

From *Die Neuzeitliche Metaphysikkritik (The New Times Critique of Metaphysics)* by Panagiotis (Panajotis) Kondylis, the Concluding or Final Remark/Comment/Observation (pp. 559-561 (German edition) = v. 2, pp. 249-252 (Greek edition (*Η κριτική τῆς Μεταφυσικῆς στῆ Νεότερη Σκέψη*)); v. 2 = Part IV, Sections 1-5, translated from the German into Greek by Μιχάλης Παπανικολάου (Michalis Papanikolaou) (Parts I – III (= v. 1) in Greek are by P.K. himself)).

Translated from the German (with consultation of the Greek translation) into English by C.F., ©, June 2019.

“

5. Concluding Remark (Final Comment or Observation)

Since the Enlightenment, time and again, the decline and the death, or conversely, the survival and the inexhaustible force and strength of metaphysics was ascertained, in relation to which diagnosis, and pious or sanctimonious prognosis, were not separated from each other. Whether now these diagnoses and prognoses turned out in favour of metaphysics or against it, common to them was the undifferentiated talk of “metaphysics” and the overlooking of the great variety of the factual, historically attested language use/usage [[as regards the term “metaphysics”]]. Behind them, as a rule, stood the will of identifying either metaphysics in general with one’s own metaphysical position, and to protect and shield oneself from every “falsification, distortion or adulteration”, or else, to hold metaphysical aberration exclusively against the (i.e. one’s) intellectual(-spiritual) opponent, and through that, acquit, clear, absolve and exonerate oneself from that (metaphysical aberration). The reduction of metaphysics in general to a certain type of metaphysical thinking has, therefore, served normative perceptions and views about the tasks and duties of intellectual(-spiritual) activity and polemical intentions. Descriptively, the question and problem as regards the life or death of metaphysics cannot be answered or responded to, if we do not bear in mind the entire spectrum of

phenomena pertaining to the history of ideas, which, on each and every respective occasion, was called “metaphysics”, without wanting to become fixated on an allegedly “genuine, true or real” concept of metaphysics; in regard to that, though, we see [[it]] confirmed by the ascertainment that ambiguity (or the existence of multiple meanings) in the matter and in the nomenclature (of metaphysics) had existed already since Aristotle; in the New Times, it (the ambiguity) grew only as the result of the pressure under which traditional metaphysics came. From this point of view, it turns out that the concept of metaphysics unconstrainedly survived the metaphysics of Transcendence, and in fact experienced, on the terrain of a godless (i.e. atheistic) Immanence, an (epistemological) revival in recent decades. The tying or binding of the concept of metaphysics to Transcendence in the sense of the old From There (i.e. That World or Life) or “real Is/Being” is, therefore, not obligatory or constitutive – but its tying or binding to the Supra-empirical remains obligatory and constitutive, i.e. to that which is not directly found (discovered or encountered) by any (sensorial) experience ((sinnliche) Erfahrung), and also cannot be unobjectionably or impeccably confirmed or rejected by any (sensorial) experience, regardless of whether it is here a matter of God, of a world formula or of general theories or hypotheses. The extensive, far-reaching or principal/main identification of the Supra-empirical with the Transcendent or the From There (i.e. That World or Life) was unavoidable during long (i.e. for many) centuries, because Transcendence fulfilled normative tasks, duties, functions and missions. From the moment at which the inner-worldly (i.e. of this world) authorities (or tiers of jurisdiction) undertook, assumed or took over not only de facto, but also nominally, the determination and definition of norms, which are supposed or ought to regulate social life, the old Transcendence had to necessarily be dropped, discontinued, abolished and cease to exist, or fade and wither. If, nevertheless, the invocation of the Supra-empirical unabatedly continues to be called upon, made use and taken advantage of, and very often

called (i.e. as often as this appears – on the basis of (a) concrete polemical constellation – to be purposeful, expedient or imperative and necessary) “metaphysics”, then it (the said invocation of the Supra-empirical) must have causes which lie deeper than the (demonstrably, neither ubiquitous nor socially indispensable) desire for the From There (i.e. That World or Life).

Supra-empirical statements (or propositions) are made either for the founding and establishment of norms and values, or else, for the drawing up, putting forward or formulation of theories (be they scientific or not) with (a) general, i.e. universal claim of validity. In both cases, it is a matter of statements/propositions which – of their essence and nature – articulate a power claim, even if this appears more clearly in (regard to) normative statements and propositions: whoever represents and recommends norms, obviously wishes for the adapt(at)ion of the behaviour of other men to his own notions and representations of values, which of course are always passed off as the product of “Reason” etc.. However, also in the field or area of not (directly) ethical theory, the factor of power (i.e. the power factor) is no less crucial and decisive – and metaphysics has, after the collapse of traditional-value-related Transcendence, mainly to do with this theoretical field or area (i.e. of not (directly) ethical theory), whilst ethical reflection in the New Times was, in principle and programmatically, separated from science. Why it must be so, and in which manner theory must function under these circumstances, I have set out and explained in another work⁷¹⁷. Especially with regard to the problem of metaphysics, that is, with regard to supra-empirical statements and propositions, it is, in principle, to be grasped or recorded that without such statements and propositions, no theoretical generalisation on a broader basis, and also no interpretation of experience (i.e. the totality of a person's perceptions, feelings, and memories, or, empirical reality; *Erfahrung*), is possible. Interpretation of experience by an interested subject means, ipso facto, transendisation (i.e.

transcending; Transzendierung), sifting, sorting, shortening, curtailment, reduction and dilution, thinning of the same (experience), that is, its (experience's) subjection and subjugation to and under those points of view, in which the power claim of the theoretician as theoretician (i.e. as (a) member of a community, in which questions and problems of identity, and power struggles, are (re)solved or are dealt with by means of theoretical arguments) finds expression and is reflected, for particular reasons, in a certain situation. This handling or treatment of

⁷¹⁷ Macht und Entscheidung (= Power and Decision), esp. Ch. III; with particular consideration of the examination of the problem of knowledge (and science), [[see]] in: Wissenschaft, Macht und Entscheidung (Science, Power and Decision).

experience, which belongs, in terms of its essence, to theory, is accompanied by the striving for and after generalisation and universality, i.e. for and after the erection, building and establishment of a theoretical Whole. Therein, the power claim of the theoretician climaxes. Because from the point of view of a Whole, whose ideational axes must be products of world-theoretical decisions, the above-mentioned subjection and subjugation of experience is effected, takes place and ensues under (i.e. by way of) interpretation much more directly and simply. The Whole, consequently, becomes or turns into the epitome (embodiment or quintessence) of a theoretically organised subjective positioning towards (or vis-à-vis) the world question (or problem (in respect) of the world) – and recourse to the idea of a Whole is, again, necessary, because only from the standpoint of the Whole can ultimate questions be answered; and only he who can answer ultimate questions may raise his hopes (or give himself hope) for the pushing through and imposition of his perceptions and views in theoretical polemics.

By means of these remarks, comments and observations, we touch upon the essence of metaphysical thought: it is a matter of that ideational power claim which is manifested or manifests itself and appears in the drawing up, putting forward or formulation of a theoretical Whole on a supra-empirical basis or foundation – but with the promise that all, or maybe at least the, on each and every respective occasion – deemed-to-be-central – aspects of experience, are to be explained. From this perspective, we must not ascertain, prophesy or bewail, bemoan and lament the death of metaphysics: the power claim, from which it lives and is nourished, is just as much, or just as little, indestructible and resilient as socially living man himself. Conversely, those who express such ascertainments, prophecies or laments, should reveal and disclose about *which* metaphysics they talk on each and every respective occasion. The metaphysics of Transcendence was a form of it (i.e. metaphysics), which came into being and had an effect for a long time, because it corresponded to the character, the needs and the social function of the strata of theoreticians bearing it. In the new-times secularised societies, power claims, which were expressed by means of supra-empirical statements and propositions, had to, as a result of general world-theoretical radical change, overturning or revolution, seek another unfolding space or other space/room for development, which was – out of opposition to the old Transcendence – called immanent; hence, the concept of metaphysics survived the collapse of this latter (Transcendence). Whether the Transcendence in the old sense will come back into favour, we cannot know. Excluded is only that its (i.e. metaphysics’) source will ever dry up – that power claim, namely, which is articulated as the transendisation (i.e. transcending) of experience with regard to, and in view of, the drawing up, putting forward or formulation of a polemically effective (effectual) theoretical Whole.

”