.*

[5] Those sympathetic include: JJ Bolhuis, GR Brown, R Richardson, & KN Laland, "Darwin in Mind: New Opportunities for Evolutionary Psychology", *PLoS Biology*, Vol. 9, 2011, pp. 1-8; those sceptical: R Richardson, *Evolutionary Psychology as Maladapted Psychology*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2007.

[6] For further discussion on this matter, see Bolhuis, *op. cit.*

IV. Objections to the EEA and EP Methodology

(i) Post-Pleistocene Selection

Given the considerations above, we can say that evolutionary psychologists use the EEA of the Pleistocene as the single set of environmental circumstances and selection pressures that shaped the human mind. To this extent, we can infer that the EEA premise would seem to have a lot of explanatory strength. But this leads to two questions: (i) how sound is the EEA, and, (ii) does the EEA have any explanatory strength?

The first problem is that, given 10,000 years have passed since the end of the Pleistocene, it is highly possible there will be post-Pleistocene selection for psychological adaptations. The most obvious and immediate response here is to argue as Barkow *et al.* has done and claim, "it is unlikely that new complex designs […] could evolve in so few generations"; furthermore, "it is improbable that our species evolved complex adaptations even to agriculture, let alone to post-industrial society."[7] Contemporary science disagrees, however. Consider, for example, a recent study by Mekel-Bobrov *et al.* in which it was found that a variant of the gene ASPM (a regulatory mechanism of brain size), developed just 5,800 years ago and is now said to be carried by nearly a quarter of all human beings. According to Mekel-Bobrov *et al.*, these recent discoveries suggest, "the human brain is still undergoing rapid adaptive evolution."[8] Following these developments, in reference to John Tooby and Leda Cosmides' quotations in §II of this paper, Kevin Laland concludes, "the theoretical framework underpinning narrow evolutionary psychology is untenable."[9] Part of the appeal of this view is we can quite easily conceive of the possibility that psychological adaptations might arise during this 10,000-year period. There is much to agree with here. But to place so much importance on a small grouping of possible psychological adaptations such as those given above is to assign them overblown significance.

For greater clarity on this matter, consider two responses to this objection. The first response is to say that there has been no forthcoming evidence of important changes (i.e. complex psychological adaptations) to our psychological configuration since the end of the Pleistocene period. Robert Kurzban correctly emphasises this point in his book *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind* when he asserts there is a fundamental difference between, on the one hand, the evolution of complex adaptations, and, on the other, rapid genetic evolution.[10] Since the findings in the Mekel-Bobrov *et al.* study only relate to simple physiological traits and not, importantly, complex psychological adaptations, this does not disprove the claim we do not yet have evidence of complex psychological adaptations evolving in the post-Pleistocene period.

Furthermore, even if we grant that complex psychological adaptations could evolve in this 10,000-year period, the unpredictability of recent social environments would more than likely have a problematic effect on their selection. What is more, we can also accept that sexual selection, for example, dates from well before the Pleistocene. So the geological time scale, we can grant, may not be so rigid as evolutionary psychologists would appear to claim. But this is not a problem. In spite of these claims, the Pleistocene is still the initial environment on which to focus when thinking about evolutionary adaptations – until, that is, specific evidence comes in and is able to prove otherwise.

Laland's conclusion, then, that post-Pleistocene selection renders EP theoretically "untenable" is rather moot since Tooby and Cosmides only claim that selection is likely to be

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[7] JH Barkow, L Cosmides, & J Tooby, *The Adapted Mind*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 5.

[8] N Mekel-Bobrov, *et al.*, "Ongoing Adaptive Evolution of ASPM, a Brain Size Determinant in Homo Sapiens", *Science*, Vol. 309 (5741), 2005, p. 1720.

[9] KN Laland, "Review Symposium: Life After Evolutionary Psychology", *Metascience*, Vol. 16, 2007, p. 9.

[10] R Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2012.

slow in this period and that evolving complex adaptations are unlikely. This is consistent with basic evolutionary theory. As such, the *explanandum* is deduced from accepted evolutionary theory and one of the main tenets of EP, gradualism, remains unscathed. And since the ASPM gene does not directly contradict any of this, Laland's conclusion is shown to have no weight.

The second response is to begin by saying that EP has never argued against the possibility of there being post-Pleistocene genetic evolution. To claim this would be, given the above, overly strong and thus indefensible. Evolutionary psychologists instead make the weaker claim that 10,000-years is not enough time for selection to take place and engender substantial changes to our psychological adaptations. So even if we were to grant the certainty of significant changes to psychological adaptations in the post-Pleistocene, this would not undermine the EP position at all. It may be that strong forthcoming evidence of post-Pleistocene psychological adaptations would force EP to rid itself of one of its core assumptions (that selection *only* shapes adaptions in the Pleistocene); that much we can concede. But that would hardly strike a devastating blow to EP, which could simply replace the Pleistocene with a more suitable geologic time scale.

Assuming this to be the case (that selection has occurred both before and after this period), the Pleistocene would still, as previously stated, remain the chief environment and time scale on which to focus. And granting post-Pleistocene selection would not undermine the central adaptationist premise that we have inherited psychological adaptations selected to solve adaptive problems in the Pleistocene. Instead, considerations of this kind would, I think, simply initiate a new research agenda affiliated with EP, concentrating on post-Pleistocene psychological adaptations. Hence I take it to follow that these recent findings of selection pose no problem to the EP discipline.

(ii) The Unobservable Problem and Indeterminacy Issue

One other means by which critics have arrived at their scepticism of EP is by asserting that the environmental conditions and selection pressures that are said to have shaped the human mind are largely unidentified. Insofar this is the case, it presents a challenge to hypothesising with this concept. This is a point noted by Anne Campbell, who says some have argued "our inability to time travel to the environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA) means that we can never "prove" which environmental problem the adaptation was designed to solve."[11] There are a number of responses to this problem. First, we can say that evolutionary psychologists can formulate hypotheses of the imperceptible Pleistocene, and that these can generate innovative calculations and predictions in the same way a hypothesising empirical science does. Moreover, we can say indeterminacy is a feature of all evolutionary science: for example, the same problem of researching an unobservable environment affects all evolutionary biology. However, sceptics can respond to this by claiming that even if there is a good case for accepting these hypotheses, the problem still remains that the epistemic strength of EP's evolutionary explanations is insufficient to invest any credence in them; there is just not enough evidence to support its claims. Many examples of this criticism can be found in contemporary literature; David Buller, for instance, presents the weaknesses and limitations of case studies in the EP discipline while identifying alternative (non-selectionist) explanations.[12]

The response here is straightforward. What Buller and others fail to acknowledge is that underdetermination is not a distinctive feature of EP, but universal to all of science. The social sciences, for example, are as vulnerable to underdetermination as any discipline dealing

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[11] A Campbell, "Feminism and Evolutionary Psychology", in JH Barkow (ed.), *Missing the Revolution: Darwinism for Social Scientists*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, p. 90.
[12] Buller, *op. cit.*

with theoretical and unobservable entities, with competing rival explanations and predictive hypotheses concerning certain social phenomena. Despite this fact, we find incomplete explanations in these adjacent disciplines are often accepted even if lacking in evidential particulars, with rival hypotheses either being dismissed or accepted, but, crucially, not taken to be mutually exclusive. This is not a problem that is regularly levelled against the social sciences. And although it isn't quite the case that social science receives no criticisms on the basis of incomplete explanation sketches, what is evident here is that this limiting feature – underdetermination – is one that is pinned on EP research disproportionately more than other scientific disciplines.

But, it can be argued, this objection against EP allows for unrestricted hypothesising about our extant psychological mechanisms – a problem stemming from its methodology. As stated above, there is always a chance we can generate alternative adaptive solutions for adaptive problems. Because there is much about the evolution of traits that cannot be predicted with certainty, alternative evolutionary explanations are highly probable. But does this fact that there are other scientific disciplines – not just the social sciences, but physics, evolutionary biology, and all fields dealing with theoretical and unobservable entities – which are guilty of this same underdetermination problem, serve as a solid vindication for EP? On its own, no, but there are additional responses, which I shall now turn to, that further support this position.

One way of responding to this indeterminacy issue is to say that there is no concrete evidence to show any one area of EP has generated unconstrained hypotheses about solutions for specific adaptive problems. Since there is no forthcoming evidence to demonstrate anything to the contrary, this stands to show how little evidential weight this argument has. What instead seems to be clear, I think, is that the heuristic nature of EP's methodology helps to reduce the range of research, alleviating the problem of unrestricted hypothesising. Let me further explain. We can concede that for any given adaptive problem in the EEA, the EP methodology has the capacity to produce a sizeable amount of hypotheses. Insofar as this true, it follows that there needs to be constraints on the number of theorised adaptive explanations for the adaptive problem in question. Without these constraints the alternatives become too abundant; any attempt to reduce exploration to a practical and effective size of research results in failure, bringing the discipline's investigative and explanatory force into question. But to remedy this problem, the evolutionary psychologist can arrange competing predictions from alternative explanations, look at the evidence provided for these, suggest evidence that would both work in favour of and contradict these hypotheses, locate the supporting data for this evidence, and then evaluate. In other words, they can follow the same procedures an empirical science would follow when responding to alternative explanations.[13] Given this, we can locate EP's heuristic power, with its methodological flexibility at its centre, and allow for a permitted – and acceptable – array of adaptive explanations for any given adaptive problem.

One potential argument against heuristics being beneficial on this basis is to say perhaps EP would benefit more from an array of methodologies, and not just from forward and reverse engineering perspectives. Perhaps, but the problem that then emerges is that numerous methodologies with disputing assumptions would be likely to encumber EP exploration. As it stands, implementing an engineering standpoint allows evolutionary psychologists to swiftly categorise and disregard many less relevant possibilities. Consider a recent example of this. Gergely Csibra and Gyorge Gergely's investigation hypothesised

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[13] In the initial stages of the EP research practice, some investigations will be futile. Subsequently though, other investigations will prove to be more favourable. These will surpass earlier studies and provide EP with solid adaptationist hypotheses. Additional research inquiries can be measured through calibration, leading to a clear and precise analysis of the design features that encompass psychological adaptations. Though this may rely on a certain level of trial and error that would not be a problem, since "mainstream" psychology, and all scientific disciplines for that matter, also rely on a process of trial and error.

psychological mechanisms that enable the attaining of local knowledge (i.e. cultural traditions) through human communication. It was predicted (successfully) by Csibra and Gergely that such a communication system would mean infants would be receptive to differentiate between different teaching experiences.[14] This successful prediction is, as Armin Schulz asserts, testament to EP's heuristic value.[15]

I take it to follow from this that by carefully constructing possible historical circumstances, evolutionary psychologists can eventually build convincing representations and models about the historical underpinnings (or the EEA) of extant psychological phenomena. And it is on this basis that evolutionary psychologists can make predictions that can be further corroborated by proceeding evidence. By failing to account for its capacity to generate innovative calculations and predictions, I would argue that critics do not see how one could accept EP explanations. But they should, for even if there is currently an incomplete collection of historical evidence in support of these explanations, there is still good grounds to accept these individual EP explanations over less convincing rival explanations. Though it may be true that a lot of bad work has been done under the banner of EP (for instance, Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer on supposed adaptive benefits of rape),[16] we can argue that supporting evidence for these forms of hypotheses, and others like it is weak, to draw a sharp distinction between good EP research and bad EP research – the latter of which, in contemporary literature, is fairly scarce.

Another point is to say that despite lacking a range of evidential details, we are entitled to accept EP explanations, via an inference to the best explanation argument (IBE), if, that is, they outcompete opposing explanations. If EP explanations do this, we can then assign them explanatory power, as well as crediting their claims with helping to increase our field of knowledge. This does not mean to say EP explanations enjoy some special epistemic status. Rather, it is to say that they have propositional content, and so we can look at the logical relations between these EP explanations and rival predictions in order to determine the former's epistemic status. However, in spite of this IBE, I think we can concede that the explanatory force of EP hypotheses is still very much constrained by how little we currently know about the EEA, and, what is more, acknowledge the criticism Van Fraassen makes against IBEs[17] – according to which, in this context, it is necessary for the evolutionary psychologist to show why alternative explanations are not as good as the ones they themselves endorse. Sceptics tend to emphasise this aspect of EP though, and go a step further to claim that the hypotheses generated from this research discipline will *always* lack crucial evidential particulars.[18] We can characterise these claims as going through the following line of argument: (1) formulate a complete adaptationist explanation in its basic structure; (2) argue that EP hypotheses fail to meet the same standards as this explanation, and; (3) conclude that EP hypotheses will never be able to meet these standards.

But what explains this? And in virtue of what evidence do sceptics argue for these claims? There is very little to argue against the suggestion that EP hypotheses are of a fairly limited post hoc nature or that they are evidentially incomplete. So we can grant (1) and (2). But the inference from these truisms (i.e. limited methodology, evidentially incomplete) to the claim that all EP hypotheses will always be unable to meet these standards is false. My point is not to argue against (1) and (2). I concede these arguments: after all, EP explanations are not complete explanations. But to claim that EP cannot – and will never – meet these

[14] G Csibra & G Gergely, "Social Learning and Social Cognition: The Case for Pedagogy", in T Munakata & MH Johnson (eds.), *Processes of Change in Brain and Cognitive Development: Attention and Performance, XXI*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, p. 148.
[15] A Schulz, "Heuristic Evolutionary Psychology", in KS Plaisance & TAC Reydon (eds.) *Philosophy of Behavioral Biology*, Springer, London, 2012.
[16] R Thornhill & C Palmer, *A Natural History of Rape*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2000.
[17] B van Fraassen, The Scientific Image, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980.
[18] See for example: Buller, *op. cit.* & Richardson, *op. cit.*

standards, as (3) does, is both unproductive and too strong. This is especially when considering, as I shall now do, its recent research developments.

(iii) Limited Topics Problem

A further sceptical response to the EEA (as well as the EP methodology) is to concede that EP can generate cogent hypotheses about psychological mechanisms, but claim it is only ever able to do so on a limited range of topics. These include mating, aggression, kinship, and so on. But this is not true. As contemporary studies in EP demonstrate, there is an emerging range of distinct subject matters evolutionary psychologists are hypothesising psychological adaptations. For example, take Michael Petersen's research concerning the psychology of mass politics; he describes why politics fails to activate evolved mechanisms, whilst also identifying the conditions that prompt these mechanisms.[19] This diversity in research topics can be further seen in David Geary's work on academic learning[20] and Justin Park's evolutionary perspective of intergroup prejudice,[21] both of which offer fruitful insights into topics that *prima facie* seem unrelated to EP. And even on the traditional topics of EP, research offers up valuable findings. Ian Penton-Voak and David Perrett, for example, successfully estimated that during the fertile stages of the menstrual cycle women's partialities for attractive male faces would be more manifest than during the non-fertile stages of the menstrual cycle.[22]

Adding to this diversity in research, we can say that EP is also refining its methods for collecting evidence, as with the developing field of EP in cognitive neuroscience. Consider K. Takahashi and Y. Okubo's investigation of sex differences in the neural responses to jealousy scenarios, using neuroimaging (fMRI, PET, SPECT, etc.). According to Takahashi and Okubo, the truth of their empirical hypothesis would give good grounds to claim, "that men and women have different neurocognitive systems to process a partner's sexual and emotional infidelity."[23] This emerging field of EP and neuroscience surely points to a growing psychology discipline, one that can not only better understand the functions of the brain by making use of an invaluable research tool such as neuroimaging, but also, more precisely, extend into multidisciplinary areas to make predictions about the likely causes of the *explanandum* in question.

On this basis we can agree with Laland when he says: "The best of evolutionary psychology is as rigorous and sophisticated as any research carried out within the field of human behaviour and evolution."[24] As a further example of this sophistication and rigour, consider Niruban Balachandran and Daniel Glass's forthcoming *PsychTable*, which will, by codifying substantiated (and unsubstantiated) psychological adaptations and evaluating their strength of evidence, give EP research a clear and taxonomic ordering of research, immediately accessible to researchers, both within EP and in adjacent disciplines.[25]

The rigour of its methodology is another example of the sophistication of the field of EP. Consider David Buss and Martie Haselton who hypothesised that, as an adaptation, jealousy is "designed to alert an individual to threats to a valued relationship," and

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[19] MB Petersen, "The Evolutionary Psychology of Mass Politics", in SC Roberts (ed.), *Applied Evolutionary Psychology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012.
[20] DC Geary, "Application of Evolutionary Psychology to Academic Learning", in SC Roberts (ed.), *Applied Evolutionary Psychology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012.
[21] J Park, "Evolutionary Perspectives on Intergroup Prejudice: Implications for Promoting Tolerance", in SC Roberts (ed.) *Applied Evolutionary Psychology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012.
[22] I Penton-Voak & D Perrett, "Male Facial Attractiveness: Perceived Personality and Shifting Female Preferences for Male Traits across the Menstrual Cycle", Advances in the Study of Behaviour, Vol. 30, 2001, pp. 219-259.
[23] H Takahashi & Y Okubo, "Sex Differences in the Neural Correlates of Jealousy", in SM Platek & TK Shackelford (eds.), *Foundations in Evolutionary Cognitive Neuroscience*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, p. 211.
[24] Laland, *op. cit.*
[25] N Balachandran & DJ Glass, "PsychTable.org: The Taxonomy of Human Evolved Psychological Adaptations", *Evolution: Education and Outreach*, Vol. 5 (2), 2012, pp. 312-320, pp. 313-314.

furthermore, "functions […] as a motivational mechanism with behavioural output designed to deter […] infidelity and abandonment."[26] Studying the EEA, Buss and Haselton used the reverse engineering method, outlined in §III, to observe that mate infidelity would have threatened the fitness of our ancestors; therefore natural selection would privilege those individuals with the trait of jealousy because this trait would encourage increased attention to one's mate, as well as to see off rival partners. In addition to this, they simultaneously made use of the forward engineering approach by predicting jealousy differences between sexes, stating that because for males and females there is a different objective of the jealousy mechanism in the EEA, "men more than women become upset at signals of sexual infidelity" while "women more than men become upset at signals of a partner's emotional infidelity."[27]

This testifies, in my view, to the latent strength of the EP methodology. It shows that by using this method, evolutionary psychologists reason from the present to the EEA and from the EEA to the present on the same topic to generate new and cogent hypotheses. In this instance, to use both aspects of this methodology together, to reason from form to function and vice versa as Buss does, draws our attention to the heuristic capacity of EP reasoning. The role this capacity plays in this context, I think, allows us to limit hypotheses to a manageable size, offering a solid basis from which to proceed into analysis. With a sharpened research understanding EP can set out new paths of investigation towards creating innovative hypotheses about both known and unknown psychological phenomena. On the face of it, then, the methodology of EP is of both great heuristic power and utility. But there are still problems for the evolutionary psychologist, as I shall now show.

(iv) Richardson's Response to Incomplete Explanations

A counter-argument might be made that heuristic power is of little significance to research if that research lacks basic evidential particulars. This argument is especially clear in the context of Robert Richardson's discussion of Buss's research, which importantly observes that Buss is unable to meet the basic standards required for an evolutionary explanation – namely, the five categories of Robert Brandon's criteria.[28] Without this information, Richardson points out there is no mention in Buss's research of the details concerning selectionist history, the structures of ancestral populations, gene flow, trait heritability, the variation of traits amongst organisms, or phylogenetic analyses – the taxonomic grouping and ordering of organisms.[29] Thus, Richardson concludes, EP hypotheses are "more a matter of speculation than science," and this is what suggests to him that they should not be assigned any credibility.[30] But, given this argument, what is the most plausible interpretation of Buss's research?

To begin with, we can say Richardson's interpretation is in many ways correct. Though extremely difficult to quantify, Brandon's standards should not be underestimated. If evolutionary psychologists wish to improve their explanations, they must try to make use of other research methods. Evidently, from this acceptable observation we find Richardson is justified to say that Buss's research lacks the scope and detail to meet the standards of a complete adaptationist explanation. But this claim seems not only a little strong but also slightly out of place. For although we can argue evolutionary psychologists must utilise a number of multidisciplinary methods and techniques to substantiate their claims, providing evidence for complete, ultimate and proximate, adaptationist explanations is not the main goal of EP. Rather, it is to produce weaker, more modest conditional hypotheses and to formulate these hypotheses into explanations.

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[26] DM Buss & M Haselton, "The Evolution of Jealousy", *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Vol. 9 (11), 2005, pp. 506-507, p. 506.
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] See: RN Brandon, *Adaptation and Environment*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1990.
[29] Richardson, op. cit., pp. 60-64, p. 88.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Perhaps the issue, then, is with Richardson's failure to properly appreciate the distinction between EP explanations and hypotheses. Consider the logic behind EP's reasoning for the Psychological Adaptation Hypothesis (PAH): for any agent S, if a psychological trait T is an adaptation for A, then psychological trait T should have adaptive design features D. The conditional insight of this hypothesis does not state that a trait is an adaptation. Rather, it states that *if* it is an adaptation *then* it should have an adaptive design. So its claim is not strong. A stronger claim, however, is made by a psychological adaptation explanation (PAE). This argues that a trait is an adaptation, and that this is proven to be true by design features D. Taking the PAH and PAE alongside one another, we see the latter is a much stronger claim than the former. Hence we should invest less credence in the PAE than the PAH.

But this is not to say EP does not aim for PAE, for it does – indeed most evolutionary psychologists make this move of developing their hypotheses into explanations.[31] Crucially, some studies do not. So where does this leave us? Following this information, I think it's fair to say that Buss and Haselton's research is limited in its evidential breadth. This is not a knockout argument, but it does highlight more generally the limitations in the evidential standards of EP research. But Richardson's exegetical account is still questionable: can he really assert that EP is inextricably bound to these standards? One potential response is to concede that EP has a relatively limited scientific status, but to add that indeterminacy is a characteristic of all evolutionary situations, especially when dealing with the causal antecedents determining psychological mechanisms. To this extent it is implausible to claim that EP hypotheses should be able to formulate complete explanations about the causes of our psychological architecture. If there are evolutionary psychologists that do make these far-reaching claims, then we should separate them from those that do not. But, ultimately, to argue against EP research on the basis that it is unable to provide the required evidence to support complete explanations is surely just unproductive.

In effect, then, on this interpretation of Buss's research, Richardson makes the unreasonable assumption that EP should be committed to meeting the standards of complete evolutionary explanations. Following its failure to do so, he makes the unwarranted inference that EP is more speculation than science. However, Buss's research is more than a "just-so story";[32] it follows a wide-range of testable hypotheses on sex differences in jealousy conducted by evolutionary psychologists in various parts of the world. This begins with Buss *et al*.[33] followed with studies in the USA and Netherlands by Buunk *et al*.,[34] and then research by Geary *et al*. in China.[35] This is cross-cultural, in-depth investigation, not merely "speculation". Moreover, it is not a monolithic enterprise. Not all people who classify themselves as doing EP are necessarily signed up to all aspects of the "Santa Barbara school" methodology. For as we have seen, EP research is making use of a wide range of methods for arriving at their hypotheses.

Yet there may be a broader lesson to take from this; namely, that we should not consider this sort of scepticism as working towards change (i.e. improving recording techniques of selection pressures, historical eventualities, introducing multidisciplinary methods, and so on) but rather as a force that tends to delineate key weaknesses and dismiss the discipline in its entirety. More moderate scepticism is perhaps, then, better and more

[31] For instance: Petersen op. cit., and Buss and Haselton op. cit.

[32] See: SJ Gould, & RC Lewontin, "The Apandrels of San Marco and the Panglossian Paradigm: A Critique of the Adaptationist Programme", *Proceedings of the Royal Society London, Series B*, Vol. 20, 1979, pp. 581-598.

[33] DM Buss, *et al.*, "International Preferences in Selecting Mates: A Study of 37 Societies", *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology,* Vol. 21, 1990, pp. 5-47.

[34] BP Buunk, *et al*., "Sex Differences in Jealousy in Evolutionary and Cultural Perspective", *Psychological Science*, Vol. 7 (6), 1996, pp. 359-363.

[35] DC Geary *et al*., "Sex Differences in Spatial Abilities Among Adults from the United States and China", Evolution and Cognition, Vol. 7 (2), 2001, 1995, pp.172-177.

progressive[36] than the overarching critiques argued for by strong EP sceptics.[37] It is unnecessary to go over this point any further. EP's theoretical and methodological underpinnings do more than just postulate ideas about our extant cognitive mechanisms. In addition, given the contemporary EP research I have so far identified, it is not even obvious that EP hypotheses are unconstrained or speculative: on the contrary, it would appear they are employing many scientific techniques to formulate them. This is important because psychologists are interested in understanding human minds and behaviour, and often – though not always – evolutionary considerations will be – and as I have shown, are – immensely useful in formulating hypotheses. But are there any further weaknesses in its methodological structure? It is to this that I shall now turn my attention, responding to one main objection made against its system of reasoning.

(v) The Grain Problem

Working from the premise that an adaptive cognitive device is selected for solving an antecedent (domain-specific) adaptive problem, Kim Sterelny and Paul Griffiths advance the second main argument against the EP methodology. They question how we are to distinguish these adaptive problems from others of the same kind; or, in other words, how precise or unambiguous is the adaptive problem? For example, "is the problem of mate choice a single problem or a mosaic of many distinct problems?"[38] The grain problem threatens to challenge this fundamental EP principle, because the grain of the domain appears arbitrary, not precise.

One response is to say that on a functional basis the best trait to solve an adaptive problem is the best reason for why it was selected for over other traits. However, functional explanations that explain the existence of an adaptation on the basis of it having a beneficial effect, still face the problem that there can be several ways to accomplish the same task. A selected adaptation is not always an optimal solution, because on occasions different designs can resolve the adaptive difficulty more effectively. But the reason why optimal designs are not always selected for is because there are constraints on what can be selected – what strategies are offered to natural selection is dependent on the degree of variation of a population, for example. Finding out what the constraints in the EEA were would help shed some light on why certain psychological mechanisms were selected for over other designs. The method must be independent though. If it is not, the reasoning becomes circular, building into the explanation the very thing being explained – namely, the antecedent identification of cognitive mechanisms.

I offer two responses to the grain problem. The first is to highlight that this problem is universal to functional hypotheses and not, as this criticism seems to characterise, exclusive to EP hypotheses. For example, take psychologists examining psychological traits. In these cases they will often explain traits on a functional basis. To this extent their research is just as guilty of individuating traits. Broadly speaking, though, what is odd about this, and many other attacks against EP, is that the weaknesses attributed to EP are common across the life sciences and sometimes even worse in "mainstream" psychology (not to mention the social sciences more broadly). This is a theme that we can clearly see running through views counter to EP. But the fact remains, as I have already suggested, that when finding causal explanations for psychological phenomena, we very often have to appeal to unobservable entities. The second response to the grain problem however, is, quite simply, that these possibilities of "sub-problems" can be tested. Diverse adaptive problems should indicate different design structures. For example, a psychological mechanism solution to the problem

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[36] For instance: Laland, *op. cit.* and Bolhuis, *op. cit.*

[37] For instance: Buller, *op. cit.* and Richardson, *op. cit.*

[38] K Sterelny & PE Griffiths, *Sex and Death: An Introduction to Philosophy of Biology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1999, p. 323.

of mate choice in general should have different design features to a psychological mechanism dealing with a subclass of mate choice. In this way, the matter of individuation can be seen, once again, as a heuristic muscle, generating fast and frugal ways for developing insights about cognitive mechanisms, making a dialectical movement from simplicity to complexity.

But this simplicity, it could be argued, is not so much a blessing of EP as it is a curse. EP's heuristic capacity, one might argue, simply generates weak, reductivist explanations about the architecture of the mind. The response here is simple. To simply follow the EP discipline in deriving explanations from hypotheses without broadening the scope of its methods or increasing its explanatory depth and precision, or using insights from adjacent research fields, would be to render the EP discipline inert. But this is not how EP is progressing. Upon further investigation it is not obvious that EP hypotheses are unconstrained or speculative: on the contrary, it would appear they have many strongly scientific aspects to them. Recall Petersen and Takahashi and Okubo, where research has been done through making predictions, forming hypotheses (consistent with evolutionary theory), and testing those against observable phenomena, in controlled conditions. Though it is true that these explanations may lack explanatory power (for there may be other hypotheses that also make predictions that are later corroborated by the relevant data), as functional explanations we can agree with Carl Hempel and Paul Oppenheim's characterisation of them in terms of the strength of their heuristic potential.[39]

V. Conclusion

Having begun by conceding EP hypotheses are evidentially incomplete and limited in their post hoc nature, I have argued EP is vindicated by its ability to generate fresh and novel predictions about the cognitive mechanisms driving our behaviour.[40] This heuristic capacity, guided by EP's ruling tenets – principally the EEA and engineering perspective – allows for exploration into hitherto unknown areas of research. What seems important here, as I take it, is that EP operates from within a framework of innovation, not explanation: novel explanations are not just an appendage of EP; they form the basis of its research. And insofar as EP research works in this field of innovation and discovery, it is a very useful addition to literature on human cognition. EP is an ambitious undertaking, one that surely cannot be comprehensive, but which, can be viewed as a useful addition to an array of literature on human cognition.

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[39] CG Hempel & P Oppenheim, "Studies in the Logic of Explanation", *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 15 (2), 1948, pp. 135-175.
[40] I have largely been unable to consider the broader problems with the psychology of EP, particularly in terms of the various philosophical issues with the MM. I suspect that this would offer rich material for the kind of study pursued in this essay.

The Philosophical Underpinnings of an English School Analysis of Terrorist Deradicalisation Programmes

Saloni Kapur

ABSTRACT

This paper sets out to explore the ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings of the English School theory of international relations, employing the conceptual framework offered by the philosophy of the social sciences. It argues that in spite of a historical perception of the English School as constituting a hermeneutic approach, coupled with contemporary attempts to conceive of the school as exhibiting methodological pluralism, the English School's assumptions – implicit and explicit – and its methods suggest a critical realist stance. The paper goes on to apply this conclusion to a concrete example of an international relations topic, terrorist deradicalisation programmes. Through the use of this illustration, this paper seeks to begin to reveal the implications of the philosophical position of the English School for international relations research that employs the school's theoretical framework.

I. Introduction

The research question addressed by this paper is: what would the philosophical consequences be of applying the English School theory of international relations to a study of terrorist deradicalisation programmes? The paper will begin by exploring the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the English School from a philosophy of social science perspective. It will go on to consider the implications of these philosophical reflections for an English School study of prison-based terrorist deradicalisation programmes that have been instituted by a number of governments, including, notably, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Indonesia. This research agenda takes the lead from Barry Buzan and Richard Little's efforts to explore the philosophical foundations of the school. While they have argued that the English School embraces methodological pluralism, this paper analyses how the school views knowledge and matter, and how these philosophical assumptions influence academic work that employs the school as a theoretical framework.[1]

This paper will use the example of terrorist deradicalisation programmes in order to provide a concrete illustration of how exactly the philosophical bases of the school pertain to subjects that are of concern to international relations scholars. Thus, the example of terrorist deradicalisation programmes will give readers a sense of the relevance of philosophical questions to the study of international relations. This is important because there have been voices within the field of international relations that have challenged the notion that it is necessary for academics in the discipline to engage with concepts from the philosophy of social science. There has been a feeling that exploring philosophical questions will result in a neglect of more pressing, empirical research agendas, as well as an idea that philosophers might be better equipped to deal with issues such as epistemology and ontology than international relations scholars.[2]

However, I argue that for social science to qualify as a science, it is necessary for disciplines within it to examine their methods and the rationales behind them. A philosophical

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[1] B Buzan, "The English School: An Underexploited Resource in IR", *Review of International Studies,* Vol. 27, 2001, pp. 471-88; R Little, "The English School's Contribution to the Study of International Relations", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 6 (395), 2000, pp. 395-422.
[2] C Wight, "Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations", in W Carlsnaes, T Risse & BA Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations*, SAGE Publications, London, 2002, pp. 24-25.

understanding of the theoretical approaches employed in international relations is important in order for researchers to gain a deeper insight into the assumptions implicit in the theories they use about what exists and how knowledge is derived, thus offering them greater clarity on how to go about their research. In the context of fierce debates within international relations on which of the many competing theoretical approaches is best, it would be useful for scholars to deepen their understanding of the underlying philosophical assumptions on which the various theories are based; this may not always be immediately apparent.[3]

Furthermore, philosophical concepts have already influenced international relations substantially. For example, practitioners have applied Thomas Kuhn's paradigmatic analysis to explain the existence of competing international relations theories, and the discipline has followed other social sciences in broadening its agenda to include philosophical perspectives such as poststructuralism.[4] Thus, a conversation between the disciplines of philosophy and international relations is already underway. This paper seeks to contribute to that discussion.

II. The Philosophical Bases of the English School

The English School is a theoretical approach to international relations that examines international politics at three analytical levels: international system, international society and world society. Hedley Bull, Martin Wight, Tim Dunne, Buzan and Little are among the influential scholars of the English School.[5] In Buzan's words, international system "is about power politics amongst states", international society "is about the institutionalisation of shared interest and identities amongst states", and world society "takes individuals, non-state organisations and ultimately the global population as a whole as the focus of global social identities and arrangements."[6]

(i) Ontology

Garry Potter defines ontology as an engagement with the question of being or existence.[7] As David Marsh and Paul Furlong explain, "[t]he key question is whether there is a "real" world "out there" that is independent of our knowledge of it."[8] They provide the example of John Gray's popular book *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, in which, as they interpret it, Gray contends that men and women are inherently different and healthy relationships are contingent on men and women appreciating these differences.[9] They claim that for Gray, these differences are consistent across cultures and periods of history.

According to Marsh and Furlong, Gray's ontological position is a foundationalist or essentialist one, which sees social phenomena as existing outside our interpretation of them. They contrast Gray's standpoint with one that a feminist would adopt; that is, differences in the behaviour of women and men are socially constructed and vary from culture to culture, as well as being dependent on the historical period being referred to. The latter stance, Marsh and Furlong state, is an anti-foundationalist ontological one, which stresses that social phenomena are constructed by our perceptions.

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[3] Buzan, *op. cit.*, p. 472

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] R Jackson & G Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, p. 127; A Linklater, :The English School", in S Burchill, A Linklater, R Devetak, J Donnelly, M Paterson, C Reus-Smit & J True, *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd ed., Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2005, p. 84.

[6] Buzan, *op. cit.*, pp. 474-75.

[7] G Potter, *The Philosophy of Social Science: New Perspectives*, Pearson Education, Harlow, 2000, p. 10.

[8] D Marsh & P Furlong, "A Skin Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science", in D Marsh & G Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 2nd ed., Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2002, p. 18.

[9] J Gray, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus: A Practical Guide for Improving Communication and Getting What You Want in Your Relationships*, HarperCollins, Hammersmith, 2012.

In Marsh and Furlong's terms, then, the English School expounds a foundationalist or essentialist ontology. To use Potter's terminology, it adopts a realist or materialist ontological position, believing that objects and social structures exist in their own right, independently of mental formations. Potter contrasts realism with an idealist ontological position, which would contend that only our sense impressions are real, and that matter does not exist outside our minds.[10]

According to Tim Dunne, the English School dispenses with the false dichotomy of materialism versus idealism.[11] Dunne's assertion might appear to contradict this paper's argument that the English School's ontology is a materialist one. However, Hedley Bull, one of the foundational scholars of the English School, clearly states that international society and war are both real; furthermore, he emphatically asserts that order exists in international politics.[12]

John Baylis' categorisation of Buzan's work as the "mature anarchy" approach to realism supports my contention that the English School's ontology is essentially a realist one, even though the school is often seen as being a via media between the international relations theories of realism and liberalism (sometimes called idealism).[13] It is important to draw a distinction here between the ontological positions of realism and idealism, and the correspondingly named international relations theories.

The international relations theories of realism and liberalism do adopt the ontological positions of materialism and idealism respectively; while realist international relations analyses power dynamics in an anarchical system of states that exists "out there", liberal international relations academics focus on the construction of institutions that would enable states to coexist peaceably. The English School, meanwhile, recognises power dynamics and the anarchical conditions that prevail in the international system. However, the school argues that there is also present an international society, in which states seek out opportunities to cooperate. In addition, it accepts the potential for a more cohesive world society to come into existence. Thus, the English School is congruent with the modern, critical version of realism within the philosophy of the social sciences, which recognises the potential for social structures to evolve and change, even while seeing them as existing regardless of our understanding of them.[14]

While the positioning of the English School as a via media between realism and idealism applies in the context of the discipline of international relations, the picture blurs when one turns to the philosophy of the social sciences, where critical realism has broadened the definition of realism to make room for social evolution. Hence, Baylis was not off the mark in an ontological sense when he categorised Buzan's work as realist, since the English School – of which Buzan considers himself a member – does adopt a mature version of the realist ontological position, i.e. critical realism.[15]

(ii) Epistemology

Epistemology, defined as "the study of knowledge",[16] asks "what we can know of the world and how we can know it."[17] Commonly, epistemological positions are divided into two

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[10] Potter, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.
[11] T Dunne, "The English School", in T Dunne, M Kurki & S Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010.
[12] H Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, Macmillan Press, London, 1977.
[13] J Baylis, "International and Global Security in the Post-Cold War Era", in J Baylis & S Smith (eds.), *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, pp. 297-324.
[14] A Sayer, *Realism and Social Science*, SAGE Publications, London, 2000.
[15] London School of Economics and Political Science, *Buzan, Barry*, LSE Research and Expertise, 2009, retrieved 23 February 2014, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/researchAndExpertise/Experts/profile.aspx?KeyValue=b.g.buzan%40lse.ac.uk>.
[16] Potter, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[17] Marsh & Furlong, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

categories: (1) scientific or positivist, and; (2) hermeneutic, interpretivist or humanist. However, Marsh and Furlong offer an alternative classification, which includes a third category of realism.[18]

A positivist epistemological position values prediction; it focuses on identifying causal relationships and values explanation. For an interpretivist, however, the world is seen as being socially constructed, so understanding and interpretation become more meaningful than explanation.[19] In the terms of this conventional classification, the English School would fall on the hermeneutic end of the spectrum. According to Dunne, the English School opposes positivism and is sceptical about interpreting international relations using scientific methods.[20] This corresponds with Potter's definition of humanism as an outlook that does not think the methods of natural science can be applied to social science.[21]

The hermeneutic tendency of the English School is further revealed by its critique of the positivist notion of rationality. Potter's chapter on hermeneutics in his book *The Philosophy of Social Science*, notes that in interpretivist work, "[r]ationality itself is given a relativist nature and understood in terms of a specific Western cosmology."[22] Bull adopts such a stance when, in his paper "International Relations as an Academic Pursuit" he criticises the assumption in realist international relations theory that states are rational actors:

> There is, of course, no such thing as rational action in an objective sense (the sense in which, for example, eighteenth-century philosophers thought that there was a distinction between 'reason' and 'the passions'). 'Rational action' is simply action which is (a) internally consistent and (b) consistent with given goals. The strategist's conception of 'rational strategic action' derives simply from his judgement as to what is usually or ordinarily done. When he applies this to some country about which he has no particular knowledge, he may be dead wrong.[23]

Bull's attack on the assumption of a universally existing standard of rational action is, likewise, reflected in his book *The Anarchical Society*.[24]

On the basis of the preceding discussion, it would seem that the English School is based on an interpretivist or hermeneutic epistemology. However, when one considers Marsh and Furlong's inclusion of a realist epistemology in their classification, it becomes clear that the English School falls into this last category, in spite of the arguments presented above. For Marsh and Furlong, "realists are looking for causal relationships", which is a concern they share with positivists. However, like interpretivists, they "think that many important relationships between social phenomena cannot be observed."[25] This understanding of realism applies equally to the English School. In Buzan's article on the school, he discusses how it combines social interpretation with realist international relations' understanding of the international system as existing under a condition of raw anarchy (which leads to causal analyses of international power politics). He draws attention to unobservable social phenomena such as identity, perceptions and norms, which influence the behaviour of people, who, he points out, are sentient beings.[26] Bull, too, states that both history and systematic theory are important, suggesting a realist epistemology that combines causal explanations of the international system with historical interpretations of political phenomena.[27]

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[18] *Ibid.*, p. 19; Potter, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.
[19] Marsh & Furlong, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20; Potter, *loc. cit.*
[20] Dunne, *loc. cit.*
[21] Potter, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[23] H Bull, "International Relations as an Academic Pursuit", in K Alderson & A Hurrell (eds.), *Hedley Bull on International Society*, Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 2000, p. 259.
[24] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, pp. 125-26.
[25] Marsh & Furlong, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[26] Buzan, *op. cit.* Sentient beings here understood by Buzan as capable of being influenced by identities, perceptions, rules and norms.
[27] Bull, "International Relations as an Academic Pursuit".

In addition to bridging the gap between positivism's preoccupation with causal explanation and interpretivism's concern with social phenomena, Marsh and Furling state that "[r]ealism shares an ontological position with positivism, but, in epistemological terms, modern realism has more in common with relativism."[28] In this sense, too, the English School falls firmly in the realist category. As shown earlier in this essay, the English School employs a foundationalist ontology, which is something it shares with positivism. Interpretivism tends to favour an anti-foundationalist ontology. However, in terms of epistemology, as demonstrated previously in this section, the English School accepts relativism's understanding of rationality as varying from culture to culture, as well as its reluctance to apply scientific techniques to international relations uncritically, without considering the human, social and historical aspects of international politics. It should be noted here that Marsh and Furlong's version of realism is the critical variety of realism, as opposed to the positivist realism referred to by Potter. My argument is that the English School meets Marsh and Furlong's criteria for a critical sort of realist epistemology.

(iii) Methodology

Traditionally, the English School has been associated with historical, interpretive analysis that shies away from scientific methods. Robert Jackson and Georg Sorenson describe Bull's methodology as the "classical approach", which, according to them, has no "explicit methodology in the scientific meaning of the term." They explain that the classical approach requires the researcher to immerse him or herself in the subject matter, thoughtfully reflecting upon it, rather than testing hypotheses and using a formal research apparatus.[29]

However, Bull puts forth arguments in favour of a historical understanding of international relations, while simultaneously rejecting the idea that international relations should be studied solely through historical lenses. He recognises the value of formulating and investigating assumptions, which can be viewed as a positivist project. While criticising the rigid application of scientific standards to international relations research, Bull concedes that the scientific approach to international relations has produced "an awareness of and sensitivity about the methodological standing of [. . .] propositions."[30]

More recently, English School researchers such as Buzan and Little have argued that the school offers methodological pluralism. Little argues that the three levels of analysis in the English School framework – the international system, international society and world society – are associated with the three methodological approaches of positivism, interpretivism and critical theory respectively.[31]

This contemporary explication of the English School's methodology sits comfortably with Marsh and Furlong's description of a realist methodological approach to social science, which, they argue, is accepting of both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. They contend that this is because a realist methodology not only accepts the existence of a real world at an ontological level, but also recognises that outcomes are influenced by social phenomena. Consequently, critical realists are sceptical about using purely quantitative data, lest it be manipulated by vested interests.[32]

During a lecture on critical realism delivered to students at Lancaster University in 2013, Andrew Sayer asserted that social science requires both interpretive understanding and causal analysis, which seems relevant to the English School, as it seeks to interpret events by delving into their historical context, while also remaining cognisant of the power dynamics

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[28] Marsh & Furlong, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[29] Jackson & Sorenson, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
[30] Bull, "International Relations as an Academic Pursuit", pp. 253-57.
[31] Buzan, *loc. cit.*; Little, *loc. cit.*
[32] Marsh & Furlong, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

that cause political phenomena at a systemic level. In spite of the common association of the English School with an interpretivist methodology, its positivist concern with causal factors at the systemic level, as well as its critical exploration of alternatives to the current state-based world order, reveal a critical realist eclecticism in the school's methodology.

III. Applications for a Study of Terrorist Deradicalisation Programmes

The implications of applying the English School's theoretical framework to terrorist deradicalisation programmes are many. The English School's exhortation to seek to remain detached from the object of study, while acknowledging one's own subjectivity and its normative stance in favour of supporting international co-operation to work towards the establishment of world society, are relevant to the topic at hand. However, this section will begin by building on the discussion in the preceding section, considering the implications of the English School's ideas about rational actors versus sentient human beings. In addition, it will reflect on the consequences of the preceding discussion on methodological issues for the study of terrorist deradicalisation.

(i) Rationality

Bull's critique of positivist assumptions about actor rationality has important consequences for research on international terrorism that uses the English School as a theoretical framework. As Buzan and Lene Hansen point out, the terrorist attacks that struck the United States on 11 September 2001 triggered questions about actor rationality within international security studies, and suicidal terrorists started to be conceptualised as irrational, non-state actors who did not neatly fit in to the analytical framework constructed by the dominant neo-realist theory of international security studies. The events of September 2001 sparked off theorising by poststructuralists and constructivists, who problematised the assumption of actor rationality made by neo-realism by discussing the important role played by emotion.[33]

From an English School perspective, as noted earlier, Bull asserts that a security analyst's conception of what constitutes rational action is a judgement on the analyst's part about the action that would ordinarily be taken in such a situation, and points out that an analyst might reach a mistaken conclusion about what normal action would be if he or she was not familiar with the country being studied.[34] This is significant for research on terrorism and radicalism. The common perception that terrorists are irrational seems to be based on the assumption that a rational person would be self-interested and hence would not conduct a suicide attack or even join an outlawed terrorist group. This assumption of self-interest may be behind analyses that focus on links between poverty and radicalisation.[35] However, as Alexander Lee points out,

> most individual-level studies of terrorist groups have concluded that these groups are composed
> of people who are wealthier and better educated than the average member of the societies from
> which they recruit.[36]

A perusal of some of the key radical Islamist literature that has influenced militants reveals a framework of reasoning based on its own assumptions. For instance, Qutb presents the argument that because Islam says Muhammad is the prophet of the only god, Islam is the only path to god. He quotes from the Qur'an:

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[33] B Buzan & L Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, pp. 228-45.
[34] Bull, *op. cit.*, p. 259.
[35] See, for example, SMA Zaidi, "The Poverty-Radicalisation Nexus in Pakistan", *Global Crime*, Vol. 11 (4), 2010, pp. 399-420.
[36] A Lee, "Who Becomes a Terrorist? Poverty, Education, and the Origins of Violence", *World Politics*, Vol. 63 (2), 2011, p. 203.

> Those who believe fight for the sake of God. And those who disbelieve fight for the sake of idols. Fight then the followers of Satan, surely the guild of Satan is but feeble. (Qur'an 4:76).

He explains that Allah "has established only one cause for killing – when there is no other recourse – and that is striving for the sake of God (jihad)."[37] Thus, Qutb's support for violence in the name of God is based on an epistemology that is presumably different from that of the security analyst, since its answer to the epistemological question of 'how do we know what we know' is that knowledge is contained in the Qur'an and *sunna* (traditions of the prophet). Qutb's argument is presented in the language of reason, but his assumptions are different from those of many Western academics.

The arguments developed by Qutb, and others of similar thought,[38] in favour of violent action in the cause of Islam meet Bull's criteria of rational action; namely action that "is internally consistent and consistent with given goals."[39] Hence, an English School analysis of terrorism would conceptualise Islamist radical violence as operating in an alternative rational framework based on its own assumptions and epistemology. This would validate the use of religious counselling by moderate clerics in several terrorist deradicalisation programmes. For if extremists are rational, then it is reasonable to seek to convince them of an alternative interpretation of their religion, using logic that is, again, based on an Islamic epistemology.

(ii) Emotion

The question of rationality also raises the problem of emotions being left out of the equation in traditional positivist research. This issue has been taken up by poststructuralists and constructivists, but only touched upon fleetingly by the English School, when Buzan praises the school's introduction of the social element to realism's raw anarchy, pointing out that people are sentient beings affected by identity and perceptions, as well as rules and norms.[40] Bull's problematising of rationality and Buzan's hinting at political actors being sentient and hence having feelings and emotions that complicate political analyses, open the way for a contribution to English School theory that introduces emotional factors into the reckoning.

Saudi Arabia's deradicalisation programme, which is considered to be one of the more successful ones, employs psychological counselling and art therapy alongside religious counselling.[41] Meanwhile, an article by Kershaw indicates that some of the people who are attracted to terrorist groups have undergone traumatic experiences as children, and the process of becoming radicalised tends to involve feelings of victimisation and alienation.[42] The philosophical assumptions of an English School understanding of terrorist deradicalisation could include a cognisance of the relevance of emotions to terrorism. Indeed, it might be possible to draw on relevant work from other social science disciplines, such as Margaret Wetherell's *Affect and Emotion*,[43] Nadia Dabbagh's *Suicide in Palestine*,[44] Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*[45] and Thomas Scheff's *Bloody Revenge*[46], to inform international relations' understanding of the emotional aspects of terrorism. Furthermore, the school could borrow from prior work carried out by constructivist and poststructuralist international

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[37] S Qutb, *This Religion of Islam*, Almanar Press, Palo Alto, 1967, p. 87.

[38] SAA Maududi, *Jihad in Islam*, 2nd ed., Islamic Publications, Lahore, 1978, pp. 5-7.

[39] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, pp. 125-26.

[40] Buzan, *loc. cit.*

[41] DC Rapoport, "Foreword", in T Bjorgo & J Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, Routledge, London, 2009, p. x; M Porges, *The Saudi Deradicalisation Experiment*, Council on Foreign Relations, 2010, retrieved 26 February 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/radicalization-and-extremism/saudi-deradicalization-experiment/p21292>.

[42] S Kershaw, "The Terrorist Mind: An Update", *The New York Times*, 9 January 2010.

[43] M Wetherell, *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding*, SAGE Publications, London, 2012.

[44] NT Dabbagh, *Suicide in Palestine: Narratives of Despair*, Hurst, London, 2005.

[45] S Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2004.

[46] TJ Scheff, *Bloody Revenge: Emotions, Nationalism, and War*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1994.

relations scholars on terrorism and emotion as it develops its own interpretation of this area of study.

(iii) Method Selection

While the English School has traditionally been viewed as a classical approach that prefers historical interpretation to other methods, recent work by Buzan and Little has sought to refute this claim, drawing attention to the school's methodological pluralism.[47] Meanwhile, Barak Mendelsohn has argued in favour of clearly laying out and testing hypotheses to bridge the gap between English School theory and the predilection among American international relations scholars for positivist methods.[48]

This paper's argument that the English School espouses a critical realist methodology throws light on this debate. During his talk on critical realism, Sayer drew attention to the paradigm's pragmatic approach to method selection. If the English School is to be consistent with its critical realist philosophical foundations, this would lend weight to Buzan, Little and Mendelsohn's advocacy of a broader understanding of the school's research methods than a simple conflation of the school with historical interpretation. Thus, a study of terrorist deradicalisation programmes might combine quantitative and qualitative research methods by considering the recidivism rates of such programmes, as well as conducting interviews and ethnographic research at terrorist rehabilitation centres.

(iv) Objectivity and Emancipation

This paper's view that the English School has a critical realist ontology and epistemology has implications for the treatment of objectivity with respect to studying terrorist deradicalisation. Sayer explained at his lecture on critical realism that the concept of objectivity has three distinct meanings: first, it can mean that "things [are] as they are regardless of whether we understand them"; secondly, it relates to knowledge being true, or at least practically adequate; and lastly, it signifies knowledge that is value-free. For Sayer, the first two definitions hold from a critical realist perspective, but the third is "nonsensical".

The English School asserts that values exist and exert an influence on social research. Nevertheless, it takes a moderate stand by refusing to completely discard the traditional aim of maintaining objectivity and detachment. It calls upon the researcher to aim to keep an academic distance from his or her research, while also recognising his or her own values and subjecting them to critical scrutiny.[49] This seems compatible with critical realism's position as spelt out by Sayer.

This scrutiny of one's own values is of special importance when studying a controversial, tricky subject such as terrorism. The United Nations has struggled to come up with a definition of terrorism as a result of disagreement between Western and Third World countries over whether violent national liberation movements ought to have legitimacy, which highlights the place of values and perspective in analyses of terrorism.[50]

Meanwhile, there is an inherent tension in the English School between its normative stance and its apparent discouragement of academics pursuing policy relevance.[51] In *The Anarchical Society*, Bull avers that "inquiry has its own morality, and is necessarily subversive of political institutions and movements of all kinds, good as well as bad", insisting

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[47] Buzan, *loc. cit.*; Dunne, *loc. cit.*; Little, *loc. cit.*
[48] B Mendelsohn, "English School, American Style: Testing the Preservation-Seeking Quality of the International Society", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 15 (2), 2009, pp. 291-318.
[49] Bull, *op. cit.*; Dunne, *loc. cit.*
[50] P Romaniuk, *Multilateral Counter-Terrorism: The Global Politics of Cooperation and Contestation*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2010, pp. 38-39.
[51] Dunne, *loc. cit.*

that his "purpose in writing this book is not to prescribe solutions or to canvass the merits of any particular vision of world order or any particular path that might lead to it."[52] However, this seems to be at odds with his assertion later on that

> it is surely the duty of all intelligent and sensitive persons, however conscious they may be of the obstacles standing in the way of the emergence of [...] a world society or community, to recognise its desirability and dedicate themselves to work for it.[53]

This tension is also apparent in Dunne's work. Whereas his article 'The English School' states that pursuing political influence is a strict no-no for English School authors, elsewhere he includes praxeological questions that seek to advise political leaders as a valid English School research agenda, while acknowledging that such questions have "a marginal presence in the classical English School literature."[54]

This contradiction flows from the school's attempt to strike a balance between recognising values and norms and yet remaining detached. While different theorists may lean towards one or the other side depending on their preference, being cognisant of this philosophical issue should be of value to English School theorists and help them to strike a balance that works for them and their areas of research. For a subject such as terrorist deradicalisation programmes, which is both of considerable interest to policy makers and firmly based in the practice of counterterrorism, it seems difficult to conceive of a research question that does not include a practical, policy-relevant aspect.

IV. Conclusion

To sum up, this paper has argued that the English School theory of international relations has a critical realist ontology, epistemology and methodology. It has considered the implications of these critical realist philosophical underpinnings of the English School for research on prison-based terrorist rehabilitation centres, exploring the questions of rationality, emotion, research method and objectivity. Further research could apply the conclusion of this paper, that the English School has a critical realist philosophical perspective, to other international relations topics.

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[52] H Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th ed., Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2012, p. xxxvii.
[53] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 1st ed., p. 289.
[54] Dunne, *loc. cit.*; T Dunne, "New Thinking On International Society", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 3 (2), 2001, p. 225.

Is it Possible for a Theory of Meaning to Avoid Both Psychologism and Behaviourism?

Madeleine Hyde

ABSTRACT

One of the most general and fundamental tasks for a philosopher of language is to account for our understanding of one another's utterances, such that we can uphold there can be genuine communication between speakers of a language (and, of course, allowing for the possibility of successful translation between different languages). To accomplish this, philosophers of language, particularly in the late 20th century, have first endeavoured to outline a theory of meaning, beginning with the criteria necessary for any such theory. Examples of such an undertaking from Michael Dummett and John McDowell are the focus of the present essay. As I will illuminate, with good reason, both attempt to do so without their theory depending on, or collapsing into a form of psychologism or behaviourism about meaning. What this task entails, why it is important, and whether or not either philosopher is successful, will be the topic of this essay.

I. Introduction

If somebody utters that *P*, how can I know that what they mean is equivalent to what I understand of *P*? One response might be to say that the significance of the thought that *P* is an inaccessible aspect of the speaker's mind. This, crudely, amounts to a position characteristic of psychologism. On the other hand, I might answer that the meaning of *P* is manifested in the speaker's behaviour: I can deduce the meaning from *how* they utter *P*, and the context surrounding the speaker's choice of words. In this case, my answer would be along the lines of that of the behaviourist.

The above only amounts to a rough sketch of the two positions. In §II of this essay I explicate the psychologism and behaviourism of language in further depth. I will look at the problems that arise from adopting a behaviouristic or psychologistic approach, to see why any theory of meaning should endeavour to avoid either position. In §III and IV, I will outline two opposing accounts for how we should formulate a theory of meaning, from Michael Dummett and John McDowell respectively. I will assess whether or not each theory is capable of avoiding both psychologism and behaviourism. As I will demonstrate, Dummett's theory fails to do so. However, McDowell, in his response to Dummett, manages to formulate a theory of meaning in which both psychologism and behaviourism are absent. Therefore, given that McDowell's theory has successfully managed to do so, we can avoid psychologism and behaviourism in a theory of meaning.

II. Psychologism and Behaviourism

My aim for this section, in providing a sketch of what it is to have either a psychologistic or behaviouristic conception of language, is to illuminate how each position presents difficulties for any theory of meaning. In such a theory, we want there to be a case of genuine communication in a commonly understood language between the speakers and the listeners. I hope to illuminate why it would be a worthwhile project for anyone creating a theory of meaning to avoid a psychologistic or behaviouristic conception of language in their theory.

I turn first to psychologism. Broadly speaking, psychologism is the position that one might adopt if one sees philosophical problems as essentially part of the study of psychology.

In the context of the philosophy of language, this might involve describing thoughts, or concepts, as purely psychological entities. At a first glance, that does not seem to be a wholly unreasonable claim. While sat on a train, for example, I can entertain the thought that "the man sat opposite me is ugly" without verbalising it. My thought then remains within the private and wholly inaccessible realm that is my mind. However, suppose that I then share this thought verbally with the person sat next to me. Does the meaning of my utterance still lie in my thought, as a mental entity? Moreover, if so, how could we account for this exchange being a genuine case of communication?

I think it is fairly intuitive that if the person sat next to me can understand what it is I want to say in uttering those particular words in that particular syntactical order, what we are sharing here is the meaning of the sentence. But on a psychologistic reading of this scenario, the meaning of my utterance is at least determined by my psychological states, which are inaccessible mental entities. If so, what does communication actually amount to in this case? As McDowell puts it: "the significance of [the speaker's] utterance is a subject for guesswork or speculation [on the listener's behalf] as to how things are in a private sphere concealed behind their behaviour."[1]

Given that we want to be able to explain how one can understand the meaning of another person's utterance without this being merely an inference, we can see how a psychologistic conception of language presents problems for any theory of meaning with such an aim. As an alternative to psychologism, one might seek a behaviouristic explanation, in which the meaning of an utterance lies in the speaker's behaviour. Behaviourism, generally, is the theory that a mental state just *is* the behaviour, or pattern of behaviours, that a person typically displays in a given situation. On a behaviouristic conception of meaning, we deduce our understanding of a speaker's meaning from an analysis of their behaviour. As in psychologism, the meaning itself still lies in the thought, a mental state. However, given that a mental state *just is* a behavioural state, the thought is *not* inaccessible, but is displayed in the behaviour of the speaker.

So why might one not want to be a behaviourist about language? As with psychologism, all a listener can do with regards to understanding the meaning of the sentence spoken, or sharing in the speaker's thought (if, indeed, they can come to understand each other) is make an *inference* from their behaviour. This is an insufficient basis on which to claim knowledge of another speaker's meaning. Moreover, we have to assume that the speaker's utterance being a case of such-and-such behaviour always means that they have the thought that, or mean to say that such-and-such. One could object that a speaker's behaviour might not always accurately convey what they actually wanted to say. We need to be able to account for misunderstanding: the force or tone a speaker uses, for example, could misrepresent the thought that they were entertaining when formulating the sentence. For the behaviourist, this behaviour nevertheless demonstrates what the speaker meant, despite it conflicting with the intentions behind their speech act.

This line of argument begs the question by making a distinction between the thought as a mental state and the thought as manifested in a person's behaviour: in behaviourism, they are one and the same. However, I think that there is a valid objection to behaviourism that emerges from this discussion. When we experience an asymmetry between our mental formulation of a sentence and what we actually say, the identity relation between our thoughts as mental states and our speech acts as behavioural states breaks down. It is a fairly common phenomenon to find, on reflection, that what we actually said conflicts with the thought that

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[1] J McDowell, "Anti-Realism and the Epistemology of Understanding", in H Parret & J Bouveresse (eds.) *Meaning and Understanding*, Gruyter, Berlin, 1981, p. 225.

we wanted to express by doing so. A behaviouristic picture of language cannot account for this phenomenon.

Behaviourism, then, like psychologism, is something that one should avoid in formulating a theory of meaning for a language. In the following two sections, I will look at the accounts given by Dummett and McDowell for how we ought to formulate such a theory of meaning. In each case, I will assess whether or not they manage to avoid relying on psychologistic and behaviouristic pictures of language.

III. Dummett's "Full-Blooded" Account of a Theory of Meaning

In this section I will look at Dummett's conception of what a theory of meaning should look like. I will outline his account, which essentially emerges from a critique of modest conceptions of meaning, and theories with a notion of truth-conditions at their core. I will then look at to what extent, if at all, Dummett's idea for a theory of meaning successfully avoids both behaviourism and psychologism.

In "What is a Theory of Meaning?" Dummett argues against a modest conception of a theory of meaning. A modest theory is one in which no account is given of the concepts (as the determinants of the thoughts that sentences containing the associated words can express) that the "primitive terms of a language" express.[2] Dummett asks instead for a "full-blooded" account[3] in which the concepts we use can be explained "as from the outside."[4] This is asking for an analysis of the concepts that goes beyond a description of the object language in its equivalent meta-language (as in a Tarski-style T-theorem *'Snow is white' iff snow is white*) or a description of the object language using semantically equivalent predicates from the "background language."[5] As soon as we begin to analyse the concepts involved in a language beyond exchanging words for their synonyms, we no longer have a modest account of meaning for a language.

As Dummett sets out in his conclusion to "What is a Theory of Meaning?", he is seeking a theory of meaning that gives an explicit account of what someone must know to know the meaning of an expression, and what this knowledge consists in. In "What is a Theory of Meaning? (II)", Dummett says that the sort of theory of meaning that could meet such requirements is one that has the notions of verification and justification at its core, rather than truth-conditions. A theory that is centred around truth-conditions, in Dummett's terms, should have at its centre a theory of reference, in the form of axioms which govern the reference of individual words, such that we know under what conditions an utterance would be true or false. This theory of reference would be surrounded by a theory of sense, which tells us what the speaker's knowledge of the reference of words consists in. In order to see why Dummett rejects the idea that truth-conditions should be at the core of a theory of meaning, we need to see what potential problems this picture presents.

If what a speaker can know, or at least understand, about the meaning of a sentence consists in knowing whether or not its truth-conditions obtain, we are confronted with a problem when it comes to sentences for which this is not, even theoretically, possible. Sentences that use a universal quantifier over an infinite domain, for example, or whose truth-conditions refer "to regions of space-time in principle inaccessible to us",[6] are beyond any speaker's practical ability to know their truth-value. If the truth-conditions of such "undecidable" sentences did obtain, it is unlikely that we would even be capable of

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[2] M Dummett, **"What is a Theory of Meaning?"**, in S Guttenplan (ed.), *Mind and Language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1975, p. 102.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] J McDowell, "In Defence of Modesty", in B Taylor (ed.), *Michael Dummett, Contributions to Philosophy*, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, 1987.
[5] J McDowell, "Another Plea for Modesty" in R Heck (ed.), *Language, Thought and Logic*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, p. 105.
[6] M Dummett, "What is a Theory of Meaning (II)" in *Seas of Language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 46.

recognising them. As an alternative, Dummett suggests that it is our verification of a sentence that gives us a basis on which to judge its truth-value. As Dummett puts it, his verificationist theory explains the meaning of our sentences "in terms of actual human capacities for the recognition of truth."[7] The meaning of a sentence is something of a judgment based on the evidence presented before us on hearing or reading it. The truth-value of a sentence is something that can emerge from our verification of it, but is not solely what its meaning consists in.

Can this theory of meaning avoid a psychologistic or behaviouristic conception of language? According to Dummett's verificationist picture of a theory of meaning, we need to make a judgment in order to determine the meaning of a sentence. Being able to make such a judgment is a practical ability that a language user possesses, which Dummett explains as our "implicit knowledge" that comes with being competent with a language. Dummett's notion of a speaker's "implicit knowledge" of a language is problematic for a theory of meaning, as McDowell argues, given it is essentially behaviouristic and has psychologistic consequences (which, as we concluded in §II, should be avoided). For this reason, I will now turn to McDowell's criticism of Dummett's notion of "implicit knowledge" to illuminate how it brings behaviourism into Dummett's theory. Moreover, McDowell's criticism demonstrates why deriving a speaker's meaning from their behaviour cannot actually tell us anything conclusive about their understanding of a language.

As an example, Dummett explains how a speaker might demonstrate implicit knowledge of what "square" means. Dummett explains that this knowledge consists in, "at the very least", being "able to discriminate between things that are square and those that are not."[8] We can ascribe this ability to a person who "will, on occasion, treat square things differently from things that are not square."[9] McDowell argues that this "would also be equally good manifestation of an indefinite amount of implicit knowledge."[10] We could reinterpret the implicit knowledge that enables us to discriminate between square objects and not-square objects as allowing us to discriminate between a square and *any* given object.

This is unreasonable knowledge to attribute to any finite being, as the consequences of Wittgenstein's rule-following argument can be taken to demonstrate. In Wittgenstein's picture, rule-following is such that from the outside looking in, we can always reinterpret the behaviour of those following the rules. If I begin to write up a number sequence "2, 4, 6, 8…" you might deduce that I am following a pattern of even numbers, but you could not conclusively know this. I could introduce a term that requires the rules to be entirely reinterpreted. There is no fact of the matter about my behaviour then, other than that I appear to be applying a rule, correctly or incorrectly, as I mean to carry on. McDowell uses Wittgenstein's sceptical conclusion to substantiate his claim that Dummett is wrong to think that we can know from someone's behaviour that they know what square means. There will always be room to reinterpret their pattern of behaviour as a manifestation of another kind of implicit knowledge.

So, according to Dummett's picture, the speaker's ability to apply a predicate correctly or incorrectly demonstrates whether or not they understand its meaning. This ability is manifested in their behaviour, and therefore Dummett's theory relies on behaviourism. McDowell also thinks that Dummett's picture of a theory of meaning has psychologistic consequences. In Dummett's conception of language, according to McDowell, the "mental aspect of speech" (which McDowell also calls the sense of the utterance) lies "behind the linguistic behaviour."[11] However, I think that this is an unfair criticism, as it relies on the

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[8] M Dummett, "What do I Know when I Know a Language?" in *Seas of Language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 98.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] McDowell, *op. cit.*, 1987, pp. 65-66.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

assumption that behaviourism is false. McDowell is right that Dummett's explanation of how we demonstrate our implicit knowledge of a concept relies on a behaviouristic conception of meaning and understanding. Given that in behaviourism the thought as a mental state and the utterance as a behavioural state are identical, to say that the mental aspect of language is hidden behind the behaviour is to contradict this, by already treating them as distinct. McDowell's criticism, therefore, begs the question: we have to assume that behaviourism (and thus Dummett's theory) is wrong to be able to see Dummett's theory as also being psychologistic.

While it is not necessarily psychologistic, we can see how Dummett's "full-blooded" account of a theory of meaning nevertheless fails to avoid *both* psychologism and behaviourism, given that the notion of "implicit knowledge" is a behaviouristic one. In the next section, I will turn to the theory McDowell forwards as a response to Dummett, which aims to avoid both psychologism and behaviourism. If it can successfully do so, this would enable me to answer affirmatively that there exists a theory of meaning that is able to avoid both psychologism and behaviourism.

IV. McDowell's Modest Account for a Theory of Meaning

In his paper "In Defence of Modesty" McDowell responds to Dummett's claim that a modest account of a theory of meaning is insufficient to properly account for how we understand an utterance in a language. A primary motivation for McDowell's defence of a modest conception of a theory of meaning is that, as he sees it, it can stand without appealing to either psychologism or behaviourism. McDowell argues that when we adopt a modest account of a theory of meaning, the senses of utterances are no longer hidden behind them (in a psychologistic sense) but "lie open to view",[12] because we can put our thoughts into words. For example, the thought that some tabletops are square can literally be heard in the utterance "some table-tops are square" by those who understand the words. In McDowell's terms, this enables the speaker to "put their own minds into those words."[13] This is possible because modest theories are homophonic, which means that the object language sounds the same as the metalanguage. This is because, albeit for different functions, they employ the same words. The contents of utterances are present, but not beneath the words: they are perceptible to those who understand the language.

According to a modest theory, we recognise the meaning of the sentences like "some table tops are square" because, as competent speakers, our understanding of the language entails that we are already familiar with the theorems that govern how such syntactical combinations can be understood. The theorem for this example could be: "'some table tops are square' is true iff some table tops are square" (we might be able to spell out) "some" as an existential statement, such that if some object fulfils both being a table and having a square top, then the sentence is true). As McDowell argues, it is because we have not had to go outside of the content here that this theory can stand without appeal to psychologism or behaviourism. It is in going outside of the content that Dummett goes wrong.

Is McDowell right that a modest theory is a better solution, and that it successfully avoids both behaviourism and psychologism? Certainly, his idea that the meaning of an utterance "lies open to view" ensures that there is no psychologism in this picture, as the meaning of an utterance is accessible to listeners rather residing in the speaker's thought. How can the meaning "lie open to view" without it being solely manifested in a speaker's behaviour, then? The answer, I think, lies in the fact that the listener also has to be competent with the language for the utterance to have significance. When the speaker and the listener

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[13] *Ibid.*

both have the theorems of their language (or indeed to translate between languages) at their disposal, as a competent speaker does in a Davidsonian picture of linguistic interpretation, they are no longer making an inference based on a speaker's behaviour. Instead, what the listener does is *perceive* the meaning of the utterance.

Perception, for McDowell, is to an extent dependent upon the conditions of the perceiver. For example, the way in which I perceive things might depend on *what I know*. To use an example from visual perception, how I perceive a Tudor house relies to a degree on the fact that I am familiar with Tudor architecture. In this scenario, my knowledge of Tudor architecture allows me to place the object before me in this historical, architectural context. Otherwise, while it is still actually a Tudor house that I see before me, I would not be capable of recognising this fact, and thus categorising my perception this way. What I would see would be a house that could have been built in any historical era, as far as I am concerned.

In a linguistic context, this notion of perception illuminates the significance of the listener's role. They are not just hearing a combination of words from which they must form their idea of the speaker's meaning based on either an inference from what their behaviour displays or an amount of guesswork of what private mental meaning lies behind their words. The fact that the speaker and listener are both competent with a language, or that the listener can successfully translate the speaker's language, rather, is what enables them to access to the speaker's meaning. The fact that we share a common understanding of a language means that on hearing a speaker utter sentence S that is true in language L, we can attribute knowledge to the speaker of the fact that this sentence is true in L. Moreover, on this basis we can know that this is what the speaker meant by uttering S. This, I think, is how the idea of the meaning of an utterance lying open to view in a modest conception of a theory of meaning allows us to formulate such a theory while successfully avoiding both psychologism and behaviourism.

Before concluding this, I will deal with a potential objection from Dummett to McDowell's defence of a modest conception of a theory of meaning. Dummett argues that those who adopt a modest theory of meaning, with the aims of avoiding psychologistic and behaviouristic consequences, fail to do so because there are still elements of psychologism present in such a theory. As a modest account of a theory of meaning refuses to explain the contents of an object language "as from the outside", Dummett argues that such theories leave this task to a prior and independent theory of thought.[14] Dummett's criticism is that such a theory of thought would lead to a psychologistic conception of language because it treats language as a code for thought. If we cannot explain the meaning of the contents of a language "from the outside", as Dummett sees it, then we must explain them from the inside. On this conception of language, the meaning would lie in the thought. For this reason, Dummett argues that we can only avoid a psychologistic conception of language by rejecting modesty altogether.

McDowell, of course, is adamant that language is *not* a code for thought. If we think of language as a code for thought, how we understand other people's utterances becomes something of a hypothesis.[15] This would not be sufficient to count as a genuine case of communication. Thus, we have to reject the idea that language is a code for thought, and replace it instead with the idea that the meaning of our utterances lies open to view in our use of language. How can we spell this out without beginning to analyse the concepts in non-analytic ways? In speech acts, as McDowell describes them, no analysis is necessary for the competent speaker. If we understand the language (or can at least translate it into one with which we are familiar with the axioms and theorems governing meaning), on hearing the words uttered, we pick up on the concepts that the speaker is using just in virtue of knowing that they said *that P*. This is no hypothesis, and yet we have not had to go outside of the

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[14] Dummett, *op. cit.*, 1996.
[15] *Ibid.*

content in order to explain exactly how it is expressed in the language. Therefore, we have been able to keep to a modest view in this explanation. A modest account of a theory of meaning, like McDowell's, then, can indeed explain how we understand each other's utterances, and how they come to have meaning in the first place, without collapsing into either psychologism or behaviourism.

V. Conclusion

As previously discussed, psychologism and behaviourism are positions we should endeavour to avoid in any theory of meaning for a language. This is because in both positions the meaning of a sentence remains in the speaker's thought, an inaccessible mental entity. At best, we can only infer the meaning of an utterance from the speaker's behaviour. This is something that both McDowell and Dummett have sought to avoid in their theories, albeit by very different methods. Dummett, as previously argued, is unsuccessful in this project. McDowell's response, by contrast, avoids such consequences by restricting the notion of speaker ability to the idea that if the speaker knows, for any given sentence, that "*S is true iff p*", then they are competent with a language. This competence, for McDowell, will "lie open to view" in their utterances. How this is possible is elucidated by McDowell's ideas on perception: on hearing an utterance in a language we are competent with, we literally perceive the meaning of the sentence. When we characterise meaning and understanding this way, we can see a midpoint between behaviourism and psychologism that avoids either position. By endorsing a modest conception, backed by a realist epistemology of understanding, I can answer affirmatively that it *is* possible for a theory of meaning to avoid psychologism and behaviourism, as the conception of a theory of meaning as outlined by McDowell demonstrates.

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