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Disputes: The Incommensurable Greatness of Micro-Wars

Felipe G. A. Moreira

University of Miami, felipegustavomoreira@yahoo.com.br

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

DISPUTES:
THE INCOMMENSURABLE GREATNESS OF MICRO-WARS

By

Felipe G. A. Moreira

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2019

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
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DISPUTES:
THE INCOMMENSURABLE GREATNESS OF MICRO-WARS

Felipe G. A. Moreira

Approved:

Otávio Bueno, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
Chair of the Philosophy Department

Michael Slote, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
UST Professor of Ethics

Berit Brogaard, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
Director of the Brogaard Lab
for Multisensory Research

Mark Rowlands, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy

Markus Gabriel, Habilitation
Professor of Philosophy
University of Bonn

Guillermo Prado, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

MOREIRA, FELIPE G. A.

(Ph.D., Philosophy)

Disputes:

(May 2019)

The Incommensurable Greatness of Micro-Wars

Dissertation supervised by Professor Otávio Bueno.

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How is one to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes in metaphysics, such as the ones on whether there is evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness? This question drives this dissertation. In the introduction, that is, in chapter 1, it is argued that one is to react to the stated fact by adopting a conflictual craft. In proposing a reading of Pyrrho of Elis, it is argued that this craft is a synthesis of the skeptic craft and of the dogmatic one, and serves to formulate the metametaphysical system of disputes. In making cases for the claims that characterize this system and in seeking to spell out its pertinence to contemporary analytic and continental philosophy, the dissertation proceeds by, in chapter 2, articulating an interpretation of two projects that have not been carefully discussed in relation to one another: Friedrich Nietzsche's libertarian project of overcoming metaphysics and Rudolf Carnap's egalitarian project of overcoming metaphysics. In chapter 3, it is showed that continental philosophers have often been influenced by the former but ignored the latter, whereas analytic philosophers have constantly done the opposite. It is claimed, then, that one is to promote a synthesis of Nietzsche's and Carnap's projects. Chapter 4 argues that those, such as Aristotle, who have been neither exactly libertarians nor egalitarians have often resorted to "subtle" violence; a kind of violence that is not as upfront as corporeal ones, such as that of shooting someone. In criticizing "subtle" violence and addressing the works of Willard van Orman Quine,

Saul Kripke and Kit Fine, chapter 5 claims that disputes are micro-political conflicts, that is, they are micro-wars that may be approached from a right-wing allegedly apolitical stance or from a left-wing stance that seeks to show the political character of disputes. Chapter 6 makes a case for the left-wing approach in proposing a heterodox reading of Gilles Deleuze. In chapter 7, the dissertation's conclusion, it is argued that micro-wars have an incommensurable greatness because it seems impossible to measure persons' overall "amount" of emotions and/or time spent in dealing with disputes.

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I would like to thank my adviser, Otávio Bueno, for the likewise “incommensurable greatness” of his support. I believe that it was sometime around 2012-2013 that I started to think that it could be interesting to pursue the work done here, that is, to read in connection and to promote a synthesis of Friedrich Nietzsche’s and Rudolf Carnap’s projects of overcoming metaphysics. Otávio was the first professor who, back in the Fall of 2014, did not react with mockery, rudeness and/or some kind of not very “subtle” violence to the aim of turning this (at first, very rough) inclination of mine into an actual dissertation. I am extremely thankful to him for that as well as for his willingness to share with me his outstanding and extensive philosophical knowledge, his Pyrrhonian objections, his remarkable professional commitment to the task of advising me throughout these last four to five years and his patience to read and give valuable comments on all the versions of this dissertation. I am also extremely thankful to Otávio for having articulated Pyrrhonian works that show that Brazilian philosophers do not need to spend their whole careers overly paying respect to European and/or North American philosophers, without daring to articulate stances of their own. Especially because of my poetic works, I am considerably displeased with clichés. Nevertheless, I, after all, need to rely on a cliché, that is, to acknowledge that, without Otávio’s support, I do not think that I would have been able to write this dissertation, at least not in the USA and in the “left-wing way” that I did.

I also would like to thank the other members of my Ph.D. dissertation committee —Berit (“Brit”) Brogaard, Michael Slote, Mark Rowlands and Markus Gabriel —for their valuable comments, objections, support and open-mindedness toward my project. I am especially grateful to Brit for having shared with me her more empirical approach to

philosophy, and to Mark for our discussions, especially those on Gilles Deleuze and personhood. I am especially thankful to Michael for having spelled out to me his own views on open-mindedness and empathy in a way that has influenced me a lot, as I take that this very dissertation shows. I am also especially grateful to Markus for having discussed with me his views on the analytic-continental gap, while helping me to articulate a take of my own on such matter. In advising and helping me to apply to a DAAD short-term research grant, Markus also gave me the outstanding chance to work on the last details of this dissertation while visiting the University of Bonn. I am very grateful to him for this chance, which significantly changed this dissertation in making me more aware that (at least outside the USA) the “right-wing way” of doing philosophy is not as dominant as I once believed.

I also would like to thank Amie L. Thomasson, Christian J. Emden, Fernando Muniz, Fernando Ribeiro, Guido Imaguire and Todd May for the valuable feedback they provided on excerpts of this dissertation. From the Fall of 2013 up to the Fall of 2014, I took classes at the University of Miami with Susan Haack, Bradford Cokelet, Elijah L. Chudnoff, Nick Stang, Risto Hilpinen and Simon J. Evnine. I am grateful to these professors for having more or less directly helped me shape the views supported here, albeit mainly in reaction to theirs. I am also very thankful to the following professors with whom from 2006 to 2013 I took classes in Paris Nanterre University, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Boston College, Tufts University or Harvard Summer School: Daniel C. Dennett, David Lang, Eli Hirsch, Ethel Rocha, Jacques Martineau, Jody Azzouni, Marco Ruffino, Peter J. Kreeft, Ronald K. Tacelli, Stephen L. White, Vera Cristina de Andrade Bueno and William Wians; all of these professors have influenced the way I practice philosophy. I am also very grateful to

Steven F. Butterman for having invited me to attend his class on “queer poetry” in the Fall of 2018, and for having given me a quite unique chance: that of discussing, in a really inclusive context, my “metamodernist poetry”, while connecting this poetry of mine with the kind of philosophy supported in this dissertation, especially in the sixth chapter.

Throughout the years I worked in this dissertation, I presented excerpts of it at Federal Fluminense University, at the University of Miami’s *Philosophy Research Forum*, at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth’s public event, *Confronting Anti-Black Racism Through Transnational Activism and Scholarship*, at the University of Miami’s Modern Languages and Literature Graduate Conference, *Lands of Freedom? Oppressions, Subversions and Pursuits of Justice in a Changing World*, as well as at the Düsseldorf Graduate Workshop, *What Do We Do When We Do Metaphysics?* I would like to thank the organizers of these events for the chance to present my research, and all of those who attended and reacted to my presentations. I am also especially grateful to all of my students who attended the several classes I taught at the University of Miami from the Spring of 2015 up to the Fall of 2018. My belief is that my students made me much more aware of my “problematic starting points”, more tolerant regarding the views of “others”, and a more efficacious public speaker. I also would like to thank all the referees of philosophical journals to which I submitted papers, and who gave me interesting comments, objections, and/or indicated revisions. I am especially thankful to the referees of *Manuscrito*, *Nietzsche-Studien* and *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* who actually accepted to publish my work.

I am likewise grateful for the love and the emotional support of my parents and sister, Amanda Moreira. I also very thankful for Amanda’s comments on all the chapters

of this dissertation. Last, but not least, I would like to thank Irene Olivero for all her love, devotion, time, willingness and patience to philosophically discuss the issues addressed in this dissertation, even when I was not exactly sober and/or making sense. Thank you all!

PREFACE

In this dissertation, I systematically connect practically all the philosophical interests I have had, since I started to intensively care about philosophy more or less thirteen years ago, especially after I joined the Erasmus interchange program and visited Paris Nanterre University from 2006 to 2007. In spelling out my “left-wing approach” to disputes, the sixth chapter addresses the longest of these interests: the one I have had on the works of Gilles Deleuze, the first philosopher who really caught my attention, and inspired me to pursue a career in philosophy. Note that, back in 2008, I graduated from the social communication bachelor’s program of Federal Fluminense University, after submitting a monography on Deleuze. This dissertation’s sixth chapter, as well as a paper of mine that is to appear in *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* by the end of this year, are my ways to revise the views I held in this monograph in the light of the further philosophical studies I have pursued and the “metamodernist poetry” I have further articulated since then. Indeed, I dream that one day there will be an “ideal reader” of mine. This is someone who is interested and has the education to feel and understand that my poetic and philosophical works are deeply connected and reinforce one another.

Another quite long interest of mine is the one on Friedrich Nietzsche’s works. This is to explain why I published a few short articles on Nietzsche as well as, while pursuing and in the end earning my philosophy master’s degree from Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, wrote a master’s dissertation on Nietzsche’s take on the mind body problem and his views on health and disease. This took place from 2009 to 2011, while I also pursued and ultimately earned a philosophy bachelor’s degree from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. During these years, I also started to be interested in the analytic

interpreters of Nietzsche, and in analytic philosophy. This interest made me want to immigrate to the USA, and join Boston College's master program, whose consortium with Tufts University's program allowed me to take several classes on analytic philosophy. Indeed, from 2011 to 2013, "my Boston years", I primarily focused my studies on analytic philosophy. More importantly, the philosopher from this tradition who has interested me the most is Rudolf Carnap, as this very dissertation and my 2014 article published in *Manuscrito*, "An Apology of Carnap", indicate. For me, then, it felt, and it still feels extremely "natural" to read in connection Carnap's and Nietzsche's apparently unrelated projects of overcoming metaphysics, as I did in the second chapter of this dissertation as well as in an article of mine that appeared in *Nietzsche-Studien* in 2018.

In fact, I think that this whole dissertation started out of a particular feeling of mine: that a "conceptual persona" that promotes a synthesis of Nietzsche's and Carnap's projects of overcoming metaphysics has something interesting to state both to analytic philosophers and to continental philosophers. This conceptual persona, as I indicate in the sixth chapter, may be called "Friedrich Carnap", "Rudolf Nietzsche", "Gilles A. G. Moreira", "Felipe G. A. Deleuze" or even "F.G.A.M." (to put in the terms of several of my poems). This dissertation (especially, its third chapter), then, is my way to spell out this persona's philosophy; a philosophy that (I think this is considerably obvious) runs in disagreement with most analytic and continental philosophies that have been done throughout the twentieth century and up to ours. Accordingly, as it might have been expected, I have likewise confronted a lot of resistance from 2013 up to today, that is, throughout my "Miami years", when I started to promote the Nietzsche-Carnap synthesis, while taking several classes, teaching classes of my own and working on the present Ph.D. dissertation.

Hence, it is only half in jest that I state that if I were not committed to Nietzsche's aim of a non-resentful life, I would entitle myself to add a personal resentments section. I am joking, but I am not joking, while underling that I am quite aware that to add such a section would not be philosophically pertinent or "prudent". Consequently, what I did was to articulate another way to resist my "deep opponents": that of interpreting and criticizing the two kinds of philosophers these opponents of mine more or less unconsciously follow. The first kind of philosophers I have in mind are those discussed in this dissertation's fourth chapter: the ones, such as (at least in my reading) Aristotle, Saint Anselm, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Eli Hirsch, who express what I call the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence. The second kind of philosophers I have in mind are the ones discussed in this dissertation's fifth chapter; those who, perhaps, avoid the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but not the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence. My reading is that this is the case with Willard van Orman Quine, Saul Kripke and Kit Fine.

What allowed me to address all the philosophers named in the last paragraph was my background in the history of philosophy, achieved after taking several historical classes at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and Boston College. I underline that, over the last four years, I prepared and taught several sections of Introduction to Philosophy, Modern Philosophy and Ancient philosophy at the University of Miami. This helped me to articulate my own picture of the history of metaphysics; the "Sisyphean picture" suggested here, especially in the fourth chapter. Another dream of mine is that at least some of this dissertation's readers will be convinced (like I am) that it may be taken for granted that several (if not most) contemporary philosophers constantly express the properly dogmatic or the pseudo-non-dogmatic

“subtle” violence, as if such kinds of violence were inherent to the very practice of doing philosophy, as if allegedly apolitical, but actually “right-wing approaches” to disputes were ultimately the only rational, pertinent and/or possible approaches.

What I am trying to say is that I have a quite deep personal relation with the two kinds of “subtle” violence criticized in this dissertation. Indeed, especially after I started to feel the need to problematize the analytic-continental gap, I have personally struggled with the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence. I also need to acknowledge that I myself may have expressed these two kinds of “subtle” violence more than once toward both analytic philosophers and continental philosophers, especially in non-academic contexts, such as those of bars. To put it in more “metamodernist” and/or paradoxical terms, to write this dissertation was also an attempt to release myself from myself. I also would like to emphasize that, in identifying and criticizing the properly dogmatic or the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence, a hope of mine is that my research “resonates” with the works of authors who have identified and criticized less explicit kinds of xenophobic, classist, racist, sexist and/or transphobic violence; kinds of violence that, I think, I have never personally experienced. What I mean is that, though I have been an immigrant in the USA since 2011, I am aware that I have been quite white, heterosexual, middle-class and protected by the academic environments I have been inserted. Yet, I still hope that those who do not have had such “particular identities” of mine may find my views on “subtle” violence pertinent. More directly, my feeling is that I do not need to explain carefully what I mean and why I oppose “subtle” violence to those who have struggled with less explicit xenophobic, classist, racist, sexist and/or transphobic kinds of violence.

I also feel the need to state that the fact that I wrote this dissertation as a foreigner in the USA probably played a significant role, even though I cannot precisely describe the significance of this role. Indeed, regardless of what I once believed, the fact that my advisor, Otávio Bueno, is also Brazilian and we discussed this dissertation in Portuguese helped me more than I thought it would. It is hard to explain why I feel like this or to qualify the help I have in mind, especially given that I do feel comfortable and, in fact, enjoy speaking and writing philosophy and poetry in English. It is also hard to explain why, while writing this dissertation, I started to be interested in the more “properly Brazilian” neo-Pyrrhonist tradition of authors, such as Otávio himself as well as Oswaldo Porchat. Note that this tradition was not brought to my attention during the years I studied philosophy in Rio de Janeiro, but, rather, only a few years ago by Otávio himself. Also note that my reaction to neo-Pyrrhonism can be found in the very first chapter of this dissertation, that is, in the introduction, where I articulate my “conflictual craft” by opposing and promoting a synthesis of Pyrrho’s skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft.

The fact that I wrote this dissertation as a foreigner in the USA probably also contributed to make me have two new interests that I did not have the space to carefully address here. The first new interest is that on “subtly” colonized non-European and non-North American philosophers who spend their whole careers overly paying respect to European and/or North American philosophers, without daring to articulate stances of their own. The second new interest is on the works of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, works that are sometimes described as one of the grounds of colonization. As indicated in the seventh chapter, that is, in this dissertation’s conclusion, I plan to do justice to these new interests in the future in addressing Hegel’s deviant concepts of God and responsible agent.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Sextus Empiricus

The roman numbers after the abbreviation refer to the book, and the Arabic numbers refer to the paragraph. For example, PH I 23 refers to paragraph 23 of the first book of *Outlines of Skepticism*.

PH *Outlines of Skepticism*, translated and edited by Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Friedrich Nietzsche

The roman numbers after the abbreviation refer to the section. The Arabic numbers refer to the paragraph. The Arabic numbers between brackets refer to the sub-section. For example, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, section III, chapter 12 and subsection 4 is cited as *Z III 12 [4]*.

A *The Anti-Christ*, translated by Judith Norman and edited by Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

BGE *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by Judith Norman and edited by Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Judith Norman. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

EH *Ecce Homo*, translated by Judith Norman and edited by Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

GM *On the Genealogy of Morality*, translated by Carol Diethe and edited by Keith Ansell-Pearson. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

GS *The Gay Science*, translated by Josefine Nauckhoff, poems translated by Adrian Del Caro and edited by Bernard Williams. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

TI *Twilight of the Idols*, translated by Judith Norman and edited by Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

WP *The Will to Power*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale and edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York, Vintage, 1968.

Z *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by Adrian Del Caro and edited by Adrian Del Caro and Robert B. Pippin. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

In the case of Nietzsche's posthumous works, I also state the year in which the fragment was written and propose translations of my own.

Nachlass Year of the Fragment, KSA *Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bänden*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1967- 1977.

Rudolf Carnap

The Arabic numbers after the abbreviation refer to pages.

- EML “The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language”, translated by Arthur Pap and edited by A. J. Ayer. In *Logical Positivism*, New York, The Free Press, 1959.
- IAB *Intellectual Autobiography*, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp. In *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, Illinois, Open Court, 1963.
- LOG “Logic”. In *Factors Determining Human Behavior*, Cambridge, Harvard University press, 1937.
- LSW *The Logical Structure of the World and Pseudoproblems in Philosophy*, translated by Rolf A. George, Illinois, Open Court, 2003.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: FROM PYRRONISM TO THE SYSTEM OF DISPUTES

1.1 Bare Wise Persons

“Bare wise persons”. This is the expression I would like to use to translate the Greek word, “*gumnosophistai*”.¹ This word was used by Diogenes Laertius in his third century CE *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*.² This work states that Pyrrho of Elis, who is believed to have lived from 365-360 BC until around 275–270 BC, joined the conqueror Alexander the Great in an expedition to India. This probably occurred around 327-326 BC. According to Diogenes, it was then that, after Pyrrho encountered such “bare wise persons”, he became a skeptic. Notice that Pyrrho left no writings. Hence, what I do is to follow his interpreters in relying heavily on secondary sources, such as Diogenes’s *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* itself as well as on the most detailed of these sources: Sextus Empiricus’ *Outlines of Skepticism*, written sometime around the second and third century CE.

Given that non-Pyrrhonist kinds of skepticism will not be addressed in this dissertation, the term “skeptic” is applied as a short for the Pyrrhonist skeptic, the one who adopts Pyrrho’s skeptic craft as opposed to a dogmatic craft, such as that of Aristotle. As it is well-known, Aristotle was a dogmatist; he is believed to have lived from 384–322 BC, worked as teacher of Alexander and was a contemporary of Pyrrho.³ “Craft” is a term

¹ This Greek word has been, traditionally, translated to “naked wise men”. However, I wish to rely on a more gender-neutral vocabulary. This is why I replace the term “men” for “persons”, a term that will be carefully addressed throughout this dissertation, especially in the fourth chapter. I also prefer the term “bare” over the term “naked”. The reason is that “bare” hopefully reminds readers of the expression, “bare particular”. A bare particular has been understood as a substance that merely instantiates universals but, in itself, has no property of its own at all. A bare wise person, on the other hand, is one that, when stripped from one’s clothes or any other cultural features, such as earrings and necklaces, still has the property of being a person.

² Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. James Miller, trans. Pamela Mensch, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018: (9.61).

³ I am inclined to believe that Aristotle is, indeed, the first Western dogmatist whose writings are available to us. Given that Plato’s works are dialogues, I am not inclined to attribute to him the dogmatic craft. I am also not inclined to believe that Plato adopted a skeptic or the conflictual craft that I describe and support in

applied in the Greek sense of *techne*, a conjunction of disciplined practices. By a practice, I understand what Sextus calls a “persuasion”, that is “a choice of life or of a way of acting practiced by one person or by many”.⁴ The skeptic craft and the dogmatic one will be carefully described in what follows. Before I do so, however, let us consider that to adopt either one of these crafts is a way to respond to a practical matter: how is one to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes? This question drives this dissertation. Let me start, then, by spelling out what I mean by it.

“Disputes” is a term used here to cover theoretical as well as practical disputes that have been associated with metaphysics. “Metaphysics” is a term that will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. For the time being, I use it loosely. The theoretical disputes I focused on are those that take place when opponents disagree (say, on the truth value or on the persuasiveness) of at least one claim that has been associated with metaphysics. The following is an example of such a claim: “there is evil”. This claim has received a lot of attention, at least since late Antiquity. “Evil”, in the sense adopted here, is exemplified by an apparently random and morally unjustifiable event, such as an earthquake or a plague that kills thousands of people. The practical disputes I address are those that occur when opponents disagree on at least one practice that has been associated with metaphysics.⁵ An

what follows. Plato seems to have had a quite unique craft of his own that, despite the countless commentaries of his works, has not been as influential as Aristotle’s. An upfront evidence for this last claim is the fact that philosophers have not usually articulated dialogues. In fact, this form of writing is usually not even regarded as being “properly philosophical” today. I cannot discuss Plato’s works here. For such an inquiry, see, for example, Fernando Muniz, *A Potência da Aparência: um estudo sobre o prazer e a sensação nos Diálogos de Platão*, São Paulo, ed. Annablume, 2011.

⁴ PH I 145.

⁵ This dissertation deals exclusively with theoretical and practical disputes that have been associated with “metaphysics”; several examples of such disputes will be given in what follows. This is to state that I am neutral concerning disputes that have been associated with mathematics or the empirical sciences, such as: what are the causes that make someone acquire an extraordinary mental ability, such as that of having the power to recognize someone else’s pain more accurately than most people? For an approach to this issue, see Berit Brogaard and Kristian Marlow, *The Superhuman Mind: Free the Genius in Your Brain*, New York, Penguin, 2015.

example of such practice is the very one of dealing (e.g., in a dissertation) with the theoretical dispute over the existence of evil as opposed to do something else, say, to focus on a theoretical dispute over a distinct claim, such as the claim that “there is a thing-in-itself”. This claim has also received a lot of attention, at least since the 16th century and especially after Immanuel Kant published his works in the 18th century. By a thing-in-itself, it is to be understood one that exists independently or is not conditioned by any human factor, such as the human mind, language, culture, history, struggle of classes, etc.

The term “person”, it is presupposed, may be applied in the sense of a being that has personhood. Several conditions for personhood—including the very one of being able to engage oneself in disputes—will be discussed in detail in the fourth chapter. For the time being, the term “personhood” is also applied loosely in the sense of the property of holding what the Greeks called *logos*, that is, reason, logic and/or language. This property may be one that is not exclusively shared by human beings. As Thomas White and Mark Rowlands indicate, other beings, such as animals, may also have personhood.⁶ On my part, I remain neutral on whether this is so. What is important here is to emphasize that, for this dissertation’s purpose, a person, that is, a holder of *logos*, is to be understood as a legitimate rational peer or at least as a potential legitimate rational peer. Hence, I take that to insinuate that x falls short of personhood, say, in comparing x to a plant or an animal or suggesting that x is a fool or insane, is to insinuate that x is not really a legitimate rational peer.

I likewise would like to use the term “other” in a way that is closely connected to the notion of “person”. Now it is considerably important to underline that there has been a long literature on the notion of “other”. Furthermore, this notion has been used in all kinds

⁶ Thomas White, *In Defense of Dolphins: The New Moral Frontier*, MA, Blackwell, 2007; and Mark Rowlands, *Can Animals be Persons?*, forthcoming.

of senses, for instance, by the likes of Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig and Emmanuel Levinas; thinkers whose works interest me a lot, but that I cannot address here.⁷ What is also important is to underline that it is not this dissertation's aim to discuss the literature on the "other" or the several senses in which this term has been applied. For my purposes, it suffices to apply the term "other" as a relational notion according to which y is an other with regard to x if, and only if: x and y are both persons who disagree regarding at least one dispute (or, more broadly, any kind of conflict), and y's sensibility regarding this dispute or conflict is radically distinct from x's inasmuch as y challenges x's *logos* in rejecting x's presuppositions and/or ignoring, violating or interpreting x's criterion to deal with the dispute or the conflict at stake differently. The most precise way to apply the notion of "other", then, would be speaking in relational terms of *one's other*, *other of someone* or *other regarding a person*. These italicized expressions, though, may not be very aesthetically appealing to some of this dissertation's readers. Hence, I will simply apply the term "other" as a short for these italicized expressions.

Some examples of criteria to deal with disputes are: recognition of what is logically self-evident; accordance with scriptures; clearness and distinctiveness; consistency with the latest results of mathematics and/or the empirical sciences; respect to the conditions for cognitive experience; oppression acknowledgment, say, of class exploitation; accordance with intuitions; respect to the rules of ordinary language; maximization of theoretical virtues, such as "conservatism, generality, simplicity, refutability and modesty"⁸; etc.

⁷ See Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, New York, Touchstone, 1970; Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, Indiana, Notre Dame Press, 1985; and Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991.

⁸ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Pursuit of Truth*, Cambridge, Harvard University, 1992: pp. 20. For a detailed discussion of these virtues, see Willard Van Orman Quine and J.S. Ullian, *The Web of Belief*, New York, McGraw-Hill Education, 1978: pp. 40-48.

Imagine a person who argues that there is evil. Imagine that this person supports that to defend so is to satisfy a criterion: accordance with scriptures. In this context, the other might be someone who simply ignores or violates this criterion. Moreover, imagine a person who defends that there is a thing-in-itself. Imagine that this person argues that to claim so is to satisfy a distinct criterion, say, respect to the conditions for cognitive experience. In this case, the other might be someone who interprets this criterion differently in insisting that such conditions can only be respected by the one who rejects the existence of a thing-in-itself. The other here might also be someone who rejects any criterion this person might have for engaging oneself in the dispute over the existence of a thing-in-itself in the first place, that is, this other may claim that it is impertinent to spend any time of one's life in discussing so, while insisting that there are matters that much more urgently are deserving of attention, such as to debate the claim that "there is consciousness". The latter claim has been constantly disputed, at least since the middle of the 20th century. By "consciousness", to put in Thomas Nagel's terms, it is to be understood a phenomenological experience; one that has "a what is like to be" aspect.⁹

A distinction that will play a seminal role in what follows is that between: God-driven philosophers, such as Saint Augustine, Boethius, William of Ockham, Saint Anselm, Saint Thomas of Aquinas and Duns Scotus; human-driven philosophers, such as Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and, more recently, Jürgen Habermas, Richard Rorty, Karl-Otto Apel and Angela Davis; and physicalist-driven philosophers, such as Willard Van Orman Quine, Saul Kripke, Nagel, Daniel Dennett, Paul

⁹ Thomas Nagel, "What is it like to be a Bat?", *Philosophical Review* 4, 1974: pp. 435-50.

and Patricia Churchland, Frank Jackson, Ned Block, David Chalmers, etc.¹⁰ Respectively, God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers have often focused on the theoretical disputes over the existence of evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness. These philosophers will be further described in detail as the dissertation proceeds; this will hopefully show that they have been others regarding one another.¹¹

For now, I underline that whether Pyrrho's encounter with the aforementioned "bare wise persons" is really a fact is not an issue that I approach here. What is crucial, for my purposes, is to presuppose and add another factor to Diogenes's account of Pyrrho; a factor that cannot be explicitly found in Diogenes's writings, but that I take to be a highly plausible speculation. The factor is that Pyrrho adopted the skeptic craft after encountering such "bare wise persons" because this radical encounter made Pyrrho recognize the personhood of these persons as well as the importance of his others insofar as disputes are at stake. What I mean is that I speculate that, after this encounter, Pyrrho concluded that

¹⁰ See Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1990; Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1979; Karl-Otto Apel, *Selected Essays*, New Jersey, Humanities Press, 1996; Angela Davis, *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, Cambridge, Blackwell Publishers, 1998; Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1960; Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1980; Thomas Nagel, "What is it like to be a Bat?"; Daniel Dennett, "Quining Qualia" in A. J. Marcel and E. Bisiach (eds.), *Consciousness in Modern Science*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988; *Consciousness Explained*, New York, Little, Brown and Company Press, 1991; Paul Churchland, *The Engine of Reason*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1996; Patricia Churchland, *Brain-Wise: Studies in Neurophilosophy*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2002; Ned Block, "Troubles with Functionalism", *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, volume IX, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1978; Frank Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia", in David Chalmers (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002; David Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind: In search of a Fundamental Theory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996; and *The Character of Consciousness*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.

¹¹ Let me emphasize that I do not wish to suggest that all philosophers are God, human or physicalist-driven ones. This does not seem to be the case with several philosophers that will not be discussed in this dissertation, such as Ancient philosophers, Eastern philosophers or Hegel. A more recent example of a philosopher who resists being labelled a God, human or physicalist-driven philosopher is Markus Gabriel. He argues that "existence = appearance in a field of sense". Accordingly, Gabriel engages himself in an ontological dispute that is not focused on by God, human or physicalist philosophers: that on whether there is what he calls a "world", that is, a "field of sense in which all other fields of sense appear". Gabriel concludes that there is no such a thing. See Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2015, pp. 73.

(1) It seems that:

- (1-i) Among the others, some are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake.
- (1-ii) No person has settled a dispute once and for all, that is, in a way that others could not rationally unsettle.
- (1-iii) (1-i) and (1-ii) are extremely important points insofar as those who fail to acknowledge them react in a quite unpersuasive manner to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.¹²

To point toward (1-i) is no trivial move. Consider Alexander and members of his troops. When confronted with those that Diogenes describes as “bare wise persons”, they might have believed that such persons were not exactly “persons” or “wise”. My point here is that, from the perspective of most Greeks, these beings were others. This is because they: did not believe in the Greek Gods; never read Homeric poems; lived under political systems quite distinct from those adopted in Ancient Greece; dressed themselves with non-Greek vestments or did not dress themselves at all; had a color of skin distinct from that of most Greeks; etc. Indeed, the sounds emitted by such beings who did not speak Ancient Greek may not have been taken as evidence that they had a language of their own. Accordingly, Alexander and/or members of his troops may have labelled them barbarians. To do so is to reject (1-i); it is to suggest that these “bare wise persons” are ultimately uncivilized and, consequently, not really legitimate rational peers concerning disputes.

¹² In an article from 1802, Hegel somehow attributes a similar practice to skeptics in arguing as follows: “what counts for the race as absolutely One and the same, and as fixed, eternal and everywhere constituted in the same way, time wrenches away from it; most commonly [what does this is] the increasing range of acquaintance with alien // peoples under the pressure of natural necessity; as, for example, becoming acquainted with a new continent, had this skeptical effect upon the dogmatic common sense of the Europeans down to that time, and upon their indubitable certainty about a mass of concepts concerning right and truth”. See G.W.F. Hegel, “On the Relationship of Skepticism to Philosophy, Exposition of its Different Modifications and Comparison of the Latest Form with the Ancient One”, trans. H.S. Harris, in George di Giovanni (ed.), *Between Kant and Hegel: Texts in the Development of Post-Kantian Idealism*, Cambridge, Hackett Publishing Company, 2000: pp.333. For a detailed take on Hegel’s view on skepticism, see Michael N. Forster, *Hegel and Skepticism*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989.

To point toward (1-ii) is also no trivial move. In not taking their others to be legitimate rational peers on disputes, Alexander and/or members of his troops might also have believed that at least one dispute has indeed been settled once and for all. The same can be stated about some Ancient Greeks who never joined expeditions to non-Greek cities. Note that such Greeks may also have been inclined to believe that (1-i) and (1-ii) were unimportant matters. The reason, they might have believed, is that one can react in a persuasive way to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes, without taking (1-i) and (1-ii) into account. It follows that the action of pointing toward (1-iii) is likewise no trivial action but, rather, a quite controversial one.

This dissertation seeks to spell out (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii). These points, I aim to show in what follows, have been constantly problematized by those who over the last 2500 years or so of history of metaphysics have been called “philosophers” —a term that derives from the Ancient Greek one “*philosophos*”, whose original meaning, as it is well known, was “lover of wisdom”. It is also important to underline that those who are usually called “philosophers” have not been influenced by Pyrrho. Over the last fifty years or so, a few Brazilian philosophers have done otherwise. They are exceptions. They may be called neo-Pyrrhonists. Oswald Porchat, whose first works were published in the late 1960s, is an example of someone who deserves to be labelled so.¹³ The same can be stated about two contemporary philosophers considerably influenced by him: Otávio Bueno and Plínio Junqueira Smith.¹⁴ As it will be spelled out in what follows, I am influenced by neo-

¹³ Oswald Porchat, *Rumo ao Ceticismo*, São Paulo, Editora Unesp, 2007.

¹⁴ Otávio Bueno, “Davidson and Skepticism: How not to Respond to the Skeptic”, *Principia* 9, 2005; “Is the Pyrrhonist an Internalist”, in Diego Machuca (ed.), *New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism*, Leiden, Brill, 2011; “Disagreeing with the Pyrrhonist”, in Diego Machuca (ed.), *Disagreement and Skepticism*, New York, Routledge, 2013; Otávio Bueno and Plínio Junqueira Smith, “Skepticism in Latin America”, in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2016; and Plínio Junqueira Smith, *Uma Visão Cética do Mundo: Porchat e a Filosofia*, São Paulo, Editora Unesp, 2017. Other non-Brazilian philosophers whose

Pyrrhonists insofar as I take dogmatism to be a non-starter. However, I am not a skeptic and do not take that (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) force one to adopt the skeptic craft. What I take myself to be is something else. I call it a conflictual crafter. The reason is that my response to the practical question that drives this dissertation (that is, “how is one to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes?”) runs as follows:

- (2) One is to adopt a conflictual craft, that is, a synthesis between the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft that serves to articulate the system of disputes.

By a synthesis between the skeptic and the dogmatic crafts, I understand a particular task; one characterized by three features: first, instead of presupposing, this synthesis brings to light the core features of the skeptic craft and of the dogmatic craft; second, I problematize the dogmatic craft by means of the skeptic one and vice-versa so that the shortcomings of these crafts are avoided; and, third, my synthesis still seeks to keep certain (hopefully positive) aspects both of the skeptic craft and of the dogmatic one.¹⁵ Let me emphasize that in arguing for (2), I do not wish to suggest that the skeptic and the dogmatic craft are the only two crafts present in the literature. Indeed, there may be several other crafts that resist being labelled “skeptic” or “dogmatic” ones. The problem is that I simply do not have the space to address all of such crafts here. What I do, then, is to focus on the skeptic and the dogmatic craft, while spelling out my conflictual craft as an alternative.

works have also been influenced by Pyrrho include: Ezequiel de Olaso, “La crisis pirrónica de Hume”, *Revista Latinoamericana de Filosofía* 3(2): 131-143, 1977; “Otra vez sobre el escepticismo de Hume”, *Manuscrito* 1 (1), 1978: pp. 65-82; “Los dos escepticismos del vicario saboyano”, *Manuscrito*, 2(3), 1980: pp. 7-23; “Thomas Hobbes y la recta razón”, *Manuscrito*, 4(1), 1980: pp. 29-35; “La investigación y la verdad”, *Manuscrito*, 6(2), 1983: pp. 45-62; “Certeza y escepticismo”, in L. Villoro (ed.), *El conocimiento* (Enciclopedia Iberoamericana de Filosofía, Vol. 20), Madrid, Trotta, 1999; as well as Robert J. Fogelin, *Pyrrhonian Reflections on Knowledge and Justification*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994.

¹⁵ “Synthesis” is a term that is often associated with Hegel’s works. In using it in the stated sense, though, I do not wish to suggest that I champion a Hegelian approach. As I indicate in 7.4, I aim to more precisely spell out my agreements and disagreements with Hegel in a future project. Yet, I cannot pursue this task here.

Now notice that a system in the dogmatic sense, to put it metaphorically, aims to be a palace for the Gods, such as the “*Valhalla*” described in Richard Wagner’s *The Ring of the Nibelung*. Just like this palace would be immune to any human bombing, a system in the dogmatic sense is supposed to be immune to any rational objection. A dogmatic system, then, would be a conjunction of undeniable metaphysical claims. By this kind of claim, it is to be understood one that may be associated with metaphysics and that each and every person is to endorse in order to count as a legitimate rational peer concerning a certain dispute at stake. I do not aim to articulate a dogmatic system. What I aim to do, instead, is to formulate a system in a conflictual sense: that of a conjunction of deniable metaphysical claims, that is, claims that may be associated with metaphysics but which are not rationally undeniable ones. This is because my others are legitimate rational peers who, hence, may rationally reject them. This system of mine, then, cannot be compared to a palace for the Gods; this system is not immune to any rational objection. In fact, I, myself, might come up with such an objection in the future. This is not to state that such a conflictual system is useless, impertinent or uninteresting. Analogously, consider remarkable constructions, such as the Egyptian pyramids, the Taj Mahal, the Neuschwanstein Castle, the Palace of Versailles, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater, Oscar Niemeyer’s Palace of Dawn, etc.

These constructions are not immune to any kind of bombing. Nevertheless, this has not been taken as a reason for not building them. Metaphorically speaking, then, what I have attempted to build is a system comparable to such constructions or at least a humbler home; a humbler home in which I feel comfortable, I feel safe, and/or I feel almost currently satisfied with myself. This is a useful, pertinent and interesting humble home of mine at least insofar as I (who inhabit it) am concerned. This home, though, may hopefully likewise

strike others as being useful, pertinent and interesting, albeit such others may ultimately want to build and live in distinct constructions of their own.

The system I have in mind deserves to be called a system because it has several features in common with traditional projects that have been called systems, such as those of Plato, Aquinas or Kant. To begin with, my system of disputes is not a purely negative skeptic project. Instead, like the systems of Plato, Aquinas or Kant, the system of disputes is characterized by a non-skeptical endorsement of several claims, such as (1), (2) and eleven other ones that will be stated in 1.5. In seeking to articulate a view that may appeal both to continental and to analytic contemporary philosophers, the system of disputes also proposes a distinct reading of two projects that have been very influential, but not usually discussed in relation to one another: the projects of overcoming metaphysics of Friedrich Nietzsche (especially, in his late phase from 1883 up until his mental collapse in 1889), and of Rudolf Carnap (especially, in 1920s-1930s). Analogously, in their respective historical contexts, Plato, Aquinas and Kant also articulated distinct readings of projects that were influential, but not usually discussed in relation to one another: respectively, the projects of Heraclitus and Parmenides; the rational project of Ancient Greek philosophers (e.g., Aristotle) and the faith project of the Jewish-Christian tradition; and the realist and the idealist project. The systems of Plato, Aquinas and Kant also spelled out the presuppositions and promoted a synthesis of the respective projects they addressed.

The system of disputes likewise seeks to synthesize Nietzsche's and Carnap's projects of overcoming metaphysics into a new philosophy that, as far as I know, has never been done before, at least not explicitly. However, insofar as in articulating it I dialogue and aim to contribute to close the gap between the so-called continental and analytic

philosophers, I am in debt to several others who have proceeded in a similar way.¹⁶ I have in mind the likes of: Richard Rorty, Hilary Putnam (especially, the one from the 2008 *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life*), Bernard Williams, Gary Gutting, Adrian W. Moore, Markus Gabriel, etc.¹⁷ What I mean is that had these philosophers not attempted to draw all kinds of connections between analytic and continental philosophers, there would arguably be no climate to write this dissertation. Also note that the practice of articulating a system has been widely shared among philosophers, especially before the 20th century. However, the system of disputes is also somehow transgressive or subversive.

This system deserves to be called so because it brings to light and problematizes presuppositions of Nietzsche and Carnap that are taken for granted by these philosophers' (sometimes unconscious) followers, such as: respectively, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida; and David Lewis and Peter van Inwagen.¹⁸ What I mean is that the very practice of articulating this system while giving a significantly extensive and new historical overview of the history of metaphysics, runs in tension with the practices of several (if not most) contemporary continental and analytic philosophers. Analogously, in bringing to

¹⁶ The task of spelling out the requirements for qualifying a philosopher as “continental” or as “analytic” is a hard one that will not be pursued here. For such an inquiry, see Søren Overgaard, Paul Gilbert, Paul and Stephen Burwood, *An Introduction to Metametaphysics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013: pp. 105-136. What this dissertation does is to follow a widely shared use of the expressions “continental philosopher” and “analytic philosopher” according to which: Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida are continental philosophers, whereas Carnap, Willard Van Orman Quine, Saul Kripke, David Lewis, Peter van Inwagen and Kit Fine are analytic philosophers.

¹⁷ Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1979; Hillary Putnam, *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2008; Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Inquiry*, London, Routledge, 2006; Gary Gutting, *What Philosophers Know: Case Studies in Recent Analytic Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, *Thinking the Impossible: French Philosophy Since 1960*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012; and Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist and I am not a Brain*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2017.

¹⁸ Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles/Eperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1979; David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983; *On the Plurality of Worlds*, MA, Blackwell, 1986; and Peter van Inwagen, “Freedom to Break the Laws”, *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXVIII*, 2004: pp. 334-350.

light and problematizing the assumptions of the respective projects they addressed, Plato, Aquinas and Kant also ran in tension with the practices of the philosophers of their times. While doing so, they also provided a quite extensive and new historical overview of the history of metaphysics up until the moment they articulated their respective systems.

I call the system defended here the system of disputes because this system does not commit itself to object-level beliefs that may be associated with metaphysics, such as “there is evil”, “there is a thing-in-itself” and “there is consciousness”. Instead, the system of disputes, as its name indicates, is one that only endorses metametaphysical claims closely connected to disputes. There are two sorts of such claims. To begin with, there are metametaphysical descriptive claims. These claims are about disputes, about approaches to the disputes, about the very system of disputes articulated in this dissertation and/or about reactions to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. (1) is an example of this first kind of metametaphysical claim. There also are metametaphysical normative claims, such as (2). These are practical claims on how *one is to* react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.

I emphasize that the italicized expression “one is to” is considerably vague. This is so in that this expression does not spell out whether “one” refers to each and every person, a group of persons or even a single person, such as myself. This is to state that a metametaphysical normative claim is not to be understood as a sort of categorical imperative that all persons are to follow in order to count as holders of *logos*. Instead, such claim is to be understood as a practical suggestion; a practical suggestion that currently strikes me as being persuasive and that with any luck will also strike others as being so.

Let me now use the rest of this introduction to introductorily justify (1) and (2) by taking four steps. The first three steps are to spell out why the conflictual craft is a synthesis between the skeptic and the dogmatic craft. Accordingly, I, first, spell out and compare the core features of the skeptic and the dogmatic crafts. Second, I problematize the dogmatic craft by means of the skeptic one and vice-versa so that the shortcomings of these crafts are avoided. Third, I present, in contrast with the skeptic and the dogmatic craft, the conflictual craft in aiming to show how the latter craft keeps certain (hopefully positive) aspects of the former two crafts. My fourth step is to state and briefly explain the eleven other claims, besides (1) and (2), that characterize the system of disputes that may be articulated once the conflictual craft is embraced. These eleven claims will be justified in the rest of the dissertation; (1) and (2) will likewise be further justified, as I proceed.

1.2 The Core Features of the Skeptic Craft and of the Dogmatic Craft

The skeptic, as indicated above, acknowledges that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. The dogmatist also acknowledges so. Consider Aristotle. In the first book of his *Metaphysics* as well as in the first book of his *De Anima*, he addresses several *aporiai*, that is, logical stalemates that seem to make a question ultimately unanswerable. In doing so, Aristotle also acknowledges that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. However, the dogmatic way of reacting to this fact is radically distinct from the skeptic one. This is so in at least five senses.

a. Appearances vs. Beliefs

The first sense in which the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft are radically distinct from one another is that the skeptic craft is an ongoing investigation into the issues that

have given rise to disputes. Skeptics, Sextus states, are simply “still investigating” these issues.¹⁹ This is why this investigation of skeptics has no predicable end. Moreover, the skeptic investigation only bases itself on *appearances*. On the other hand, the dogmatic craft is an inquiry that purports to have reached the end of an investigation. In other words, the dogmatic craft, as its name indicates, is that of dogmatists; those who “in the proper sense of the word think that they have discovered the truth” about at least one issue that gave rise to at least one dispute.²⁰ In doing so, dogmatists do not merely live in accordance with appearances. Rather, they also commit themselves to *dogmas*, that is, *beliefs*.

Note that I italicized the terms “appearances” and “beliefs”. I did so because it is crucial to underline that, being a skeptic, Sextus does not have a theory that precisely spells out how these two terms are to be understood. This is to state that Sextus does not spell out necessary or sufficient conditions for appearance and for belief, let alone for truth. Instead, he applies the terms “appearance” and “belief” in a considerably loose (if not extremely vague) way. It follows that it is not surprising that Sextus’ writings themselves have given rise to an exegetical dispute; one that has been going on for several centuries: the dispute on how the appearance/belief distinct is to be read in the first place.

As Michael Forster spells out, some of Sextus’ readers are “urbane”, to use Jonathan Barnes’s expression.²¹ These readers of the likes of Kant and, more recently, Michael Frede interpret that by a belief, Sextus only means “reason-based beliefs concerning the supersensible”, such as the beliefs that there is a beginning of the world, an

¹⁹ PHI 3

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Jonathan Barnes, “The Beliefs of a Pyrrhonist”, in Michael Frede and Myles F. Burnyeat (eds.), *The Original Sceptics: A Controversy*, Cambridge, Hackett Publishing Company, 1997: pp.61.

immaterial soul or a God.²² “God” in this dissertation is to be understood in the Jewish, Christian and/or Islamic sense of a being that has the properties of: being a “you”, that is, something that human beings can address themselves to (e.g., in prayers); almightiness; omniscience; moral perfection; eternity; immutability; omnipresence; being the creator of all other beings, besides God; necessary existence; and uniqueness.²³ Now consider, once again, Pyrrho’s encounter with the aforementioned “bare wise persons”. Imagine that exclusively based on his senses (e.g., those of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touching), Pyrrho recognized the personhood of these persons. An urbane reader might argue that, for Sextus, Pyrrho’s recognition does not count as belief, but as an appearance. This reader might also claim that, for Sextus, (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) are merely appearances exclusively based on sensible experience; not really beliefs. This is why the skeptic may embrace them.

On the other hand, as Forster also indicates, there are also those, like himself, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Myles Burnyeat, who interpret that by a belief, Sextus means any kind of belief whatsoever.²⁴ Barnes labels these readers, among which Barnes himself is also to be included, “rustic” readers.²⁵ According to the rustic reading, skeptics would not commit themselves to even widely shared sense-based beliefs on the sensible. Note that such beliefs that are not very easily distinguishable from appearances. Also note that rustic

²² Michael N. Forster, “Hegelian vs. Kantian Interpretations of Pyrrhonism: Revolution or Reaction?”, *Kritisches Jahrbuch der Philosophie* Vol. 10, 2005: pp. 53. Also see Michael N. Forster, *Kant and Skepticism*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2008; and Michael Frede “The Sceptic’s Beliefs”, in Michael Frede and Myles F. Burnyeat (eds.), *The Original Sceptics: A Controversy*, Cambridge, Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.

²³ For a more detailed discussion of these properties, see Peter van Inwagen, *The Problem of Evil*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006: pp.18.

²⁴ See Myles F. Burnyeat, “Can the Sceptic Live his Scepticism?” in *Explorations in Ancient and Modern Philosophy Vol. 1*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

²⁵ Jonathan Barnes, “The Beliefs of a Pyrrhonist”, pp.61.

readers may take that Pyrrho's recognition that some "bare wise persons" are persons as a belief; not as an appearance. The same would be the case with (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii).

It is likewise worth mentioning that there have been readers who have problematized the widely shared urbane/rustic distinction proposed by Barnes. Ultimately, these readers endorse a distinct formulation of the exegetical dispute on how Sextus' distinction between appearance and belief is to be read. Consider, for instance, Gail Fine.²⁶ She argues that what is at stake in the stated exegetical dispute are two distinct possible readings that are not precisely captured by Barnes' distinction: the "some-belief view" interpretation and the "no-belief view" one.²⁷ As its name indicates, those who adopt the former reading take that skeptics can embrace some beliefs. Accordingly, the some-belief view readers have the burden of spelling the beliefs skeptics can endorse.

For instance, it may be argued that skeptics can embrace sense-based beliefs, such as the ones that the aforementioned "bare wise persons" are persons and the beliefs that (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii). It could also be interpreted that skeptics exclusively embrace, not sense-based beliefs in general, but beliefs about their own affections, that is, beliefs about the "feelings forced upon them by appearances", such as the belief that it seems to oneself that such "bare wise persons" are persons and that (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii).²⁸ "We [skeptics]", Sextus claims in arguably pointing to this direction, "report descriptively on each item according to how it appears to us at the time".²⁹ This last passage may also be read as

²⁶ Gail Fine, "Scepticism, Existence, and Belief: A Discussion of R.J. Hankinson, *The Sceptics*", in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy Vol 14*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996.

²⁷ Gail Fine, "Scepticism, Existence, and Belief", pp.284.

²⁸ PHI 13.

²⁹ PHI 4.

evidence that skeptics can endorse any belief whatsoever as long as such belief is not identified with a supposedly objective truth of the matter regarding the dispute at stake.

Another way to put this is by stating that the skeptic can have a belief as long as a (so to speak) *it seems to me* operator is placed before it. What may, arguably, back up this interpretation is the fact that, as indicated above, skeptics are those who are always “still investigating” the issues that have given rise to disputes. Therefore, it could be argued that skeptics cannot be committed to a belief that purports to be a truth able to end the investigation at stake. “*It seems to me*” — a skeptic could state according to such reading — that these “bare wise persons” are persons and that (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii).

In contrast, the readers who accept the no-belief view described by Fine have a quite distinct burden: that of replying to the most traditional objection to the skeptic craft according to which this craft self-refutes itself insofar as its adherents propose but fail to live without having any belief whatsoever. I will further discuss this objection in what follows. Before I do so, let me underline that it is not my aim to carefully address (let alone, solve) the exegetical dispute on how Sextus’ distinction between appearance and belief is to be read. As the last six paragraphs indicate, this is an extremely complex interpretative dispute. Hence, in order to carefully address it, arguably, a whole new dissertation primarily focused on Sextus’ exegesis would have to be written. I cannot do so here.

What I would like to do, instead, is to limit myself to remain neutral on “truth” and to propose a plausible reading of the appearance/belief distinction. While doing so, I do not wish to commit myself to any strong exegetical point, such as the point that this plausible reading of mine is more persuasive than other ones present in the extremely extensive literature on Sextus’ works; a literature that has centuries of age. The reading I

propose is that, for Sextus, an appearance is distinct from a belief insofar as: an appearance is less controversial and, consequently, less likely to give rise to a dispute than a belief.

Textual evidence points to this reading of mine. What I mean is that I interpret that Sextus takes an appearance to be less controversial and, hence, less likely to give rise to a dispute than a belief because he states that an appearance is “equally apparent to everyone and agreed upon and not disputed”.³⁰ On the other hand, Sextus states that belief “is assent to some unclear object of investigation in the sciences”.³¹ Therefore, my reading is that he takes belief to be quite controversial and, so, more likely to give rise to a dispute than an appearance. It is also important to emphasize that Sextus states that “disputed items, insofar as they have been subject to dispute, are unclear” and “on everything unclear there has been an interminable dispute”.³² Furthermore, consider that Sextus suggests that disputes occur when everyday life is disrupted and “opposed accounts” are held.³³

In contrast, then, Sextus describes skeptics as those who live in accordance with appearances insofar as they “set out without opinions [*doxai*] from the observance of ordinary life”, that is, skeptics “live in accordance with everyday observances”.³⁴ There are four kinds of such everyday observances. The first everyday observance is “guidance by nature”.³⁵ This is the power to perceive appearances and to think about appearances. Now consider someone seeking to satisfy one’s needs for food and drink. To do so is to act in accordance with a “necessitation by feelings”.³⁶ This is the second everyday observance.

³⁰ PH II 8.

³¹ PH I 13.

³² PH II 182 and PH II 8, respectively.

³³ PH I 4.

³⁴ PH II 254 and PH I 23, respectively.

³⁵ PH I 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

The third everyday observance is the “handing down of laws and customs”.³⁷ This is the power to grasp the widely shared norms of one’s community, such as the norm that “piety is good and impiety bad”.³⁸ The fourth everyday observance is the “teaching of kinds of expertise”, such as that of playing a musical instrument.³⁹

I also would like to assume that the appearance/belief distinction is sensitive to context, even though Sextus does not explicitly state so. The reason I make this move is that, given my stated interpretation of this distinction, it is quite plausible to take this distinction to be sensitive to context. Consider, once again, Pyrrho’s encounter with the aforementioned “bare wise persons”. In most contexts of everyday life, the statement that the latter are persons is a non-controversial “clear” appearance; one that is held by someone who is guided by nature. The same can be stated about (1-i), (1-ii), (1-iii). In other more dogmatic contexts, though, these three points themselves may count as beliefs. This is because they may raise a theoretical dispute between the one who endorses them and an opponent who believes that such “bare wise persons” are not persons, but, rather, lack personhood and that, so, (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) are to be rejected. Note that this opponent could problematize the very criterion that allows one to conclude that some “bare wise persons” are persons. For instance, this opponent may argue that accordance with one’s sensible experience is not the criterion that is to be adopted in spelling out whether these “bare wise persons” are persons. This is because one’s senses are not always reliable, that is, a being could appear to be a person and still be something else that falls short of *logos*.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Moreover, this opponent may also claim that it is not at all clear that sensible experience is enough to back up (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii); that other criterion is to be adopted to do so.

This is to state that one person's appearance is another person's belief (and vice-versa).⁴⁰ Henceforth, then, the (much less philosophical loaded) term "claim" will be used to refer to that which resists been qualified as an appearance or as a belief, that is, that which may be an appearance in certain contexts, but a belief in others. Given that most beliefs count as appearances in certain contexts and vice-versa, I will mainly speak in terms of "claims" in what follows. Accordingly, I would like to describe (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) as claims; not as appearances or as beliefs. Moreover, my proposed reading is that skeptics may merely insinuate, indicate or point toward without never explicitly making a case or explicitly embracing (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii). The reason, as indicated above, is that there are dogmatic contexts in which (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) are beliefs that lead to disputes.

b. Undecidability and Strong Decision

The second sense in which the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft are radically distinct from one another is that, given (1), those who adopt the former craft seek to spell out that disputes have seemed to be *anepikritos*, that is, undecidable. Note that to seek to spell out so is not to be confounded with the attitude of stating that is "true" that disputes are undecidable. Sextus calls those who make this move "Academics", not skeptics.⁴¹ I will not address the academic craft here. What is crucial for my purposes, instead, is to

⁴⁰ Note that Sextus was inserted in a context in which most people were pious in taking the Greek gods to exist, and to be provident. Hence, the norm that one is to be pious counted for him as an appearance, that is, as a way of handing down a custom. Sextus indicates so in stating that in "following ordinary life without opinions, we [skeptics] say that there are gods and we are pious towards the gods and say that they are provident". See PH III 2.

⁴¹ PH I 3.

emphasize that dogmatists, on the other hand, believe that at least one dispute is decidable once and for all. In doing so, they seem to contradict (1-i), (1-ii) and/or (1-iii). I will back up this last claim much more carefully throughout the fourth and the fifth chapter. For now, let me take it for granted, while also underlining that dogmatists are those who suggest that their own works attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim. To suggest so is to indicate that a strong decision regarding at least one dispute is attainable.

c. Equipollence and Strong Non-Equipollence

The third sense in which the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft are radically distinct from one another is that, given any dispute whatsoever, skeptics also aim to spell out that it appears to exist an *isostheneia*, that is, an equipollence regarding the claims or practices of the conflicting parties. This is to state that, given (1), skeptics aim to spell out that such conflicting parties ultimately have equally rationally persuasive views. Dogmatists, on the other hand, argue that there are strong ways of avoiding the equipollency of their own claims or practices with those of their opponents. For dogmatists, this could be done by showing that, regardless of context, their claims are more rationally persuasive than their opponents'. This is because, for dogmatists, undeniable metaphysical claims would be justified by one or a conjunction of first principles or starting points.

By a starting point, it is to be understood a "self-evident" likewise undeniable metaphysical claim or criterion to deal with the dispute at stake that no person may rationally reject and that ultimately justifies all other claims and practices endorsed by the dogmatist. The dogmatist who endorses a single starting point may be called foundationalist dogmatist. I call coherentist dogmatist the dogmatist who embraces a conjunction of such starting points. On his part, Sextus states that skeptics aim to be

“philanthropic” regarding dogmatists; this is to state that skeptic “wish to cure by argument, as far as they can, the conceit and rashness of the Dogmatists”.⁴²

The dogmatist’ conceit and rashness is that of taking oneself to be able to provide an undeniable metaphysical claim, even though no such claim appears attainable. The philanthropic skeptic cure is pursued by means of a *tropos*, that is, a mode. Sextus spells out fifteen of such modes. He attributes ten of these modes to the “older skeptics”; he attributes five modes to “the more recent Skeptics”.⁴³ The latter modes, Diogenes states, are those of “Agrippa and his school”.⁴⁴ I will briefly comment on the tenth mode of the older skeptics in what follows. Nevertheless, I emphasize that that the modes of Agrippa have been traditionally understood as being the most challenging for dogmatists. This is why I would like to primarily focus on them in this dissertation.

The first mode of Agrippa is that of dispute; it is to suggest that it appears that any theoretical dispute at stake is an undecidable one in that claims about it that contradict or run in tension with one another have been held. Indeed, there have been contrasting claims even about what is a belief; what is an appearance; how beliefs are distinct from appearances; etc. Agrippa’s second mode is infinite regress. This mode indicates that that which is supposed to justify one’s claim about a theoretical dispute (e.g., a criterion to deal with the dispute at stake) is itself in need of further justification, and so on *ad infinitum*.

The third mode of Agrippa may be called relativity. This mode serves to indicate that one’s criterion to address the theoretical dispute at stake is not universally shared, but relative to one’s own culture. This is why others may rationally reject this criterion.

⁴² PH III 280.

⁴³ PH I 36 and PH I 164, respectively.

⁴⁴ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, (9.88).

Agrippa's fourth mode is hypothesis. This mode aims to show that, in order to avoid the infinite regress, one needs to ask one's opponents for a concession "without proof" of a hypothesis, say, a criterion to deal with the theoretical dispute at stake.⁴⁵ The fifth mode of Agrippa is circularity: to show that, in order to avoid asking for a concession, one may ultimately presuppose the very claim or the criterion to back up the claim that is being theoretically disputed. In relying on such modes, skeptics seek to insinuate that dogmatists are "sick" in believing that their claims are undeniable metaphysical ones.

d. Suspension of Judgment and Universal Judgment

Accordingly, there is a fourth sense in which the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft are radically distinct from one another: namely, skeptics seek to bring about at least in themselves an *epochē*, that is, a suspension of judgment. On their parts, dogmatists simply do not do so. Rather, what dogmatists do is to commit themselves to undeniable metaphysical claims. In other words, they make supposedly universal judgments. Now let me underline that to bring (at least in oneself) a suspension of judgment is not to be committed to the normative claim that one should do so. Instead, it is to not commit oneself to any claim whatsoever, including that very claim that one is to suspend judgment.

e. Tranquility and Fundamental Health

Finally, the fifth and last sense in which the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft are radically distinct from one another concerns what these crafts aim to achieve. Ultimately, skeptics seek to experience an *ataraxia*. This is a feeling of tranquility, that is, "a freedom

⁴⁵ PHI 168.

from disturbance or calmness of soul”; one that, skeptics insinuate, would arise after one suspends judgment.⁴⁶ What dogmatists, on their parts, seek to achieve is something quite different: they ultimately aim to experience what I would like to call a fundamental health. By this kind of health, it is to be understood that of rationally thinking in accordance with what all persons insofar as holders of *logos* think, act or should think and act.

1.3 Problematizing the Dogmatic and the Skeptic Craft

a. Against the Dogmatic Craft

I problematize the dogmatic craft by means of the skeptic craft. To do so is to follow skeptics in stating, to speak like them, that “it appears to me” that dogmatists ultimately suffer from the stated “conceit and rashness” identified by Sextus: that of taking oneself to be able to provide at least one undeniable metaphysical claim, even though no such claim appears attainable.⁴⁷ Notice that what points toward this objection to dogmatists is the very acknowledgment of (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii). More precisely, what I mean is that I embrace three claims. First, if, as (1-i) indicates, some others (who, I emphasize, are sometimes other dogmatists themselves) are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake, it is hard to understand how dogmatists can obtain any undeniable metaphysical claim, that is, it seems that certain others can and have actually constantly rationally rejected any allegedly undeniable metaphysical claim proposed by dogmatists. Furthermore, notice that the skeptic appeal to the aforementioned modes also points to this direction.

⁴⁶ PH I 10. Moreover, note that the interpretation of the skeptic craft proposed here is quite influenced by Burnyeat’s reading. As he states, this craft’s “sequence is: conflict – undecidability – equal strength – *epoché*, and finally *ataraxia*”. See Myles F. Burnyeat, “Can the Sceptic Live his Scepticism?”, pp. 209.

⁴⁷ PH III 280.

Hence, the second claim I have in mind is: if, as (1-ii) indicates, no person has settled a dispute once and for all, dogmatists seem to be, indeed, “conceited” in suggesting that their own works attest to otherwise. Third, it seems that dogmatists could only take themselves to be able to obtain at least one undeniable metaphysical claim if they “rashly” ignore (1-i) and (1-ii), say, by acting as if they did not have any others and, so, were able to solve disputes once and for all. This action, though, is quite unpersuasive because (1-i) and (1-ii) are, if not appearances in the sense embraced here, at least widely shared claims. Like skeptics, then, I am simply not convinced that dogmatists have been able to discover a truth of the matter or to attain a strong decision concerning any dispute whatsoever. I am also not convinced that dogmatists are able to strongly avoid the equipollence of their views with that of their opponents, such as their others. Accordingly, I am skeptical about the possibility of universal judgments and that of reaching the dogmatic goal of achieving the aforementioned universal health. In fact, I am inclined to believe that persons cannot obtain this health because their others are always problematizing *logos* or what one takes to be so. I highlight that this last claim as well as my objection to dogmatism will be further spelled in more detail as the dissertation proceeds, especially, in the fourth and in the fifth chapter.

b. Against the Skeptic Craft

I also problematize the skeptic craft by means of the dogmatic one. Nevertheless, I do not wish to do so in the most traditional way, that is, by embracing the stated traditional objection to the skeptic craft according to which this craft self-refutes itself insofar as its adherents propose but fail to live without having any belief. Notice that this objection can be found in Diogenes’s *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* itself and was more recently

rearticulated by Burnyeat.⁴⁸ It is not this dissertation's aim to discuss this objection in detail. Yet, I emphasize that this objection depends on a reading of the appearance / belief distinction insofar as those who endorse it suggest that belief involves an active volition to endorse one practice over another one. This dissertation is neutral on whether belief is to be characterized so, but a few points are likewise to be considered: the appearance / belief distinction, as indicated above, is not precisely made by Sextus; this dissertation has used the term "belief" in the stated sense of something "unclear" that leads to a theoretical dispute; and the problematic claim that belief also involves an active volition is one that leads to a theoretical dispute that skeptics may approach by means of the skeptic craft.

What will be presupposed, then, is that skeptics may live free of belief (in the stated sense endorsed here). They may do so by, on the one hand, endorsing what they take to be "clear" and uncontroversial appearances whenever they are inserted in everyday life contexts. On the other hand, they may adopt the skeptic craft in suspending judgment and not committing themselves to any "unclear" and controversial belief when they are within more dogmatic contexts of theoretical disputes. What skeptics cannot do, as Sextus himself acknowledges, is to live over and above appearances, that is, they need to embrace the four kinds of everyday observances. In doing so, skeptics cannot be neutral regarding practices, that is, they need to do something in taking one course of action instead of another one.

Notice that Sextus himself acknowledges that skeptics cannot be practically neutral; skeptics "are not able to be utterly inactive", he explicitly recognizes.⁴⁹ Indeed, the impossibility of practical neutrality may be a "clear" and uncontroversial appearance. What

⁴⁸ See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, (9.102-105); and Myles F. Burnyeat, "Can the Sceptic Live his Scepticism?", pp. 205.

⁴⁹ PHI 23.

Sextus does not acknowledge, though, is that the skeptic craft can be problematized by means of the dogmatic one, not by endorsing the stated traditional objection, but by pointing toward a properly skeptic kind of “conceit and rashness”: the conceit and rashness of apparently wishing to achieve an ultimately impossible neutrality regarding practices, while engaging oneself in the exclusively negative skeptical investigation and failing to positively explicitly justify the practices that oneself inevitably actively endorses. Let me carefully spell out what I mean by this alternative objection so that it becomes explicit that, ultimately, the skeptic conceit and rashness is just as problematic as that of the dogmatists.

Consider Sextus’ discussion of the tenth mode of the old skeptics. This mode is considerably similar to Agrippa’s relativity mode; it is that of opposing contrasting “persuasions and customs and laws and beliefs in myths and dogmatic suppositions” to one another.⁵⁰ For my purposes, it suffices to focus on Sextus’ discussion of custom, which he understands as “a common acceptance by a number of people of a certain way of acting, transgressors of which are not necessarily punished”.⁵¹ Note that Sextus limits himself to “oppose custom to custom”. His way of doing so is to stress that: “some of the Ethiopians tattoo their babies, while we do not; the Persians deem it becoming to wear brightly-coloured full-length dresses, while we deem it unbecoming; Indians have sex with women in public, while most other people hold that it is shameful”.⁵² My reading is that Sextus’ discussion of such customs is evidence of the alternative objection.

To begin with, in endorsing the merely negative skeptic investigation, Sextus seems to wish to achieve an ultimately impossible neutrality regarding practices. This is so insofar

⁵⁰ PHI 145.

⁵¹ PHI 146.

⁵² PHI 148.

as he simply does not care to spell out what he would do in a context in which he actually had to decide between accepting or rejecting the stated customs, that is, Sextus does not discuss whether he actively endorses the practices of tattooing a baby, wearing brightly-coloured full-length dresses or having sex with women in public. As if he could remain practically neutral regarding these practices and/or all other practices, what Sextus limits to do is to attempt to bring about at least in himself a suspension of judgment that would cause tranquility, that is, he indicates that to endorse or to not endorse the stated customs are equally rationally persuasive courses of actions. However, as Sextus acknowledges, skeptics “are not able to be utterly inactive”.⁵³ Hence, skeptics, like everybody else, need to endorse practices. I object, then, that the skeptic craft simply fails to positively explicitly justify the practices that skeptics inevitably endorse in the end, such as the very practices of tattooing or not tattooing a baby; wearing or not wearing brightly-coloured full-length dresses; having or not having sex with women in public; etc. So, a skeptic’s decision of adopting a practice as opposed to any other one is a barely justified decision. Arguably, this decision may be even an arbitrary one. Two other examples point to this direction.

First, imagine that Pyrrho was next to Alexander when the latter’s troops were positioned to fight those of the Indians. Imagine that, in relying on the skeptic craft and seeking to achieve tranquility, Pyrrho suspended judgment on whether this fight is to be held, that is, Pyrrho felt that to fight or not to fight the Indians were equally rationally persuasive courses of action so that no strong decision for one course of action or the other could be obtained. However, Pyrrho still had to act, say, by joining Alexander’s troops; trying to stop them in spelling out the skeptic craft; running away from the battle; remaining

⁵³ PHI 23.

paralyzed; crying in desperation; etc. I object, then, that in relying on the skeptic craft and apparently wishing to achieve an impossible neutrality concerning all of these practices, Pyrrho would fail to positively explicitly justify whatever practice he actively endorsed in the end. This is why his choice of one course of action, instead of another one, would be a barely justified choice. Arguably, his choice could even be a quite arbitrary one.

Second, imagine a male guard who works at the U.S. / Mexico border and turns out to be a skeptic. Imagine that this guard suspends judgment on the dispute on whether children of illegal Mexican immigrants caught in the border are to be separated from their parents. He feels that the decisions of separating and of not separating these children from their parents are equipollent, that is, their “levels” of rational persuasion are similar. Hence, from this guard’s perspective, neither one of these decisions seems a strong one. In fact, he feels that more right-wing politicians, such as Donald Trump or Jair Bolsonaro, are just as rationally persuasive as more left-wing ones of the likes of Barack Obama or the former Brazilian president, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva. Indeed, let me underline that, as the neo-Pyrrhonists, Bueno and Junqueira Smith themselves, state, another neo-Pyrrhonist, “Porchat (in conversation)”, goes as far as holding that “the skeptic could have any political doctrine, including a radical one: from extreme right to extreme left.”⁵⁴

However, note that the imagined guard still needs to act, say, by enforcing the law that children of illegal immigrants caught in the border are to be separated from their parents; turning the blind eye on this law and not enforcing it; quitting his job; etc. My view, then, is that in relying on the skeptic craft and apparently wishing to achieve an impossible neutrality concerning all of these practices, this guard would also fail to

⁵⁴ Otávio Bueno and Plínio Junqueira Smith, “Skepticism in Latin America”, pp. 9.

positively explicitly justify the practice he actively ultimately endorses; his practice would also be a barely justified practice and, perhaps, even an arbitrary practice. To put in the Portuguese language of neo-Pyrrhonists themselves, this is to state that a skeptic seems to aim, but inevitably fail to be an “*isentão*”, someone who takes no practical party once a dispute arises. Ultimately, skeptics simply take a barely justified or even arbitrary stance.

Note, though, that a, so to speak, hardcore skeptic could still insinuate that to have a barely justified or even an ultimately arbitrary stance is just as rationally appealing as having a justified and non-arbitrary stance; that, indeed, to attempt and fail to be an “*isentão*” is just as rationally appealing as to not do so in taking any other kind of position. I also have a reply to the hardcore skeptic, but I would like to postpone its articulation until this dissertation’s conclusion. I do so under two assumptions. First, in order to more persuasively reply to the hardcore skeptic, I need to establish several other points so that my own stance becomes explicit. Second, I take that most of this dissertation’s readers are not skeptics. Hence, they may be sufficiently convinced by my alternative objection.

1.4 The Conflictual Craft

I now characterize the conflictual craft in contrast to the skeptic and the dogmatic one. This will serve to spell out in which sense the former craft keeps certain aspects of the latter two crafts while avoiding both the dogmatic and the skeptic conceit and rashness.

a. Neither Appearances nor Beliefs but Claims

The conflictual craft is neither a skeptic ongoing investigation exclusively based on appearances nor a dogmatic inquiry that purports to have a particular kind of belief: an undeniable metaphysical claim. Like the skeptic craft, the conflictual craft is a kind of

investigation. Nonetheless, a conflictual crafter is someone who acknowledges the impossibility of practical neutrality, that is, the impossibility of being an “*isentão*”. This is why, like the dogmatist, the conflictual crafter explicitly seeks to justify whatever claims and/or practices one ultimately positively endorses. In doing so, the conflictual investigation provisionally stops the investigation. This is so insofar as the conflictual crafter settles for a claim and/or practice justified by whatever imperfect justificatory resources one currently has at his or her disposal. Indeed, this dissertation itself is, ultimately, a report of how I can currently justify my views on the disputes addressed here.

What I mean by an imperfect justificatory resource is a resource that backs up a claim and/or a practice in a way that currently strikes the conflictual crafter as being persuasive, even though this might change in the future and no end of the process of justification of one’s practices and claims seems predictable. In fact, this justificatory process may be one whose end is unpredictable or that is only bounded by the conflictual crafter’s own finitude.⁵⁵ This is why conflictual crafters are never completely epistemically satisfied; they never cease to attempt to justify their very own claims and practices, regardless of their very likely impossibility of convincing all of their others or even themselves once and for all. An example of an imperfect justificatory resource that I endorse is that of claiming that basic empirical observation of the history of metaphysics backs up (1); this observation will be spelled out in much more detail as I proceed. For now, consider that another imperfect justificatory resource endorsed here is that of claiming

⁵⁵ There might be some resemblances between the conflictual craft, and infinitist views, such as Peter Klein’s. This is not an issue that can be addressed here. For infinitism, see Peter Klein, “How to be an Infinitist about Doxastic Justification”, *Philosophical Studies* 134.1, 2007.

that my readings of the skeptic and the dogmatic craft back up (2). Distinct from skeptics, I am not neutral on all claims. I take (1) and (2) to be more persuasive than their denials.

This last move is controversial. This is so insofar as my others reject it; say, in suggesting that their others are not legitimate rational peers; in taking themselves to have solved a dispute once and for all; by taking the acknowledgement of (1-i) and (1-ii) to be ultimately irrelevant and/or by claiming that the conflictual craft is not a synthesis of the skeptic and of the dogmatic one able to articulate the system of disputes. Distinct from skeptics, though, I do not take the fact that my others will disagree with whatever move I make, with whatever criterion I propose or with whatever claim I endorse as a reason for seeking an ultimately impossible practical neutrality. Rather, this is merely a reason for recognizing myself as inevitably inserted into what I would like to call a conflictual community: a community in which theoretical and practical disputes constantly take place, and for every member x , there is another member y so that x and y are others of one another. A few examples of conflictual communities are: that of all holders of *logos*; the Western community; the community of all contemporary philosophers or, even more narrowly, the community of all philosophers in a philosophy department, such as that of the University of Miami or of the University of Bonn themselves. Also notice that the fact that the conflictual craft takes for granted that persons have always been inserted into such conflictual communities is a first reason for calling this craft a conflictual craft.

b. Neither Undecidability nor Strong Decision but Weak Decision

The conflictual craft neither seeks to skeptically spell out that disputes have seemed undecidable nor purports to dogmatically achieve a strong decision concerning them, that is, one that suggests that one's own work attests to the existence of at least one undeniable

metaphysical claim. Instead, the conflictual crafter is the one who takes oneself to be able to achieve a weak decision regarding disputes, that is, one that relies on merely deniable metaphysical claims, such as (1) and (2), backed up by imperfect justificatory resources, such as the very ones mentioned in the last sub-section. Another way to put this is by stating that conflictual crafters take that claims can be rationally supported, but not in an ultimately rationally undeniable way, as dogmatists have always wished. Note that a weak decision, then, does not lead to the ultimate end of the dispute at stake. Rather, this decision is merely one that is contextually accepted by some interlocutors but rejected by others, such as those who do not even grant that the dispute that one aims to address is a pertinent way to spend some time of one's life in the first place. What I mean, then, is that a weak decision does not purport to end conflict in convincing all persons once and for all in ending the dispute at stake. This is, accordingly, a second reason for calling my craft a conflictual one.

c. Neither Equipollence nor Strong Non-Equipollence, but Weak Non-Equipollence

The conflictual craft neither seeks to skeptically spell out the equipollence of conflicting parties' claims or practices, nor purports to strongly avoid the equipollency of one's own claims and practices with those of opponents, say, by suggesting that one's own claims are, regardless of context, more persuasive than those of one's opponents. Instead, what the conflictual crafter does is to weakly avoid the equipollency of one's own claims and practices with those of one's opponents. This can be done by recognizing that the conflictual crafter's claims and practices are not immune to the skeptic modes, and that their "level" of rational persuasiveness varies with context. In other words, a conflictual crafter is someone who acknowledges that one's own claims and practices are rationally

persuasive in certain contexts, such as those in which interlocutors share the conflictual crafter's sensibility regarding disputes; take the conflictual crafter's moves to be pertinent and even interesting; grant that the authors the conflictual crafter discusses are relevant and deserving of attention; do not ask for a definition of each and every term applied; do not entitle themselves to be rude with the conflictual crafter; are educated enough to understand the points the conflictual crafters seeks to establish; etc. There are contexts in which interlocutors do not have such characteristics. In such contexts, conflictual crafters grant that their views lack in rational persuasion and, so, may even intensify conflict by bringing more dissensus. This consequence, though, is very likely practically inevitable. Thus, conflictual crafters embrace it. This is a third reason for calling their craft a conflictual one.

d. Neither Suspension of Judgment nor Universal Judgment but Particular Judgment

Accordingly, the conflictual craft neither aims to bring about a suspension of judgement, nor purports to make universal judgments. Rather, this craft seeks to back up particular judgments, that is, deniable metaphysical claims, such as (1) and (2). Consider, then, that if Sextus were a conflictual crafter, he would rely on rationally deniable claims in seeking to avoid the stated alternative objection while justifying his own practices regarding tattooing or not tattooing babies, wearing brightly-coloured full-length dresses or having sex with women in public. Accordingly, when confronted with Alexander's troops, Pyrrho would have proceed in a similar manner, were him to be a conflictual crafter, that is, he would rely on deniable metaphysical claim in imperfectly justifying a course of action. The same would have been done by the guard in the U.S./ Mexico border, were him a conflictual crafter as opposed to a skeptic. In doing so, he would accept the impossibility

of not running into conflict with anyone, not even with others. Indeed, to live, for conflictual crafters, is basically to live in constant conflict with such others. This is, accordingly, a fourth reason for calling my craft conflictual craft.

e. Neither Tranquility nor Fundamental Health but Singular Health

Finally, the conflictual craft neither seeks the skeptic's tranquility nor the dogmatist's fundamental health. Indeed, given that persons have been inserted into all sorts of conflictual communities, I tend to think that it is impossible for them to actually fulfill these goals; it is simply "unrealistic" to even aim to do so. The reason is that persons who are inserted into conflictual communities are constantly running into theoretical and practical disputes, especially with others. Hence, it is quite hard to believe that anyone living in such communities could achieve the state of mind of tranquility or express a fundamental health. Now note that this last considerably weak claim is to be distinguished from a much stronger claim: the claim that skeptics as well as dogmatists have always implicitly naively attempted to bring about a non-conflictual community in which there are no theoretical and practical disputes, and that no one is an other of anyone else.

I am not committed to this stronger claim. However, I would like to state that I tend to agree with Forster when he speculates that Pyrrho might have had "at bottom a yearning for something from the past", that is, an Archaic non-conflictual Ancient Greek community.⁵⁶ In fact, I also tend to think that a dogmatist also yearns for something similar: a future non-conflictual community in which all persons unanimously agreed with the dogmatist's views on disputes. I cannot back up in detail these tendencies of mine in this

⁵⁶ Michael N. Forster, "Hegelian vs. Kantian Interpretations", pp. 70.

dissertation. However, let me underline that it seems that only in a non-conflictual community, one could achieve the skeptic tranquility or the dogmatic fundamental health.

Let me also underline the fifth and last reason for calling my craft a conflictual one: I, in a more “realist vein”, do not aim to bring about a non-conflictual community into existence, but, rather, seek to achieve a goal that is more likely attainable than the skeptic and the dogmatic one for who anyone who is inserted into a conflictual community. The goal I have in mind is that of bringing about at least in myself a singular health: that of thinking and acting with accordance with what properly characterizes myself in a way that currently strikes me as being persuasive and that may also be persuasive and helpful for other legitimate rational peers who are part of the conflictual communities I am inserted.

1.5 The System of Disputes

I claim, then, that the conflictual craft serves to formulate a neither skeptic, nor dogmatic system of disputes; thirteen claims characterize this system. (1) and (2) are the first two claims I have in mind. The eleven other ones will be supported by all sorts of imperfect justificatory resources, as the dissertation proceeds. However, before I start doing so, I would like to use this section to state and briefly explain such claims. This will allow readers to be aware of what is about to come in the next almost 300 pages.

The third claim of the system of dispute is a metametaphysical descriptive claim:

(3) Nietzsche and Carnap champion contrasting reactions to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. While doing so, they both endorse, but interpret differently an overcoming metametaphysics characterized by three metametaphysical normative claims:

(3-i) An overcoming of metaphysics is to be performed.

(3-ii) This overcoming is to be performed by adopting a method of

linguistic analysis that is suspicious of the metaphysical use of language and interprets such use through a different use of language that aims to avoid metaphysics.

- (3-iii) This overcoming is to contribute to the political task of resisting “diseased” metaphysical practices and promoting “healthy” non-metaphysical ones.

Nietzsche’s reaction is what may be called a libertarian reaction: that of theoretically defending claims that are to provoke dissensus, while practically resisting egalitarian practices and promoting libertarian ones. An egalitarian practice is one that privileges communitarian tendencies to either consciously or unconsciously contribute to create a really universal community, while seeking to attenuate one’s own’s singularity and/or the singularity of others, especially, deviants whose practices violate the norms of merely particular communities. By a merely particular community, I understand a considerably narrow community that exclusively seeks to defend the interests of a considerably narrow group of persons, such as that of all white, male, heterosexual, rich North Americans or Europeans. A really universal community is one that seeks to defend the interests of all beings or at least persons, regardless of their race, nationality, etc.

By a libertarian practice, it is to be understood one that privileges individualistic tendencies. These are tendencies to either consciously or unconsciously act in accordance and contribute to bring about (or, to put it in Nietzschean terms, to affirm) one’s own singularity and/or the singularities of others, while problematizing the constraints that any kind of community imposes upon such singularities. I read that, in symmetrical contrast to Nietzsche, Carnap embraces an egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in dispute. This reaction is to theoretically defend claims

regarding which consensus is to be reached, while practically resisting libertarian practices and promoting egalitarian ones. The fourth claim of the system of dispute is that:

- (4) The contrast between Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction is to be considered, not only by the few scholars who are interested in both of these philosophers' works, but by a far larger group of philosophers that includes: those who have addressed the continental-analytic gap; those who are concerned with the development of the history of 20th and 21st century philosophy; and/or those who are interested in the works of the likes of Foucault, Derrida, Lewis and/or van Inwagen.

Notice that this claim is a normative metametaphysical one. The same is the case with the fifth claim of the system of disputes: namely,

- (5) One is to do a synthesis of Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.

Another way to state (5) is by claiming that one is to act in accordance with a tendency; a tendency that—in contrast with Nietzsche's "will to power" and Carnap's "will to order" that will be addressed in the next chapter—I call the will to synthesis. The will to synthesis is the tendency to either consciously or unconsciously embrace the very contradictory conflict between one's communitarian tendencies (or will to order) and one's individualistic tendencies (or will to power), while seeking to maximize and achieve a balance that prudently satisfies both of these tendencies, even if to perfectly achieve such a balance may be ultimately impossible for inevitably imperfect persons. Another way to state this is by claiming that one acts in accordance with the will to synthesis when one aims to be an open-minded person who is both a libertarian and an egalitarian (as opposed to a more close-minded conservative person who is neither a libertarian nor an egalitarian).

The sixth claim of my system is also a metametaphysical descriptive claim:

- (6) There is no undeniable metaphysical claim, but a properly dogmatic “subtle” violence.

By a “subtle” violence, it is to be understood one that is distinct and not as easily identifiable as corporeal upfront forms of violence, such as that of punching someone. The properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, I aim to show in what follows, is that of Aristotle and several of his more or less conscious followers, such as Saint Anselm, David Hume, Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein and, more recently, Eli Hirsch. These are philosophers who adopt the dogmatic craft or crafts similar to it and suggest that their writings attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim, while not explicitly endorsing and, perhaps, even contradicting (1-i) and/or (1-ii). This is to read that these philosophers do not merely suffer from a “conceit and rashness”, as Sextus suggests, but, rather, in expressing a “subtle” violence, insinuate that their others are not legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake, and/or that one’s works settle at least one dispute once and for all.

In providing textual evidence from writings by the philosophers named in the last paragraph, I aim to show that this insinuation has been quite pervasive in the history of metaphysics, and that those who embrace it are neither libertarians nor egalitarians but, rather, conservatively act in discordance with the will to synthesis. The seventh claim of the system of disputes is the metametaphysical descriptive claim that, as the contrasts between the works of Nietzsche, Carnap and their respective followers indicate,

- (7) Disputes are micro-political conflicts analogous to macro-political conflicts, that is, they are micro-wars.

By a micro-war, I understand a micro-political conflict analogous to a macro one. An example of a macro-political conflict is the quarrel on whether the bronze equestrian

statue of the former confederate general Robert E. Lee is to be removed from a public park in Charlottesville, Virginia, USA. I presuppose that three features characterize a macro-political conflict: first, a significant social importance, that is, not only a single individual, family or group of acquaintances care about the conflict but, rather, hundreds, thousands, millions or even billions of people; second, parties involved in a macro-political conflict explicitly pressure a significant group of people (beyond their families or group of acquaintances) to change their practices by sometimes even resorting to violence, such as that of marching with torches and screaming words of order; and, third, in a macro-political conflict, there is an explicit presence of normative issues, say, on which criterion is to be adopted to deal with the macro-conflict at stake in the first place.

On the other hand, a micro-war, that is, a micro-political conflict is one that merely implicitly has these very three features. This is to state that this conflict is one whose significant social importance is not upfront. Moreover, the parties engaged in a micro-political conflict pressure a significant group of people to change their practices without relying on upfront kinds of violence, even if more “subtle” kinds of violence may be used. Finally, in micro-political conflicts, normative issues are not very openly present but, rather, need to be made explicit by quite specialized readers of the conflict at stake.

The system of disputes’ eighth claim is the metametaphysical descriptive one that

- (8) There has been a right-wing allegedly apolitical approach to disputes that, perhaps, avoids the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, but still expresses the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence.

I make a case for this claim by addressing the views of three allegedly apolitical philosophers on the theoretical dispute on whether, independently of the way entities are

described, they have essences: Quine, Kripke and Kit Fine.⁵⁷ By a pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence, I understand that of not explicitly contradicting (1-i) and (1-ii), while still, nonetheless, contradicting (1-iii). This is done by those whose views are quite unpersuasive insofar as they ignore or at least do not consider that: among the others, some are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake and no person has settled a dispute once and for all. A right-wing approach is to be understood as one that is less tolerant than a left-wing approach because right-wingers privilege their needs for self-defense over their powers to show empathy toward others; left-wingers do the opposite in being more open-minded than more close-minded right-wingers.

It is assumed that empathy and self-defense are mental states that both have a passive as well as an active component. I am inspired by Michael Slote in assuming that to passively empathize is to feel the suffering of someone else (e.g., that of an other) or at least to recognize that this suffering exists.⁵⁸ To actively empathize is to act under the influence of this suffering in ceasing to give or at least attenuating the importance of one’s particular identities so that this suffering is reduced. A particular identity (e.g., to be from the South of the USA) is one shared by some, but not all persons. To passively self-defend oneself is to feel that others are a threat to one’s particular identities or to one’s life. To actively self-defend oneself is to act under the influence of this feeling so that one’s life and/or particular identities are protected. I also argue that right-wingers who express the

⁵⁷ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*; Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*; and Kit Fine “Essence and Modality”, in *Philosophical Perspectives Vol. 8*, 1994: pp.1-16.

⁵⁸ Michael Slote, *From Enlightenment to Receptivity: Rethinking our Values*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; “Philosophy’s Dirty Secret: What Virtue Epistemology Needs to Learn about Human Irrationality”, forthcoming; and “Philosophical Sin”, forthcoming.

pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence are neither libertarians, nor egalitarians, but, instead, conservatively act in discordance with the will to synthesis in contradicting (5).

The ninth claim of the system of dispute is a metametaphysical normative one: that

- (9) The properly dogmatic and the pseudo non-dogmatic “subtle” violence are to be avoided.

Those who express either of one of these two kinds of “subtle” violence, I highlight, are this dissertation’s deep opponents as opposed to merely superficial ones. I assume that x is a deep opponent regarding y if and only if x and y are others regarding one another and disagree regarding the practices that are to be endorsed in the first place. More directly, they disagree on how one is to spend the time of one’s life. Hence, this dissertation’s deep opponents are those who are my others and express either one of the two kinds of “subtle” violence, while making it very hard for me to engage myself in the very task of articulating the system of disputes, say, those who, practically speaking, are unwilling to accept into a graduate program, invite to give a talk, hire as a faculty member and/or publish someone who aims to articulate this system. I underline that the notion of a deep opponent is closely connected, but distinct from that of other. Consider that one of my others is a Chinese philosopher who contradicts any claim or criterion endorsed here; someone who has been educated and worked in China, while reacting mainly to Confucius and those influenced by him, whose views, unfortunately, I currently ignore and do not have the proper education to address. Imagine, though, that this Chinese philosopher is not my deep opponent in that: his practices do not run in tension with mine; he does not pressure me to cease to do philosophy as I aim to do; and I also do not pressure him to drop his practices.

I take that x is a superficial opponent regarding y if and only if x and y agree on the practice of engaging themselves on a certain dispute, while holding conflicting claims on the dispute at stake. Consider two physicalist-driven philosophers, say, Nagel and Dennett.⁵⁹ They are superficial opponents of one another. While theoretically disagreeing on the existence of consciousness, they have practically agreed on the practice of pursuing this discussion in the first place. Deep opponents of both Nagel and Dennett are those who are others regarding these philosophers and oppose the very practice of spending a considerable amount of one's life in discussing the existence of consciousness. I emphasize that this dissertation is focused on my deep opponents; not on the superficial ones.

I make cases for the tenth, eleventh and twelfth claims of my system by applying Gilles Deleuze's particular method of reading (his "immaculate conception") to Deleuze's works themselves.⁶⁰ This method of reading is that of: on the one hand, using the author's writings as evidence to support exegetical claims while, on the other hand, making problematic interpretative moves. Examples of such problematic moves are: to translate the author's terminology to a distinct terminology the author never adopted; to justify these translated claims in manners the author never openly embraced; to connect passages by the author that are not obviously connected to one another; to spell out the author's view on disputes the author never explicitly approached; etc. The tenth and eleventh claims of my system are both metametaphysical normative ones. Respectively, they run as follows:

- (10) A left-wing political practice of politicization that deals with micro-wars by

⁵⁹ Thomas Nagel, "Dennett: Content and Consciousness" and "Dennett: Consciousness Dissolved", in *Other Minds: Critical Essays 1969-1994*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995; and Daniel Dennett, "Quining Qualia" and *Consciousness Explained*.

⁶⁰ Gilles Deleuze, "Letter to a Harsh Critic" in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin, New York, Columbia University, 1995.

avoiding the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence is to be pursued as an alternative to the right-wing allegedly apolitical approach.

- (11) The left-wing political practice of politicization is to be prudently pursued in a metamodernist way as opposed to a modernist way.

The twelfth claim is the descriptive metametaphysical claim that

- (12) This very dissertation illustrates how one can do so.

A modernist way of pursuing the left-wing practice of politicization is one that presupposes that philosophers are to: rely on alternative uses of language; impersonate their others in their writings; and point toward a new context, say, one in which all persons would understand their others to be part of a really universal conflictual community as opposed to threats to merely particular communities. In seeking to do so, modernist philosophers aim to self-defend themselves from opponents (e.g., right-wingers) in pressuring them to think and act differently. Modernist philosophers may also go as far as shocking or embarrassing their opponents. “Shock” is a term used here in the sense of the feeling of being deeply offended by someone or something that disrespected something that one values deeply, such as a statue that represents one’s historical heritage; a criterion to deal with disputes, such as accordance with one’s intuition; a reading of a respected author; etc. “Embarrassment” is applied in the sense of an attenuated kind of shock: the feeling of being upset by someone or something that disrespected something that one values deeply.

By a metamodernist way of pursuing the left-wing practice of politicization, it is to be understood one that: identifies that the modernist assumptions have become widely shared norms (especially among philosophers influenced by Nietzsche, such as Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze himself); problematizes the modernist assumptions in spelling that

those who take them for granted today face the risk of proceeding as inverted right-wingers who privilege their needs for self-defense over their powers to show empathy toward those who ignore the modernists assumptions or norms of political correctness; and paradoxically still satisfies the modernist assumptions. As it will be indicated throughout this dissertation, metamodernist philosophers may likewise shock or embarrass opponents of theirs.

The system of disputes' last claim is also a metametaphysical descriptive one:

(13) Disputes have an incommensurable greatness.

I claim that disputes have a greatness in the sense that, since immemorial times, persons have deeply cared about disputes in being strongly emotionally compelled to spend a considerable amount of their lives' times in addressing disputes. This greatness is incommensurable because no common unit of measurement to quantify over it seems obtainable, that is, it seems impossible to measure persons' overall "amount" of emotions and/or time spent in dealing with disputes.⁶¹ Now I would like to use all sorts of imperfect justificatory resources to back up (3) through (13). More precisely, in the second chapter, I deal with (3). I establish (4) and (5) in the third chapter. (6) is supported in the fourth chapter. Cases for (7), (8) and (9) are to be found in the fifth chapter. In the sixth chapter, I would like to argue for (10), (11) and (12). Finally, the seventh chapter, that is, this dissertation's conclusion spells out reasons for (13) as well as for taking that the conjunction of all the claims of the system of disputes with my cases for them further justify the two claims already introductorily defended in this introduction, that is, (1) and (2).

⁶¹ I will always apply the term "incommensurable" in the stated sense. There have been, however, several other uses of such term and of other terms closely related to it, such as "incommensurability". I cannot address this issue here. For such a research, see Ruth Chang, "Incommensurability (and Incomparability)", in Hugh LaFollette (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Ethics*, New Jersey, Wiley-Blackwell, 2013: pp. 2591-2604.

CHAPTER 2 OVERCOMING METAMETAPHYSICS: NIETZSCHE AND CARNAP⁶²

2.1 The Climate of Animosity

A core feature of twentieth-century philosophy, as the introduction already indicated, was a climate of animosity between the practitioners of what appear to be two considerably distinct kinds of philosophy: so-called “continental philosophy” and so-called “analytic philosophy.” Hence, contemporary continental and analytic philosophers have constantly been deep opponents of one another, that is, they have, to say the least, disagreed on which disputes are to be pursued in the first place. Friedrich Nietzsche is considered a key figure of continental philosophy, while Rudolf Carnap is widely regarded as one of the main representatives of analytic philosophy. Accordingly, as the next chapter aims to show, continental philosophers, such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, have been influenced by Nietzsche but practically ignored Carnap. On the other hand, many analytic philosophers have not paid much attention to Nietzsche. Instead, they have developed their projects in the light of Carnap’s, even when they do not explicitly state so. This is the case, as the next chapter also aims to show, with David Lewis and Peter van Inwagen. It is therefore not surprising that work connecting Nietzsche and Carnap is largely lacking.

As such, it is also not surprising that there is a widely shared assumption that Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s projects of overcoming metaphysics have little in common, even though this assumption is rarely examined in detail. The reading supported here is that Nietzsche’s project and Carnap’s, indeed, are quite distinct from one another insofar as they champion contrasting reactions to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have

⁶² This chapter is an expanded version of an article of mine. See Felipe G. A. Moreira, “Overcoming Metametaphysics: Nietzsche and Carnap”, *Nietzsche-Studien*, Volume 47, Issue 1, Nov. 2018: pp. 240-271.

been engaged in disputes. Nietzsche relies on a presupposition: that one is to react to the stated fact by, theoretically speaking, defending claims that are to provoke dissensus, while, practically speaking, resisting egalitarian practices and promoting libertarian ones. As stated in the introduction, an egalitarian practice is one that privileges one's communitarian tendencies over one's individualistic tendencies. In Nietzsche's words, these tendencies are "herd instincts" and "instincts for the wild", respectively.⁶³

I appeal to textual evidence in imperfectly justifying all my exegetical claims about Nietzsche and Carnap. This includes the exegetical claim that the former presupposes that one is to defend claims that provoke dissensus. This exegetical claim is backed up by textual evidence that indicates that Nietzsche takes consensus to lack value. Hence, the "philosophers of the future" are not even to aim at reaching such consensus.⁶⁴ Note that were all persons to do so, perhaps, disputes would disappear insofar as no one would attempt to convince anyone else of one's claims. Indeed, Nietzsche goes as far as implying that philosophers of the future would not even care about what their opponents think about their views. In Nietzsche's words: "'my judgment is my judgment: other people don't have an obvious right to it too' —perhaps this is what such a philosopher of the future will say".⁶⁵ Nietzsche also states that "we must do away with the bad taste of wanting to be in agreement with the majority".⁶⁶ This would be because "'good' is no longer good when it comes from your neighbor's mouth. And how could there ever be a 'common good'! The term is self-contradictory: whatever can be common will never have much value".⁶⁷

⁶³ BGE 202 and GM II 16, respectively.

⁶⁴ BGE 42, 44, 210.

⁶⁵ BGE 43.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Nietzsche concludes, then, that, “in the end, it has to be as it is and has always been: great things are left for the great, abysses for the profound, delicacy and trembling for the subtle, and, all in all, everything rare for those who are rare themselves”.⁶⁸

My reading, then, is that Nietzsche also presupposes that one is to resist egalitarian practices and promote libertarian ones. Consider Nietzsche’s take on “socialist fools and nitwits”.⁶⁹ The latter, he claims, are engaged in a “brutalizing process of turning humanity into stunted little animals with equal rights and equal claims”.⁷⁰ Nietzsche also describes the statement “equal rights for everyone” as a “poisonous doctrine”.⁷¹ He likewise criticizes the constraints that communities place upon persons. Indeed, a person would be a “prisoner” in a community.⁷² This is because communities would be herds comparable to prisons insofar as they would not allow one to act in accordance with one’s individualistic tendencies. Ultimately, herds would oppress such tendencies. In Nietzsche’s words,

Those terrible bulwarks with which state organizations protected themselves against the old instincts of freedom —punishments are a primary instance of this kind of bulkwark — had the result that all those instincts of the wild, free, roving man were turned backwards, *against man himself*.⁷³

It follows that, for Nietzsche, a herd would be a “declaration of war against all the old instincts on which, up till then, [one’s] strength, pleasure and formidableness had been based”.⁷⁴ It also follows that Nietzsche describes himself as “warlike by nature” in the particular sense of someone who promotes libertarian practices that do or at least seek to

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ BGE 203.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ BGE 203.

⁷² GM II 16.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

do justice to such old instincts.⁷⁵ No similar move can be found in Carnap's works. In fact, consider his 1963 *Intellectual Autobiography*. In this work, Carnap explicitly underlines that, after serving in the German forces during World War I, he ceased to be "uninterested and ignorant in political matters".⁷⁶ It was then that his "political thinking" became "pacifist, anti-militarist, anti-monarchist, perhaps also socialist".⁷⁷ Carnap also goes as far as stating that "all of us in the [Vienna] Circle were strongly interested in social and political progress. Most of us, myself included, were socialists".⁷⁸

Regardless of the Vienna Circle's influence in contemporary analytic philosophy, this last passage points to a striking difference between the circle's members and several (if not most) contemporary analytic philosophers, such as Willard Van Orman Quine, Saul Kripke and Kit Fine. The latter (at least in their writings) have been neither strongly interested in social and political progress, nor called themselves socialists.⁷⁹ The importance of this point will be spelled out in the fifth chapter. For now, I emphasize that Carnap (especially in his works from the 1920s to the 1930s focused on here) contradicts Nietzsche in relying on a distinct presupposition: that one is to react to the fact that, since

⁷⁵ EHI 7.

⁷⁶ IAB 9.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ IAB 22.

⁷⁹ The same can be stated about several contemporary analytic philosophers who describe themselves as being inspired by Carnap. See, for example, David Chalmers, "Ontological Anti-Realism", in David Chalmers (ed.), David Manley (ed.) and Ryan Wasserman (ed.), *Metametaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; Huw Price, "Metaphysics After Carnap: The Ghost Who Walks?", in David Chalmers (ed.), David Manley (ed.) and Ryan Wasserman (ed.), *Metametaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance and Realism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; and Amie L. Thomasson, *Ontology Made Easy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015. Note that these philosophers have all focused on the 1950s Carnap, especially in Rudolf Carnap, "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology", *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* Vol 4, 1950: pp. 20-40. A revised version of this paper is: Rudolf Carnap, "Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology", in *Meaning and Necessity: A Study of Semantics and Modal Logic*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1956. For a discussion of the differences between these versions, see Susan Haack, "Some Preliminaries to Ontology", *Journal of Philosophical Logic* Vol. 5, Issue 4, 1976: pp. 457-474. For a case for the claim that Eli Hirsch's deflationism is less persuasive than that of the 1950s Carnap, see my own Felipe G. A. Moreira, "An Apology of Carnap", *Manuscrito* (Unicamp), Vol 37, Número 2, 2014: pp.261-289.

immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes by, theoretically speaking, defending claims regarding which consensus is to be reached; while doing so, one is to, practically speaking, resist libertarian practices and promote egalitarian ones.

Carnap presupposes that one is to defend claims on which consensus is to be reached in that his works contain passages, like the following one from his autobiography:

Even in the pre-Vienna period, most of the controversies in traditional metaphysics appeared to me sterile and useless. When I compared this kind of argumentation with investigations and discussions in empirical science or in the logical analysis of language, I was often struck by the vagueness of the concepts used and by the inconclusive nature of the arguments. I was depressed by disputations in which the opponents talked at cross purposes; there seemed hardly any chance of mutual understanding, let alone of agreement, because there was not even a common criterion for deciding the controversy.⁸⁰

This passage suggests that Carnap was depressed with practices held by philosophers, or, more narrowly, “metaphysicians” in a properly Carnapian sense that will be spelled out in what follows. These practices, he insinuates, would be less valuable than those of empirical scientists and logicians. The reason would be that the two latter ones would have more often reached consensus among one another. Hence, Carnap implies that philosophers are to attempt to be more similar to empirical scientists and logicians, that is, they are to seek to reach consensus with one another, instead of relying on distinct incompatible criteria to deal with disputes. As Carnap states in his 1928 *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*: “in philosophy we witness the spectacle (which must be depressing to a person of scientific orientation) that one after another and side by side a multiplicity of incompatible philosophical systems is erected”.⁸¹ Thus, Carnap might have been suspicious of this very dissertation’s aim of articulating a system of disputes. The same can be stated about Nietzsche who states: “I distrust all systematizers and avoid them. The will to a system is

⁸⁰ IAB 44-45.

⁸¹ LSW xvii.

a lack of integrity.”⁸² In the next chapter, yet, I indicate how the system of disputes still does justice to both Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s project of overcoming of metaphysics.

For the time being, though, I emphasize that Carnap, practically speaking, also resists libertarian practices and promotes egalitarian ones. He associated libertarian practices to, among others, philosophers themselves who erect the aforementioned “incompatible philosophical systems” and, as it will be made explicit in what follows, to Nazi-like politicians.⁸³ Such libertarian practices would be “sterile and useless” for they would not contribute to the creation of a really universal community. Therefore, instead of articulating unique views of their own, like Nietzsche suggests, Carnap argues that philosophers are to contribute to a common effort. That Carnap is committed to this practice is indicated by the fact that the 1929 Vienna Circle’s manifesto —*The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle* —puts the “emphasis on *collective efforts*”.⁸⁴

Indeed, this manifesto itself is the result of one of such efforts, bringing together Carnap, the other two authors who signed the manifesto, Hans Hahn and Otto Neurath, and further members of the Vienna Circle, such as Herbert Feigl, Friedrich Waismann, and Philipp Frank, who also contributed to its writing.⁸⁵ This manifesto champions a “specifically scientific attitude”.⁸⁶ The focus of this attitude is on defending that “what

⁸² TI I 26. Note that, nevertheless, some of Nietzsche’s interpreters have claimed that Nietzsche himself implicitly articulated a system. See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983; and John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1996.

⁸³ See, especially, LOG.

⁸⁴ Rudolf Carnap, Hans Hahn and Otto Neurath, “Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung: Der Wiener Kreis [The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle]”, in Otto Neurath, Marie Neurath (ed.) and Robert S. Cohen (ed.), *Empiricism and Sociology*, Dordrecht, D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1973: pp. 306.

⁸⁵ For a detailed discussion of the roles that each of the philosophers mentioned played in the development of the Vienna Circle’s Manifesto, see Thomas Uebel, “On the Production, History, and Aspects of the Reception of the Vienna Circle’s Manifesto”, *Perspectives on Science* Volume 16, Number 1, Spring 2008: pp. 70-102.

⁸⁶ Rudolf Carnap, Hans Hahn and Otto Neurath, “Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung”, pp. 304.

can be said at all, can be said clearly' (Wittgenstein),” and “if there are differences of opinion, it is in the end possible to agree, and therefore agreement is demanded”.⁸⁷ I read this passage as Carnap’s way of promoting the practice of at least attempting to make dissensus among philosophers decrease. This is to state that Carnap aims, as he indicated in his 1934 “On the Character of Philosophic Problems”, to make “philosophical conflict” or “philosophical combat” disappear.⁸⁸ One way to achieve this would be by adopting a use of language with greater clarity than conventional language.

Hence, it seems against this background that it would be uninteresting to explore the connections between Nietzsche and Carnap; that it would be much more pertinent to deal with these figures separately, as most of Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s readers have done throughout the 20th century and even today. Three reasons make me resist this conclusion. The first reason, as it will be spelled out in detail, is the textual evidence that Carnap read and sometimes even held a positive view of Nietzsche’s writings. Given the influence that Carnap and Nietzsche have had on 20th century as well as in contemporary philosophy, I tend to go as far as believing that this textual evidence already provides sufficient justification for an inquiry that connects the views of these two philosophers.

The second reason for not separating Nietzsche and Carnap is that Neurath explicitly claimed that “Nietzsche and his critique of the metaphysicians took an active part in the flourishing of the Vienna School”.⁸⁹ There is also a third reason for resisting the assumption that it is not worth comparing Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s views: despite the

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Rudolf Carnap, “On the Character of Philosophic Problems”, trans., William M. Malisoff, *Philosophy of Science* Vol 1, No. 1, Jan., 1934: pp. 15 and 16, respectively.

⁸⁹ Otto Neurath, *Gesammelte philosophische und methodologische*, Vienna, Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1981: pp. 652.

differences mentioned above, and several others that will be discussed later, some scholars, over the last twenty five years or so, have indicated that Nietzsche's and Carnap's conceptions of philosophy are marked by significant similarities.

According to Steven D. Hales, Nietzsche and Carnap “are interested in undermining metaphysics, both think that there is something wrong with ordinary language that leads us into error, both consider metaphysics to be ‘not yet science’ (TI III 3), and both prefer historical and empirical analyses to metaphysical speculation”.⁹⁰ Along similar lines Michael Friedman stated that “it is possible that Carnap, too, made a connection between ‘overcoming metaphysics’ and Nietzsche”.⁹¹ Moreover, Gottfried Gabriel observes that “with Carnap, so to speak, Frege’s *Begriffsschrift* lies on the desk and Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* on the bedside table”.⁹² Abraham Stone “carefully” speculates that “Carnap’s statement that the ‘future belongs to our attitude’ [might be one of] Nietzschean rational faith”⁹³. On his part, Carl Sachs claims that “Carnap appeals to Nietzsche as anticipating, though no doubt in a confused form (because lacking the tools of modern logic), the overcoming of metaphysics that has finally become possible with logical empiricism”.⁹⁴ Finally, Thomas Mormann goes as far as defending that “Nietzsche influenced considerably [Carnap’s] thought-style and even the content of his philosophizing”.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Steven D. Hales, “Nietzsche on Logic”, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Vol. 56, No. 4, 1996: pp. 828.

⁹¹ Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, Illinois, Open Court, 2000: pp. 23.

⁹² Gottfried Gabriel, “Carnap’s ‘Elimination of metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language’: A Retrospective Consideration of the Relationship between Continental and Analytic Philosophy”, in Paolo Parrini (ed.), Wesley C. Salmon (ed.), Merrilee H. Salmon (ed.), *Logical Empiricism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003: pp. 36.

⁹³ Abraham D. Stone, “Heidegger and Carnap on the Overcoming of Metaphysics”, in Stephen Mulhall, *Martin Heidegger*, London, Ashgate Publishing, 2006: pp. 232.

⁹⁴ Carl B. Sachs, “What is to be Overcome? Nietzsche, Carnap, and Modernism as the Overcoming of Metaphysics”, *History of Philosophy Quarterly* Vol 28, Issue 3, 2011: pp. 312.

⁹⁵ Thomas Mormann, “Carnap’s Boundless Ocean of Unlimited Possibilities: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism”, in Pierre Wagner (ed.), *Carnap’s Ideal of Explication and Naturalism*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012: pp. 72.

If the remarks above are correct, and I am inclined to assume that they are, we are faced with a question that has not received much attention: can we articulate a persuasive reading of Nietzsche's and Carnap's views on metaphysics which does not ignore their obvious differences, while spelling out their underlying similarities? This chapter aims to back up a positive answer. I do so by articulating an interpretation according to which:

- (3) Nietzsche and Carnap, as indicated above, champion contrasting reactions to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. While doing so, they both endorse, but interpret differently an overcoming metametaphysics characterized by three metametaphysical normative claims:
 - (3-i) An overcoming of metaphysics is to be performed.
 - (3-ii) This overcoming is to be performed by adopting a method of linguistic analysis that is suspicious of the metaphysical use of language and interprets such use through a different use of language that aims to avoid metaphysics.
 - (3-iii) This overcoming is to contribute to the political task of resisting "diseased" metaphysical practices and promoting "healthy" non-metaphysical ones.

This is, as stated in the introduction, the system of disputes' third claim. Now let me explain what I mean and seek to imperfectly back this claim up throughout the rest of this chapter.

2.2 The Overcoming of Metaphysics

"For me personally", Carnap states in his *Intellectual Autobiography*, "Wittgenstein was perhaps the philosopher who, besides Russell and Frege, had the greatest influence on my thinking".⁹⁶ That Carnap never mentions Nietzsche as one of his influences can be explained by the context of his autobiography. Carnap moved to the United States in 1935, and he was still alive there when his autobiography was published

⁹⁶ IAB 25.

in 1963. During the 1950s, “McCarthyism”—the persecution of anything deemed “anti-American” and “subversive” by Senator Joseph McCarthy through congressional hearings and FBI investigations—marked intellectual life throughout the United States. George A. Reisch showed that the influence of this policy of intellectual oppression on American philosophy departments cannot be underestimated. Such policy, Reisch argues, contributed to “the decline in North American of so-called public intellectuals and the growth of research universities as the main institutions of intellectual life in North America”.⁹⁷

Note that, distinct from the Vienna circle members and others, such as Charles W. Morris, those educated and/or employed by such institutions (especially in analytic philosophy departments) have often taken themselves to be politically neutral. As Reisch indicates, this may have been one of the very reasons for why the latter’s careers have flourished, whereas that of philosophers, such as Neurath, Frank and Morris, “suffered [...] a professional decline in the decades after the war”.⁹⁸ For complex reasons that I cannot approach here, Carnap’s career did not suffer such decline. Indeed, despite his stated socialist inclinations, he was often depicted “as a professional, apolitical philosopher during and after the Cold War”.⁹⁹ Yet, around 1954-1955, Carnap himself was investigated by the FBI under the pretense that he was engaged in “subversive political activity”.¹⁰⁰

The fact that these investigations even occurred made Carus conclude that “Carnap was careful not to associate his academic works with anything that might attract unwelcome attention from authorities or university administrations”.¹⁰¹ As Gabriel also

⁹⁷ George A. Reisch, *How the Cold War Transformed Philosophy of Science: to the Icy Slopes of Logic*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005: pp. 369.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 382.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 369.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 274.

¹⁰¹ A. W. Carus, *Carnap and Twentieth-Century Thought: Explication as Enlightenment*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2007: pp. 36.

emphasizes, it is very likely that Carnap felt the need to adapt his work to the new philosophical context in which he had adhered.¹⁰² From the 1930s to the 1960s, most American philosophers were not familiar with Nietzsche's works. In fact, many American philosophers might have associated Nietzsche with some sort of transgressive thinking and/or Nazism.¹⁰³ Therefore, it is plausible to assume that Carnap felt that to mention Nietzsche in this American context would be problematic if not outright offensive.

Before his immigration, Carnap refers positively to Nietzsche in two of his published works. The first is his 1928 *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, where Carnap mentions Nietzsche's name three times. First, Carnap agrees with "Nietzsche [*Wille*] §§276, 309, 367 ff." that the "self is not implicit in the original data of cognition" and he goes as far as quoting and endorsing the following passage of what was then assumed to be Nietzsche's book *The Will to Power*: "it is merely a formulation of our grammatical habits that there must always be something that thinks when there is thinking and that there must always be a doer when there is a deed".¹⁰⁴ Second, Carnap endorses and quotes a passage by Wilhelm Schuppe: "the thinking of the individual begins with total impression [that is, a conjunction of several sensations] which only reflection analyses into their simple

¹⁰² Gottfried Gabriel, "Carnap's 'Elimination of metaphysics'", pp. 56.

¹⁰³ To dissociate Nietzsche from Nazism was one of the main aims of Walter Kaufmann *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1950. This work gave rise to the English-speaking tradition of Nietzsche scholarship. For a discussion of Nietzsche's reception in this American context, see Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen, *American Nietzsche: A History of an Icon and His Ideas*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2012: pp. 219-62.

¹⁰⁴ LSW 105. The passage Carnap refers to can be found in *Nachlass* 1887, KSA 10 [58] as well as in WP 477. Note that *The Will to Power* was edited by Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche. She put together several of Nietzsche's fragments by relying on one of the plans that he left for a work which was supposed to be entitled "The Will to Power." Elisabeth organized two editions of the book. The first is from 1901, and has 483 fragments. The second is from 1906; it contains 1067 fragments. It is hard to determine which one of the two versions Carnap read (if any). This is because, in the bibliography to *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, Carnap cites Nietzsche's book as having been published in 1887. Carnap's references to Nietzsche can be found on pages 105, 108 and 261 of the latest English edition of the *Aufbau* released in 2003. According to Mormann, Carnap used a "rather apocryphal edition of Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* (edited by Max Brahn)". See Thomas Mormann, "Carnap's Boundless Ocean", pp. 73.

elements [e.g., a particular visual sensation]”.¹⁰⁵ Carnap claims that Hans Cornelius endorsed this view and took “Nietzsche” to be a predecessor of it.¹⁰⁶

Third, Carnap objects to Descartes that the “*sum* does not follow from the *cogito*; it does not follow from ‘I experience’ that I am’, but only that an experience is”.¹⁰⁷ “A similar denial of [the self’s] activity in the original [experiential] state of affairs,” Carnap states, “is found in Nietzsche [*Wille*] §§304, 309”.¹⁰⁸ I agree with Carnap’s reading of Nietzsche here. Nietzsche, indeed, claims that “people are following grammatical habits [...] in drawing conclusions, reasoning that ‘thinking is an activity, behind every activity something is active, therefore’”.¹⁰⁹ “It is”, Nietzsche concludes, “a *falsification* of the facts to say that the subject ‘I’ is the condition of the predicate ‘think’”.¹¹⁰

The second published work in which Carnap mentions Nietzsche is the one that the champions of the interpretative tendency have focused on, Carnap’s 1931 “Überwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache” (henceforth, “Überwindung der Metaphysik”).¹¹¹ My reading also focuses on this piece, whose conclusion is that:

Our conjecture that metaphysics is a substitute, albeit an inadequate one, for art, seems to be further confirmed by the fact that the metaphysician who perhaps had artistic talent to the highest degree, viz. Nietzsche, almost entirely avoided the error of that confusion. A large part of his work has predominantly empirical content. We find there, for instance, historical analyses of specific artistic phenomena, or an historical psychological analysis of morals. In the work, however, in which he expresses most strongly that which others express through metaphysics or ethics, in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, he does not choose the misleading theoretical form, but openly the form of art, of poetry.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ LSW 108.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 261.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ BGE 17.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Rudolf Carnap, “Überwindung der Metaphysik durch Logische Analyse der Sprache”, *Erkenntnis* Vol 2, 1931: pp. 219-241.

¹¹² EML 80.

Nietzsche, Carnap claims, is a metaphysician. Nonetheless, he would have been significantly different from other metaphysicians, such as “Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Bergson [and] Heidegger”.¹¹³ In contrast to the latter, Carnap claims that Nietzsche would have often adopted two non-metaphysical procedures—an empirical procedure and an explicitly poetic procedure that can be found in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Moreover, Nietzsche would have practically never made a move that Carnap associates with the other metaphysicians named in the last paragraph—that of confounding the roles of metaphysics and poetry; “Nietzsche clearly separates the two [*Nietzsche hat beides deutlich getrennt*]”.¹¹⁴ The latter quote is from an unpublished manuscript by Carnap entitled *Lectures in Europe (Items 18-29)*. In this text, Carnap’s notes to “Überwindung der Metaphysik” can be found. In his unpublished manuscripts, Carnap refers to Nietzsche at other occasions. I will return to these manuscripts later.

For now, let me commit myself to the following disjunction: either the conclusion of “Überwindung der Metaphysik” is evidence that, in adopting an egalitarian practice, Carnap aimed to spell out agreements between his own position and that of an opponent (that is, Nietzsche)¹¹⁵, or this conclusion is Carnap’s way of insinuating that Nietzsche was indeed one of his influences after all. The latter option, suggested by Sachs, becomes as persuasive as the former as soon as we take into account that Carnap’s article is concerned with the *Überwindung* of metaphysics.¹¹⁶ The connections between Carnap’s philosophy,

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Rudolf Carnap, “Lectures in Europe (Items 18-29)”, Unpublished Manuscript (1929-37), University of Pittsburgh, Archive for Scientific Philosophy, code: (RC110-07-21). Carnap’s manuscripts remain unpublished and are held by the Archive of Scientific Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh’s Hilman Library. All translations are my own.

¹¹⁵ As Mormann claims, Carnap was “always engaged in the business of building bridges and finding ways of reconciling apparently irreconcilable philosophical positions”. See Thomas Mormann, “Carnap’s Boundless Ocean”, pp. 63.

¹¹⁶ See Carl B. Sachs, “What is to be Overcome?”. pp. 312.

on the one hand, and Kant and neo-Kantianism, on the other, have been pointed out by many commentators.¹¹⁷ Yet, “*Überwindung*” is not a word Kant or the neo-Kantians used in the sense of overcoming metaphysics. Kant’s project is concerned with the limits, or the very possibility of metaphysics, not its “*Überwindung*”. Most importantly, this word is pervasive throughout and characteristic of Nietzsche’s works. Thus, given the textual evidence that Carnap read Nietzsche, two conclusions become plausible: that Carnap was aware of “*Überwindung*” as a distinctly Nietzschean term and that he aimed to (so to speak) sound “Nietzschean” in using this term in the title of “*Überwindung der Metaphysik*”.

From 1870, when “*Überwindung*” appears for the first time in Nietzsche’s notebooks, until 1889, when it is used for the last time in *Ecce Homo*, 109 is the number of times Nietzsche uses this term.¹¹⁸ These uses are more recurrent in the notebooks. I cannot analyze all of them. What I do is to focus on a single passage from Nietzsche’s notebooks in 1885. In this passage, he relies on the very same expression found in Carnap’s article; “*Überwindung of metaphysics*”.¹¹⁹ In spelling out what Nietzsche means by this expression, and in highlighting his commitment to (3-i), (3-ii) and (3-iii), I will proceed by connecting several passages of Nietzsche’s late phase. A coherent view of what Nietzsche meant by “metaphysics” will be, then, outlined. This procedure is problematic. Yet, similar ones have been adopted by many readers of Nietzsche.¹²⁰ One heuristic reason for this

¹¹⁷ See, for example, Alan W. Richardson, *Carnap’s Construction of the World: The Aufbau and the Emergence of Logical Empiricism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998; Michael Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999; and A. W. Carus, *Carnap and Twentieth-Century Thought*.

¹¹⁸ See *Nachlass* 1870, KSA 5 [23]) as well as EH I 4.

¹¹⁹ *Nachlass* 1885, KSA 40 [65].

¹²⁰ See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, Patrick Wotling, *Nietzsche et le problème de la civilisation*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1995, Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche: His Philosophy of Contradictions and the Contradictions of His Philosophy*, Illinois, University of Illinois Press,

approach has been emphasized by John Richardson: “the strongest kind of claim any single reading [of Nietzsche] can plausibly make for itself [is] to pick *one* voice or aspect in Nietzsche’s writings, and show how to see that voice as somehow dominant, somehow trumping or subordinating the many other incompatible voices also there”.¹²¹ The voice in Nietzsche’s writings that I wish to focus on sometimes sounds proto-Carnapian.

Neither Carnap nor Nietzsche explicitly spell out the meaning of *Überwindung*. Moreover, in his 1936 presentation of logical positivism for an English-speaking audience, *Language, Truth and Logic*, A. J. Ayer translated *Überwindung* as “elimination”.¹²² This is also the word adopted in the only translation into English of Carnap’s “*Überwindung der Metaphysik*”, the 1959 translation of Arthur Pap. On the other hand, “overcoming” is the translation used by many recent interpreters of “*Überwindung der Metaphysik*” and by all English translators of Nietzsche. I am inclined to agree that *Überwindung* is more accurately translated by “overcoming” than by “elimination”, but I think the best translation is not a single English word but a phrase: the challenging process of attempting to triumph over an obstacle or an opponent. For the sake of consistency, though, I would like to follow the standard use of “overcoming” as a translation of *Überwindung*.

It might seem that the remarks made in the previous paragraph are relevant only for translators, but it is indeed the case that different translations of *Überwindung* as either “overcoming” or “elimination” lead to radically different interpretations. Referring to “elimination”, Ayer and Pap suggested that Carnap aimed to perform what might be called an eradication of metaphysics. By this, I understand a relation that obtains whenever a

1999: John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System* and John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s New Darwinism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004; etc.

¹²¹ John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s New Darwinism*, pp. 9.

¹²² A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, London, Dover Publication, 1936.

philosopher articulates a philosophical position that cannot be called metaphysical in any sense whatsoever. Note that “metaphysics” is an extremely equivocal term. The same can be stated about its cognates (e.g. “metaphysical”) and about expressions that contain the term “metaphysics”, such as “overcoming of metaphysics.” What I wish to stress out is that, since ancient Greek philosophy, several meanings have been associated with “metaphysics,” among them: an inquiry into first principles, the science of being *qua* being, an unscientific investigation that violates the conditions for cognitive experience, an ideology comparable to religion that ultimately serves the interests of the dominant class, a phallogocentric practice, etc. So, it seems that Carnap’s statement “there is no unanimity whatever [...] on what is meant by ‘metaphysics’” was as correct in 1928 as it is in 2019.¹²³

More importantly, if Carnap aimed to perform an eradication of metaphysics, it would be easy to object, following Hilary Putnam, that Carnap ultimately failed in his attempt to formulate a philosophical project that has nothing in common with metaphysics in any of its several senses.¹²⁴ Putnam seems to assume that Carnap used “metaphysics” in the sense of an inquiry that articulates statements which violate the verification principle. In Carnap’s “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, this principle is defined as follows: a word is meaningful if and only if it is part of, or reducible to, the words contained in “protocol sentences”.¹²⁵ So, a statement with words that violate this principle is a meaningless one. Protocol sentences refer to what is immediately observable or verifiable. Carnap’s “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, yet, is neutral with regard to the content and the form of

¹²³ LSW 295.

¹²⁴ Hilary Putnam, “Philosophers and Human Understanding,” in *Realism and Reason: Philosophical Papers Vol 3*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981.

¹²⁵ EML 63.

such protocol sentences.¹²⁶ As Putnam points out, several of the statements endorsed by Carnap himself also violate the verification principle.¹²⁷ Indeed, this principle itself cannot be verified so that Carnap's project would still be "metaphysics" in Putnam's sense.

Moreover, had Nietzsche been engaged in an eradication of metaphysics, a similar objection could be raised against his position: that his project is a failure in that he aims, but fails to articulate a philosophy that has no content in common with metaphysics in any of its several senses. This is what Martin Heidegger means when he describes Nietzsche as "the *last metaphysician* of the West".¹²⁸ Consider the following statement by Nietzsche:

(NM) "The innermost essence of being is will to power".¹²⁹

Heidegger uses the term "metaphysics" in the sense of an inquiry into Being.¹³⁰ I would like to presuppose a reading according to which, for Heidegger, Being is an universal identity, that is, one that is shared by all entities (e.g., human beings, animals, natural kinds, artifacts, etc.) and ultimately characterizes them insofar as entities. I underline that I use the term "entity" in a loose way that is to cover all sorts of beings, objects or things philosophers have talked about, such as evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness.¹³¹

¹²⁶ For a detailed account of Carnap's view on protocol sentences, and of his dispute with Neurath, see Thomas Uebel, "Reconstruction as Elucidation? Carnap in the Early Protocol Sentence Debate", *Synthese* Vol 93, No. 1 / 2, Carnap: A Centenary Reappraisal, Nov., 1992: pp. 107-140, A. W. Carus, *Carnap and Twentieth-Century Thought* as well as George A. Reisch, *How the Cold War*.

¹²⁷ For a discussion of this problem, see Rudolf Carnap, "On the Character of Philosophic Problems". For a detailed reply to Putnam's objection on behalf of Carnap, see Thomas Ricketts, "Carnap's principle of tolerance, empiricism, and conventionalism", in Bob Hale (ed.) and Peter Clark (ed.), *Reading Putnam*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994.

¹²⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes Three and Four*, New York, Harper Collins, 1991: pp. 8. Also see Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two*, New York, Harper Collins, 1991.

¹²⁹ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [80].

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ In doing so, I remain neutral on whether there are specific conditions for the individuation of entities. For a discussion of this matter, see Willard Van Orman Quine "Speaking of Objects". *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, Vol. 31 (1957-1958): pp. 5-22.

Under Heidegger's influence, I take that another feature of God-driven philosophers is that they focus on the theoretical dispute over the claim that: Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with God. I would like to use the expression "some sort of non-causal relation" as a schematic place holder for all kinds of relations described by idioms, such as: identity idioms (e.g., "is identical to" or "is token or type identical to"); semantic idioms (e.g., "has a meaning reducible to that of"); modal idioms (e.g., "could not have existed if there was no"); epistemic idioms (e.g., "is conditioned by"); and properly metaphysical idioms (e.g., "is the very principle of" or "participates in").

Note that, when relying on such idioms, God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers have the burden of more precisely spelling what they mean by them. On my part, this is not a task that I pursue in this dissertation.¹³² It is also important to notice that, if it is granted that evil exists, another theoretical dispute arises for God-driven philosophers: namely, they have to explain how evil and God can coexist or, in other words, they are to spell out how there can be evil if Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with God. Another characteristic of human-driven philosophers is that they focus on a distinct theoretical dispute: that over the claim that Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with that which conditions human experience. Some purported examples of such conditions are: Kant's transcendental subject; struggle of classes; a particularly human psychology or *logos*; language, history and culture; institutional power relations; white supremacy; patriarchal gender oppression; etc. Moreover, consider that if it is granted that a thing-in-itself exists, human-driven philosophers are to deal with another

¹³² For recent takes on properly metaphysical idioms, see Jessica M. Wilson, "Grounding-Based Formulations of Physicalism", *Topoi* 37, 2018; and Jonathan Schaffer, "Ground Rules: Lessons from Wilson", in Kenneth Aizawa (ed.) and Carl Gillett (ed.), *Scientific Composition and Metaphysical Ground*, London, Palgrave, 2016.

dispute: that of explaining the non-causal relation between such a thing-in-itself and that which conditions human experience or, in other words, the dispute of spelling out how can there be a thing-in-itself, if Being is some sort of non-causal relation with these conditions.

In addressing statements such as (NM), Heidegger interprets Nietzsche as doing “metaphysics” in the Heideggerian sense.¹³³ Nietzsche, though, would not have understood Being as God or as human-driven philosophers have done. Rather, Nietzsche would have believed that, not only human beings have individualistic tendencies, but that Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with the ultimately individualistic will to power. I am inclined to agree with Heidegger that this is, indeed, what (NM) indicates. The same can be stated about the fact that Nietzsche calls the “will to power” the “essence of life”: one that would be constituted by “spontaneous, aggressive, expansive, re-interpreting, re-directing and formative forces”.¹³⁴ Indeed, let me go as far as taking this passage as an indication that Nietzsche was a human-yet-physicalist-driven philosopher.

This is because though he still associates Being to an apparently human factor, such as a “will”, he calls such a will, one of power and describes power in terms of “forces”. In doing so, Nietzsche somehow anticipates and points toward a distinct theoretical dispute that 20th and 21st century physicalist-driven philosophers have privileged: that over the claim that Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with a neither divine, nor properly human entity. The particles postulated by physics are examples of neither divine, nor properly human entities. Furthermore, note that if the existence of consciousness is

¹³³ For other readings that take Nietzsche to be doing “metaphysics” in senses closely related to, but not exactly identical with Heidegger’s, see Peter Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995; and John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System*. On the other hand, for readings that dissociate Nietzsche’s project from “metaphysics” see Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, and Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

¹³⁴ GM II 12. For detailed discussions of Nietzsche’s will to power, besides Heidegger’s books on Nietzsche, see Peter Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, and John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System*.

acknowledged, physicalist-driven philosophers run into the distinct theoretical dispute over the non-causal relation that consciousness has with such entities. A more Heideggerian way of articulating this dispute is by asking: how does consciousness exist if Being is some sort of non-causal relation with neither divine, nor properly human entities, like particles?

It is not my aim, then, to put into question Heidegger's view that Nietzsche understood the will to power as Being.¹³⁵ Moreover, my goal is not to problematize Putnam's view that Carnap was himself committed to statements that violate the principle of verification. What is crucial for this dissertation's purposes is that even if Heidegger's and Putnam's views are correct, Nietzsche's and Carnap's projects do not need to be read as failures inasmuch as they aimed but failed to perform an eradication of metaphysics. It is more persuasive to attribute both to Nietzsche and to Carnap the aim of performing what may be called an overcoming of metaphysics. This is a relation that obtains whenever a philosopher articulates a philosophy that seeks to have no content in common with metaphysics in the specific sense of "metaphysics" adopted by this philosopher (as opposed to any other sense of metaphysics that an interpreter attributes to the philosopher at stake).

This means that we can read Nietzsche's project, on its own terms, as being successful, since he aimed and succeed in performing an overcoming of metaphysics in the sense that he uses the term. In short, Nietzsche does not use "metaphysics" in a Heideggerian sense; rather, Nietzsche uses "metaphysics" in a Nietzschean sense, referring to a set of claims first articulated by Socrates and/or Plato, such as the claims that "causal

¹³⁵ As Friedman remarks, "in the mid to late 1930s, in connection with his work on Nietzsche and his increasing concern with technology, Heidegger began to use the expression 'overcoming metaphysics' to characterize his own philosophical ambitions". To discuss Heidegger's overcoming, though, is not a task that I can pursue in this dissertation. See Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, pp. 23.

efficacy” exists, that the “will is a *faculty*”, and that the “I” is a “substance”.¹³⁶ It is not my goal to discuss all of these claims. What I would like to do, instead, is to focus on three of such claims that are particularly characteristic of metaphysics in Nietzsche’s sense of the term. The first of these claims is that there are hierarchical oppositions of values.

In Nietzsche’s words, “the fundamental belief of metaphysicians is the *belief in oppositions of values*”.¹³⁷ “Truth-error”, “the will to truth-the will to deception”, “selfless-self-interest” and “wisdom-covetous leer” are some of the oppositions that Nietzsche has in mind.¹³⁸ Metaphysicians would have assumed that the first term in the aforementioned oppositions is more valuable than the second term. A second claim that would characterize metaphysics is one that most contemporary analytic philosophers would associate with epistemology, not metaphysics. The claim is that one is to pursue “certainty”.¹³⁹ Metaphysicians would “prefer a handful of ‘certainty’ to an entire wagonload of pretty possibilities”.¹⁴⁰ In fact, Nietzsche continues, “there might even be puritanical fanatics of conscience who would rather lie dying on an assured nothing than an uncertain something”¹⁴¹. Although Nietzsche does not explicitly spell out what he means by “certainty”, I would argue that he understands this as a phenomenon which occurs whenever a claim does not require any further “support” in convincing even skeptics.¹⁴²

A third claim that would characterize metaphysics is that there is a “true world”.¹⁴³ Nietzsche suggests that those who share this view embrace some sort of realism. Realism,

¹³⁶ TI III 5.

¹³⁷ BGE 2.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ GS V 347, BGE 10.

¹⁴⁰ BGE 10.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² GS V 347.

¹⁴³ EH P and TI IV.

in this respect, is the conjunction of two claims: there are entities, such as God or particles, that are not conditioned by the stated examples of what conditions, *and* these entities or at least some of their properties can be known by means of these conditions. A characteristic that God-driven philosophers and most physicalist-driven philosophers share is that of often presupposing realism. Nietzsche also speaks in terms of an “illusory world”.¹⁴⁴ With this expression, it is not clear whether he refers to strong or to weak idealism. The former is the claim that there are no entities that exist independently or that are not conditioned, that is, this is the claim held by the likes of Johann Gottlieb Fichte that there is no thing-in-itself. Weak idealism is the Kantian claim that though such things-in-themselves exist, human beings cannot know them in themselves, but only conditionally. Note that another feature of human-driven philosophers is that they often endorse strong or weak idealism.

It follows that Nietzsche’s overcoming of metaphysics may be read as the task of practicing a philosophy that aims to put into question the three claims that he associates with metaphysics. It also follows that my reading is that Nietzsche is committed to (3-i). I claim that the same is the case with Carnap, even though he interprets this statement very differently from Nietzsche. Indeed, my reading is that, like Nietzsche’s project, we may read Carnap’s project as successful on its own terms. This is to state that he does not aim to overcome what Nietzsche, Putnam or Heidegger calls “metaphysics”; rather, what Carnap aims is to overcome what he himself calls “metaphysics”—a term that Carnap does not use in the exact same sense in his 1928 *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* and in his 1957 remarks to “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, originally published in 1931.

¹⁴⁴ TI IV.

“Metaphysics,” Carnap states in 1928, is “the result of a nonrational, purely intuitive process”.¹⁴⁵ This is what I call the first Carnapian sense of metaphysics: Carnap dissociates rationality from metaphysics in depicting it as an intuitive (emotional or volitional) activity. For Carnap, “rational” is a term that mainly or, perhaps, exclusively refers to the inquiries in the formal sciences—that is, logic and mathematics—and in the empirical sciences. These inquiries would be theoretical ones that seek to answer what Carnap calls in his 1934 “Theoretische Fragen und praktische Entscheidungen” “theoretical questions”.¹⁴⁶ Two examples of such questions are: “Is $2 + 2 = 4$?” and “Are spiders arthropodes?” Carnap’s view is that answers to theoretical questions have truth-values. The same would not be the case with regard to practical questions.

Practical questions would concern what Carnap calls “decisions [*Entscheidungen*]”, such as the decision to adopt a certain empirical theory over another one.¹⁴⁷ In his 1937 article “Logic”, Carnap spells out three conditions for thinking to be “logical” or “reasonable”: “clarity, consistency and adequacy to evidence”.¹⁴⁸ Metaphysicians—in the sense of philosophers who practice metaphysics in the first Carnapian sense—would disrespect these conditions. This is because, in appealing to irrational intuitions, they would rely on a considerably mysterious barely justificatory resource, perhaps, comparable to those of taking oneself to be, like an Ancient Greek poet, inspired by a muse; or purporting, like a prophet, to have a direct sensible access to God.

¹⁴⁵ LSW 295.

¹⁴⁶ Rudolf Carnap, “Theoretische Fragen und praktische Entscheidungen”, *Natur und Geist*, Dresden 2. Jahrgang Nummer 9, September 1934: pp. 257-260.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 257.

¹⁴⁸ LOG 108.

In the 1957 remarks to “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, Carnap attaches a second meaning to metaphysics: that metaphysics is an inquiry which embraces a claim that most contemporary analytic philosophers would also associate with epistemology, not with metaphysics. The claim is that we can obtain a “knowledge of the essence of things which transcends the realm of empirically founded, inductive science”.¹⁴⁹ Without providing textual evidence, Carnap problematically attributes this claim to “Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Bergson [and] Heidegger”.¹⁵⁰ These philosophers are Carnap’s main targets; they would be metaphysicians, since they would have practiced metaphysics in the first and in second Carnapian senses. Carnap never precisely spells out what he means by an “essence”. This is also a problematic move, given that this term, as it will be discussed in the fifth chapter, has been traditionally applied in at least two senses: that of a necessary property, and that of a real definition, that is, a definition that ultimately or properly characterizes what an entity is. Regardless of which of these two senses or any other one Carnap had in mind when using the term “essence”, my reading is that his article “Überwindung der Metaphysik” is concerned with an overcoming of metaphysics, whose task is that of problematizing a view purportedly shared by Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Bergson and Heidegger. The view is that they are engaged in a theoretical inquiry able to use irrational intuitions to provide a sort of mysterious knowledge of the essence of things; a sort of mysterious knowledge that would be neither mathematical nor empirical knowledge.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ EML 80.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ I am also inclined to follow Adrian W. Moore in believing that Carnap’s project strongly resembles Hume’s: both describe metaphysics as falling short of standards of knowledge that only formal sciences (mathematics and logic) and the empirical sciences could fulfill. See Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012: pp. 279.

2.3 How Can an Overcoming of Metaphysics be Performed?

Nietzsche and Carnap implicitly answer the question of how to overcome metaphysics by endorsing distinct readings of (3-ii), that is, in order to perform an overcoming of metaphysics, one is to adopt a method of linguistic analysis. Note that to endorse this method is not to embrace weak or strong idealism. Rather, it is to put into question the very way philosophers in general—including human-driven philosophers themselves—have articulated their views, while engaging themselves in disputes.

Three features characterize the method I have in mind. The first is an attitude of suspicion concerning the metaphysical use of language. For Nietzsche, a metaphysical use of language inclines one to accept claims that he takes to be particularly characteristic of metaphysics. As indicated in the last section, Nietzsche sees the metaphysical use of language as falling into the category of “grammatical habits”.¹⁵² His aim is to step back from such habits by not taking for granted the assumptions apparently implied by them. He even goes as far as stating that his contemporaries still follow God-driven philosophers in believing in God because their grammatical habits incline them to do so.

“I am afraid”, Nietzsche states in this sense, “that we have not got rid of God because we still have faith in grammar”.¹⁵³ The previously mentioned passage from Nietzsche quoted in Carnap’s *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* likewise indicates Nietzsche’s commitment to the stated attitude of suspicion. Nietzsche suggests that philosophers have been inclined to adopt assumptions about the self since grammar has seduced them to do so. Nietzsche’s attitude of suspicion is likewise present in the preface to *Beyond Good and*

¹⁵² *Nachlass* 1887, KSA 10 [58], BGE 17.

¹⁵³ TI III 5.

Evil, where he states the following: “*what* actually served as the cornerstone of those sublime and unconditional philosophical edifices that the dogmatists used to build” might have been “some word-play perhaps, [and] a seduction [*Verführung*] of grammar”.¹⁵⁴

A similar insight lies at the very core of Carnap’s project. Consider:

(PS-i) Caesar is a prime number.

Carnap addresses this statement by arguing that “the fact that the rules of grammatical syntax are not violated easily seduces [*verführt*] one at first glance into the erroneous opinion that one still has to do with a statement, albeit a false one”.¹⁵⁵ Metaphysicians would also have fallen prey to a similar seduction while endorsing the metaphysical use of language. For Carnap, such a use of language makes metaphysicians inclined to believe that metaphysics is a theoretical rational process, and/or that metaphysics is able to provide a mysterious knowledge of the essence of things that is neither mathematical nor empirical. This helps explain why metaphysicians make claims, such as the following one presented in Heidegger’s 1929 lecture “What is Metaphysics?”:

(PS-ii) “The nothing nothings”.¹⁵⁶

The second feature that the analysis of language has to possess in order to overcome metaphysics is a collection of the metaphysical uses of language. The aim of this collection

¹⁵⁴ BGE P.

¹⁵⁵ EML 68. For an objection to Carnap’s interpretation of (PS-i) as meaningless, see Elisabeth Camp, “The Generality Constraint and Categorical Restrictions”, *Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 54, No. 215, April 2004: pp. 209-231.

¹⁵⁶ This is how Arthur Pap translates the sentence “Das Nichts nichtet”. See Rudolf Carnap, “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, pp. 230 as well as EML 70. Heidegger’s sentence itself is “Das Nichts selbst nichtet”. See Martin Heidegger, “Was ist Metaphysik?”, in *Gesamtausgabe: I. Abteilung: Veröffentlichte Schriften 1914-1970 Band 9 Wegmarken*, Frankfurt, Vittorio Klostermann, 1976: pp. 114. Also consider Martin Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?”, trans. David Farrel Krell, in David Farrel Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*, New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 1993.

is to indicate the particularity that makes metaphysical language seductive in the first place. Nietzsche fulfills this aim by emphasizing that metaphysicians have relied on terms, such as: “Being, the Unconditioned, the Good, the True, [and] the Perfect”.¹⁵⁷ On his part, Carnap collects the following “specifically metaphysical terms” in order to spell out the particular nature of metaphysical language: “‘the Idea’, ‘the Absolute’, ‘the Unconditioned’, ‘the Infinite’, ‘the being of being’, ‘non-being’, ‘thing in itself’, ‘absolute spirit’”, etc.¹⁵⁸ I emphasize that, as indicated above, in Carnap’s article “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, Nietzsche himself is depicted as a “metaphysician”.¹⁵⁹ This may be interpreted as suggesting that Carnap believed that Nietzsche also relied on metaphysical terms; the “will to power” is an example that Carnap might have had in mind. Nevertheless, Carnap never explicitly states which statements by Nietzsche, if any, are metaphysical in the first and/or second Carnapian sense, and it is therefore hard to understand how Carnap would have read a statement, such as (NM). I will not speculate on this matter here.

Instead, I am going to emphasize what is explicit: in the conclusion of “Überwindung der Metaphysik”, Carnap claims that Nietzsche’s uses of language were mostly either scientific or poetic. The scientific use would be characterized either by its use of tautologies (as in a formal science, like logic or mathematics) or by its aim of providing empirical knowledge (as in the empirical sciences). The following two statements exemplify these two characteristics of the scientific use: respectively,

(S-i) $1+1 = 2$

(S-ii) Spiders are arthropodes.

¹⁵⁷ TI III 4.

¹⁵⁸ EML 67.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 80.

For Carnap, (S-i) is an analytic, *a priori*, and necessary statement, which belongs to the formal sciences. (S-ii) would be a synthetic, *a posteriori*, and contingent statement, which belongs to the empirical sciences. Carnap, then, endorses a dual picture of science.¹⁶⁰

Consider that statements that have the same features of (S-ii) are recurrent in Nietzsche's works. An example is the following statement from *The Genealogy of Morals*:

(NS) "The Romans were the strong".¹⁶¹

In contrast to the scientific use of language, the poetic use of language is characterized by the aim to provide a special expression of emotions. Consider the following line by Arthur Rimbaud: "*L'étoile a pleuré rose au cœur de tes oreilles*". This verse can be translated to:

(P) The star has wept rose-colored in the heart of your ears.

Carnap reads Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as an example of a poetic use of language and he might have used the following as a particularly poignant example:

(NP) "*The desert grows: woe to him who harbors deserts!*"¹⁶²

The third and last feature that the analysis of language has to possess in order to overcome metaphysics is an interpretation of the metaphysical uses of language by means of another use whose aim is to avoid metaphysics. As indicated above, Nietzsche aims to avoid metaphysics in the Nietzschean sense and, in order to achieve this, he relies on what

¹⁶⁰ This is another reason for claiming Carnap's project resembles Hume's, as indicated by Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*. Moreover, note that Carnap's dual picture of science is problematized by Willard Van Orman Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", *Philosophical Review* Vol 60, No 1, Jan 1951: pp. 20-43.

¹⁶¹ GM I 6.

¹⁶² Z III 16 [2].

might be called a medical-philosophical use of language. Carnap, on the other hand, seeks to avoid metaphysics in the first and the second Carnapian senses. In order to do so, however, he (perhaps, considerably surprisingly) interprets metaphysical uses of language through a metalinguistic use of language that, not unlike Nietzsche, reads metaphysical language as a symptom that metaphysicians are somehow sick, that is, self-delusional.

The main characteristic of Nietzsche's medical-philosophical use of language is a technical distinction between "health" (*Gesundheit*) and "sickness" (*Krankheit*).¹⁶³ While health would be an individualistic tendency toward harmony, sickness would be a communitarian tendency toward disharmony. Nietzsche also claims that an organism is healthy whenever a "dominating passion" rules all others.¹⁶⁴ When this occurs, Nietzsche argues that "the co-ordination of the inner systems and their operation in the service of one end is best achieved".¹⁶⁵ An organism is sick when an "antagonism of the passions" takes place. Nietzsche describes this situation as an "inner ruin" and as physiological "anarchism".¹⁶⁶ What Nietzsche also suggests is that to be healthy is to live in accordance with what he as Heidegger indicates may have taken to be Being: the will to power. "What is good?", Nietzsche asks, answering: "Everything that enhances people's feeling of power, will to power, power itself"¹⁶⁷. He also suggests that to be sick is to fail to exist in accordance with the will to power; it is to cease to strive for the affirmation of one's own

¹⁶³ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [65].

¹⁶⁴ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [173].

¹⁶⁵ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [157].

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* For a more detailed take on Nietzsche's notions of health and disease, see Daniel R. Ahern, *Nietzsche as Cultural Physician*, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995. Also see my own Felipe G. A. Moreira, *Nietzsche como se sem metáfora: mente, corpo, doença e saúde na obra nietzschiana*, Unpublished Master Dissertation, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2011.

¹⁶⁷ A 2.

singularity in negating oneself while acting in accordance with a “herd instinct”.¹⁶⁸ When Nietzsche asks “What is bad?”, his response is: “Everything stemming from weakness”.¹⁶⁹

Nietzsche’s objection to Plato and Socrates, then, is not of an ethical, epistemic or metaphysical kind. Rather, in relying on his medical-philosophical use of language Nietzsche articulates what I would like to call a clinical objection: Plato’s metaphysical use of language attests to the fact that Plato and Socrates were sick. Nietzsche takes “Socrates and Plato as symptoms of decay, as agents of Greek disintegration, as pseudo-Greek, as anti-Greek”.¹⁷⁰ He also sees “signs of Socrates’s decadence not only in [his] admitted chaos, and anarchy of his instincts, but in the hypertrophy of logic as well as in his emblematic rachitic spite”.¹⁷¹ “Everything about [Socrates] is exaggerated”, Nietzsche concludes.¹⁷² This exaggeration gives rise to the “most bizarre of all equations”, that is, the “Socratic equation of reason = virtue = happiness”.¹⁷³

Socrates’s equation maps onto what Nietzsche regards as the Christian “herd” of the later 19th century. Accordingly, he claims that “Christianity is Platonism for the ‘people’” and “a hangman’s metaphysics”.¹⁷⁴ As such, it is not surprising that Nietzsche should have relied on his medical-philosophical use of language in interpreting that “all the [Christian] concepts of ‘God’, ‘the soul’, ‘virtue’, ‘sin’, the ‘beyond’, ‘truth’, ‘eternal life’” are “*lies* from the bad instincts of sick natures”.¹⁷⁵ In fact, it is because of their sick physiological egalitarian disharmony that Christians apply the predicates “evil” (*böse*) and

¹⁶⁸ G I 2.

¹⁶⁹ A 2.

¹⁷⁰ TI II 2.

¹⁷¹ TI II 4.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ BGE P, and TI VI 7, respectively.

¹⁷⁵ EH II 10.

“good” (*gut*) in a particular way: evil refers to selfishness, while goodness refers to selflessness.¹⁷⁶ For Nietzsche, then, 19th century European culture was the result of a tradition that started with Socrates and Plato. This tradition entails degeneration and has bred “the domestic animal, the herd animal, the sick animal: man, —the Christian”.¹⁷⁷

Hence, Nietzsche sees some of his others —that is, anyone who champions egalitarian practices, such as Socrates, Plato and Christians in general— as deep opponents who would be attacking his as well as everybody else’s (including their own’s) individualistic tendencies. My reading, then, is that Nietzsche uses his clinical vocabulary as a way to self-defend himself from such opponents and as a means to pressure them to change their practices of being in ultimate discordance with the will to power. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to claim that Nietzsche aimed to shock or embarrass these deep opponents of his in derogatorily describing them with expressions, such as “sick animals” and “herd animals”. Given that Nietzsche does so, it is also plausible to read that he somehow proceeds like a dogmatist. This is because, as opposed to a conflictual crafter, such as myself, Nietzsche does not explicitly endorse and may have even contradicted (1-i), even though I do not find any passage in which Nietzsche suggests that his works attests to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim or in which he contradicts (1-ii). As stated above, (1-i) is the claim that, among the others, some are legitimate rational peers; (1-ii) is the claim that no one has a settle a dispute once and for all. My point, then, is that, in calling his others sick, Nietzsche may be interpreted as someone who does not take these others, such as Socrates, to be legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake.

¹⁷⁶ GM I 7.

¹⁷⁷ A 3.

The main characteristic of Carnap's metalinguistic use of language is the aim to establish the conditions under which words and statements are cognitively meaningful. In pursuing this aim, the article "Überwindung der Metaphysik" relies on three assumptions. The first is that, since it can be taken for granted that the formal and the empirical sciences provide knowledge, the question is how to determine which use of language can serve this purpose. The second assumption is that all words and statements have "non-cognitive (expressive) meaning", but only some words and statements have "cognitive meaning".¹⁷⁸ Note that, in his "Logic", Carnap also embraces this distinction.¹⁷⁹ The third assumption is that only cognitively meaningful statements are useful for science.

Carnap's metalinguistic use is characterized by the following conditions for cognitive meaning. A word has cognitive meaning if and only if it fulfills two conditions. One is syntactical: the rules of modern logic must not be violated while connecting the word to other words within a statement. According to Carnap, the syntactic rules of modern logic are stricter than those of ordinary grammar: "If grammatical syntax corresponded exactly to logical syntax", he claims, "pseudo-statements could not arise".¹⁸⁰ His point is that the syntactic rules of ordinary grammar differentiate among "the word-categories of nouns, adjectives, verbs, conjunctions, etc".¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, these rules do not spell out all the specificities of each and every word that fall into these categories. For example, the syntactic rules of grammar do not determine that the noun "prime number" cannot be the property of a person. The syntactic rules of modern logic, on the other hand, do not permit

¹⁷⁸ EML 80.

¹⁷⁹ LOG 109.

¹⁸⁰ EML 68.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

a statement, such as (PS-i). It is important to emphasize that, by making this assumption, Carnap quite problematically seems to attach a theory of meaning to logic.¹⁸²

The second condition for a word to be cognitively meaningful is semantical, that is, the aforementioned verification principle cannot be violated. If a word violates either or both of these conditions, it is a meaningless one which appears without having a cognitive meaning. Tautologies, such as (S-i), are true merely in virtue of their meaning. Contradictions are negations of tautologies. It follows that, for Carnap, they would be false solely by virtue of their meaning or form. Both tautologies and contradictions are cognitively meaningful statements which “say nothing about reality”.¹⁸³

A statement that is neither a tautology nor a contradiction, and that aims to say something about reality, has cognitive meaning if and only if it fulfills a syntactic condition and a semantic one. The syntactic condition is that the statement must not violate the rules of modern logic; the semantic condition is that the statement’s nouns must be words that have cognitive meaning. (S-ii) would, thus, be a standard cognitive empirical statement. A statement that disrespects one or both of the conditions mentioned above is a “pseudo-statement” which is neither true nor false but simply meaningless.¹⁸⁴ (PS-i) would be a standard example, since it disrespects the syntactic condition for cognitive meaning by attributing to Caesar a property —being a prime number —that persons cannot have. (PS-ii) would likewise be a standard pseudo-statement. For Carnap, the word “nothing” in this statement seems to be syntactically used as a noun. However, whether this is actually the

¹⁸² To approach the particularities of Carnap’s interpretation of modern logic is a task that I cannot pursue here. For such an inquiry, consider Erich H. Reck, “Carnap and Modern Logic,” in Michael Friedman (ed.) and Richard Creath (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Carnap*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

¹⁸³ EML 68.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

case would be hardly determinable. The reason is that Heidegger does not explicitly state alternative rules that would govern the syntax of the noun “nothing”.

Semantically, Heidegger would also not have been clear with regard to the meaning of “nothing”. As a consequence, “nothing” in (PS-ii) would be a meaningless word for two reasons: first, the word violates the syntactic rules of modern logic; second, it is impossible to reduce it to the words contained in protocol sentences. Carnap interprets Heidegger’s neologism “nothings” in a similar fashion. Syntactically, this word appears to be used as a verb. Yet, whether this is the case would also be hardly determinable. This is because Heidegger would not have spelled out alternative rules that would govern the syntax of the verb “to nothing”. “Nothings”, then, would violate the rules of modern logic. Semantically, the meaning of “nothings” would also not have been explained by Heidegger.¹⁸⁵

Most importantly, Carnap does not limit himself to claiming that metaphysical uses of language (like Heidegger’s) are meaningless. He takes a step further that most of his commentators have not fully recognized: he adopts a quite Nietzschean approach of using a clinical vocabulary in order to diagnose those who adopt a metaphysical use of language as being sick. In “*deluding himself*” and “*succumbing to self-delusion*”, Carnap claims, the “metaphysician *suffers* from the illusion that the metaphysical statements say something”.¹⁸⁶ Metaphysicians are intellectually confused; they mistakenly assume themselves as being engaged in a rational, theoretical inquiry like that of scientists when in fact they are only engaged in an irrational, emotional practical activity. This confusion is a sign of the metaphysical disease: the disease of taking oneself to be able to rationally

¹⁸⁵ For more detailed comments on Carnap’s reading of Heidegger, see Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways* and Abraham D. Stone, “Heidegger and Carnap on the Overcoming of Metaphysics”.

¹⁸⁶ EML 79, my emphasis.

justify pseudo-statements that lack cognitive meaning, instead of recognizing that, like poetic statements, metaphysical statements are limited to expressive meaning.

It is evident that Carnap does not rely on a clinical vocabulary as consistently as Nietzsche does. Yet, the article “Überwindung der Metaphysik” is not the only work in which Carnap employs this vocabulary. In his “Theoretische Fragen und praktische Entscheidungen”, he states, for instance, that “philosophical and religious metaphysics are in certain circumstances a *narcotic*, dangerous and harmful to reason”.¹⁸⁷ As Thomas Mormann noted, this passage “reminds one not only of Marx but also of Nietzsche (cf. *The Gay Science*, Book 3, §147)”.¹⁸⁸ “What do savage tribes today take over first of all from the Europeans?”, Nietzsche asks in this passage. “Liquor and Christianity, the narcotics of Europe”, he answers. “And from what do they perish most quickly?”, he also asks. “From European narcotics”, he responds. A similar clinical vocabulary can be found in Carnap’s “Logic” in which he argues that logic’s “task is to serve a *spiritual hygiene*, cautioning men against the *disease of intellectual confusion*”.¹⁸⁹ Logic, Carnap continues, “has the ungrateful duty, whenever it *finds symptoms of this disease*, to pronounce the unwelcome *diagnosis*”.¹⁹⁰ The unwelcome diagnosis would be that metaphysicians are sick; they are “deceiving themselves” in believing that they are able to provide some sort of mysterious knowledge of the essence of things that is neither mathematical nor empirical.¹⁹¹

Hence, similarly to Nietzsche, Carnap takes some of his others, such as Heidegger, to be deep opponents whose practices are to be resisted. In contrast to Nietzsche, though,

¹⁸⁷ Rudolf Carnap, “Theoretische Fragen und praktische Entscheidungen”, pp. 260, my emphasis.

¹⁸⁸ Thomas Mormann, “Carnap’s Boundless Ocean”, pp. 73.

¹⁸⁹ LOG 118, my emphasis.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

Carnap's opponents are those who promote libertarian practices. I will discuss this last point more carefully in the next section. For now, I read that Carnap also self-defends himself from his deep opponents by pressuring them to think and/or act differently in his 1920s-1930s writings, such as "Überwindung der Metaphysik". He also seems to seek to shock or embarrass such opponents by derogatorily describing them by means of a clinical-political vocabulary characterized by expressions, such as "self-delusion". In doing so, Carnap's procedure may be interpreted to be somehow dogmatic, even though he neither suggests that his works attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim nor contradicts that claim that no person has settle a dispute once and for all. What I mean is that, distinct from a conflictual crafter, such as myself, Carnap could be plausibly interpreted as someone who does not explicitly embrace and, perhaps, even contradicts the claim that, among the others, some are rational legitimate peers. This takes place because Carnap insinuates that metaphysicians (in the Carnapian senses) are not legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are concerned, but would, rather, be suffering from a sickness.

2.4 Why is an Overcoming of Metaphysics to be Performed?

Nietzsche and Carnap also have to face the question why an overcoming of metaphysics is to be performed. They answer this question by endorsing different versions of (3-iii): to overcome metaphysics is to contribute to the political task of resisting diseased metaphysical practices and promoting healthy non-metaphysical ones. By a political task, I understand one that: first, aims to have a significant social importance, even if merely for the members of a particular field, such as the philosophical field; second, this task seeks to pressure a significant group of people to change their practices, say, by labelling such practices sick or even going as far as resorting to upfront violence or at least to "subtle"

violence; and, third, a political task relies on considerably controversial normative claims that others or one's deep opponents simply do not embrace, such as (3-i), (3-ii) and (3-iii).

That Nietzsche is engaged in a political task is considerably explicit —“great politics” is what he calls this.¹⁹² Moreover, note that, in articulating this “great politics”, Nietzsche does not merely “awaits” what he calls the “philosophical physician”, a figure who would “set himself the task of pursuing the problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity”.¹⁹³ Rather, he proceeds himself like a philosophical physician in endorsing (3-iii). The situation is more difficult in the case of Carnap. Unlike Neurath, Carnap was not quite explicit with regard to political matters, especially after he immigrated to the United States in 1935. He noted in his 1963 autobiography, for instance: “we [the members of the Vienna Circle with the exception of Neurath] liked to keep our philosophical work separated from our political aims”.¹⁹⁴ “In our view”, he continued, “logic, including applied logic, and the theory of knowledge, the analysis of language, and the methodology of science, are, like science itself, neutral with respect to practical aims, whether they are moral aim for the individual, or political aims for society”.¹⁹⁵

This last passage seems to back up the widely shared claim that Carnap's attempt to overcome metaphysics is politically neutral. Like Michael Friedman, I would argue in contrast that Carnap “just as strongly agrees with his more activist friend and colleague [Neurath] that philosophy can and should serve social and political aims in its particular historical context”.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, as Thomas Uebel emphasizes, Carnap was an “activist”

¹⁹² BGE 208, 241, etc.

¹⁹³ GS, P 2.

¹⁹⁴ IAB 22.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, pp. 16.

and his emphasis on the value neutrality of logic and science is “often misinterpreted”.¹⁹⁷ Carnap, to put it more sharply, does not say that philosophy has no political role to play. What he suggests, rather, is that there is a distinction between theoretical questions and practical decisions so that, when dealing with the former, logic is neutral with regard to the latter. This is not to state that logic has no practical role to play. Consider the passages I quoted in the last section in which Carnap relies on a clinical vocabulary; they attest that logic and scientific philosophy pursue a practical aim: that of resisting sick metaphysical libertarian practices, while promoting healthy non-metaphysical egalitarian ones.

Of course, Nietzsche and Carnap do not have a common political motivation; Carnap’s “activism”, to use Uebel’s term, ultimately runs counter to Nietzsche’s intentions.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, I would like to go as far as claiming that the core of their disagreement is of a political kind. For Nietzsche, as indicated above, the sick metaphysical practices that are to be resisted are egalitarian ones.¹⁹⁹ These are altruistic practices that do not exist in accordance with the will to power, since they overvalue a communitarian (or, in Nietzsche’s terms) “herd” equality. This excessive valorization of communitarian equality would have resulted in the disharmony of modern European culture. Metaphysicians (in Nietzsche’s sense) and the “socialist fools” mentioned in this chapter’s introduction would show signs of this disharmony.²⁰⁰ The same would be the case with Christians. Nietzsche’s aim, then, is to articulate a philosophy that promotes harmony in doing justice to one’s “instincts for the wild” and pointing toward an “overman”

¹⁹⁷ Thomas Uebel, “Carnap, Philosophy and ‘Politics in its Broadest Sense’”, in Richard Creath, *Carnap and the Legacy of Logical Empiricism*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2012: pp. 133.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ For a detailed take on Nietzsche’s objections to egalitarianism, see John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System*, pp. 165.

²⁰⁰ BGE 203.

(*Übermensch*) that would no longer let the herd make him sick.²⁰¹ No similar aim is pursued by Carnap or Neurath.

Consider Neurath's 1946 reply to Horace Kallen's objection that the unity of the sciences aimed at by logical positivism pointed toward totalitarianism.²⁰² Neurath addresses an issue regarding which Nietzsche had a lot to state—that of priests' influence upon the masses. Neurath's view is that “if priests and rulers have a language of their own, they become separated from the ruled masses, and it is just the unification of language that is a step forward to some democratic possibilities”.²⁰³ For Nietzsche, though, the problem is not that priests and rulers have acted in an anti-democratic way; rather, the real problem would be that these figures have actually spread those religious concepts that have created the sick masses which endorse the egalitarian values associated with democracy.

Carnap, on the other hand, moves into a distinctly non-Nietzschean direction. He suggests that the sick practices that need to be resisted are of a libertarian kind. These practices would confound rationality and irrationality, theoretical questions and practical decisions as well as the “cognitive” and the “expressive function” of sentences.²⁰⁴ These sick practices, Carnap suggests, constitute an anti-democratic selfishness that renders it difficult to achieve a universal communal equality. Now note that Mormann claims that “evidence for Nietzsche's early influence [on Carnap] can be found in the 1921-1922 manuscript *Vom Chaos zur Welt*²⁰⁵ that Carnap himself considered as the ‘nucleus of the

²⁰¹ GM II 16 and Z P 3, respectively.

²⁰² Horace M. Kallen, “The Meanings of ‘Unity’ Among the Sciences, Once More”, *Philosophy and Phenomenal Research* Vol 6, No 4, June., 1946: pp. 493-496.

²⁰³ Otto Neurath, “The Orchestration of the Sciences by the Encyclopedism of Logical Empiricism”, *Philosophy and Phenomenal Research* Vol 6, No 4, June., 1946: pp. 502. See also Otto Neurath, *Philosophical Papers 1913-1946*, Dordrecht, D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983.

²⁰⁴ LOG 109.

²⁰⁵ Rudolf Carnap, “Ms. ‘Vom Chaos zur Wirklichkeit’ (mit Notizen zum Konstitution-System)”, Unpublished Manuscript (1921-1926), University of Pittsburgh, Archive for Scientific Philosophy, code: RC 081-05-01.

Aufbau”²⁰⁶ “In *Chaos*”, Mormann argues in a way that I am inclined to endorse, “Carnap subscribed to a pseudo-Nietzschean ‘will to order’ (for him apparently more appealing than the original ‘will to power’) that was the ‘irrational starting point’ of the orderly constitution of the world the philosopher attempted to realize”.²⁰⁷ Perhaps, then, a way to describe what Carnap takes to be sick practices is by stating that these practices do not exist in accordance with this will to order. By such a will to order, I read that the Carnap of “*Chaos*” had in mind either a synonym of what I have described as one’s communitarian tendencies (or herd instincts), or, more problematically, a distinct conception of Being.

According to this conception, Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with the will to order, that is, the will to protect oneself from chaos by, in the human case, acting in accordance and contributing to the creation of a really universal community. Were Carnap actually committed to this view, he would also be a human-yet-physicalist-driven philosopher in a sense quite similar to the one above attributed to Nietzsche, that is, though Carnap would still associate Being to something apparently human, such as a “will”, he would have indicated that the universal identity of all beings is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation to a neither divine, nor human entity. Carnap’s published writings, though, never explicitly endorse any conception of Being. In fact, as indicated above, he often suggests that those who embrace such conceptions rely on quite mysterious barely justificatory resources that cannot be comparable to those of mathematicians, logicians and/or empirical scientists. So, it is more persuasive to call Carnap a proto or even, indeed, a physicalist-driven philosopher in a distinct sense. The sense is that of being one of the firsts to explicitly address the theoretical dispute over the following claim ultimately

²⁰⁶ Thomas Mormann, “Carnap’s Boundless Ocean”, pp. 73.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

embraced by Carnap himself: “for all scientific statements [e.g., one from psychology, such as “Mr. A is angry”], there is an equipollent statement of the language of physics”.²⁰⁸

Let me now underline that I do not think that it is an exaggeration to claim that Carnap believes metaphysicians (in his two senses) to be agents of chaos. This is because they would appeal to people’s irrational emotions in rendering any kind of rational inquiry barely achievable. Hence, metaphysicians would not merely be self-delusional “musicians without musical ability”.²⁰⁹ They would be much worse than that. Indeed, if metaphysicians were merely artists without artistic ability, it would be hard to understand why Carnap advocates for an overcoming of metaphysics in the first place. That is: why would anyone want to resist mere musicians without musical ability or poets with no poetic taste? There seems to be no persuasive political reason to engage oneself in such a resistance.

My reading, then, is that Carnap understands metaphysicians to be quite similar to the “priests and rulers” considered by Neurath; they act in an authoritarian way by relying on an obscure use of language that renders any refutation impossible and that separates them from the rest of the community.²¹⁰ In his 1937 “Logic”, Carnap further highlights the political dangers of metaphysics, when he compares metaphysicians to Nazi-like politicians. Both would seek to advance “illogical thinking” which confounds theoretical questions and practical decisions as well as the “cognitive” and the “expressive function” of sentences.²¹¹ Ultimately, the main difference between metaphysicians and such Nazi-

²⁰⁸ See Rudolf Carnap, “Les Concepts psychologiques et les concepts physiques sont-ils foncièrement différents?”, trans. Robert Bouvier, *Revue de synthese* (Paris), t. 10, no. 1, April 1935: pp. 46. My translation.

²⁰⁹ EML 80.

²¹⁰ Otto Neurath, “The Orchestration of the Sciences”, pp. 502.

²¹¹ LOG 110.

like politicians would be their distinct abilities to influence others. In Carnap's words, metaphysicians' "doctrines and the confusions arising from their failures to distinguish between cognitive and expressive function of sentences produce relatively little harmful effects upon human destiny".²¹² In "politics", though, a similar attitude would have "serious practical consequences".²¹³ Carnap illustrates his point by imagining that a specific "creed is promulgated in a certain country".²¹⁴ The creed resembles the ideological commitments of National Socialism, and runs as follows: "there is only one race of superior men, say the race of Hottentots, and this race alone is worthy of ruling other races. Members of these other races are inferior, so that all civil rights are to be denied them so long as they inhabit the country".²¹⁵

Carnap's view is that this claim is similar to a metaphysical pseudo-statement, such as (PS-ii). Although the claim "certainly has the appearance of an assertion," it has "no cognitive meaning and exercises merely a volitional function".²¹⁶ Carnap concludes that "it is [...] of great practical importance for understanding the effective appeal of political war-cries like the above to note that they take the form of misleading pseudo-assertions".²¹⁷ "This is to be explained", he continues, "by the fact that many men respond less readily to what are obviously commands than to such assertions or pseudo-assertions, especially

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 111.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ *Ibid.* "Hottentots" is a name that 17th century Dutch colonizers gave to the Khoikhoi people of Southern Africa. Today, this term is considered derogatory and offensive. What Carnap knew about the Khoikhoi people is uncertain. He does not make any reference to their history and the colonial violence they have been subjected to. Arguably, in using the term "Hottentots" Carnap contradicts his own egalitarian values. For a take on the Khoikhoi people, see Emile Boonzaier, Candy Malherbe, Andy Smith, Penny Berens, *The Cape Herders: A History of the Khoikhoi of Southern Africa*, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1997.

²¹⁶ LOG 110.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 112.

when the latter are accompanied by powerful emotional appeals”.²¹⁸ Against this background, Friedman is right to argue that “there can be very little doubt [...] that Carnap’s attacks on Heidegger, articulated and presented at a critical moment during the last years of the Weimar Republic, have more than purely philosophical motivations”.²¹⁹

As Critchley claims, Carnap’s objection to Heidegger “is not just a theoretical disagreement, but also one expression of the social and political conflicts that so deeply scarred the last century”.²²⁰ Indeed, as stated above, Carnap emigrated to the United States in 1935, since “with the beginning of the Hitler regime in Germany in 1933, the political atmosphere, even in Austria and Czechoslovakia, became more and more intolerable”.²²¹ “The Nazi ideology”, he underlines, “spread more and more among the German-speaking population of the Sudeten region and therewith among the students of our university and even among some of the professors”.²²² On the other hand, Heidegger had an ambiguous relationship to the Nazis.²²³ What Carnap himself knew about Heidegger’s (now well-documented) involvement with the Nazis is uncertain.²²⁴ It is obvious, however, that Carnap reads the Nazi-like credo quoted above and Heidegger’s metaphysical statement, (PS-ii), along the same lines. They would both be symptomatic signs that those who articulated such statements champion sick libertarian practices that are to be resisted.²²⁵

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, pp. 21.

²²⁰ Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001: pp. 102.

²²¹ IAB 33.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ On this ambiguity, see, for instance, Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1989; and Jacques Derrida, *Of spirit: Heidegger and the question*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1989.

²²⁴ See Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*.

²²⁵ On my part, I tend to disagree with Carnap’s reading of the Nazis. Although it is not my aim to articulate an interpretation of the Nazis here, I am inclined to believe that they were not libertarians at all but, rather, conservatives in a sense that will be carefully spelled out throughout the fifth and the sixth chapter.

In contrast to Carnap, Nietzsche claims, as indicated above, that the healthy practices that are to be promoted question communitarian principles of equality. Such libertarian practices promote individual freedom insofar as they seek to do justice to the “instincts for the wild”. Nietzsche’s description of the “nobles” can serve as a prominent example. The latter, he claims, occasionally “enjoy the freedom from every social constraint”.²²⁶ In doing so, they exhibit signs of a war-like healthy physiology that is in harmony with itself. In Nietzsche’s words,

The chivalric-aristocratic value judgments are based on a powerful physicality, a blossoming, rich, even effervescent good health that includes things needed to maintain it, war, adventure, hunting, dancing, jousting and everything else that contains strong, free, happy action.²²⁷

This is to state that healthy practices are those that seek to provoke in the herd some sort of healthy chaos, as opposed to the diseased chaos of overpraising a herd instinct, like sick Christian animals would have done.

I do not wish to suggest that Nietzsche promotes a return to the noble way of life. It seems more persuasive to argue that, in order to bring harmony back to his own degenerated culture, Nietzsche thought that it would be necessary to adopt his above stated reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons are engaged in disputes. To create a philosophy guided by this reaction would be a way to pursue a health comparable to that of the nobles. This new philosophy would have to rely on several kinds of statements. This includes scientific, poetic and (arguably) metaphysical statements (in the Heideggerian sense). Indeed, nothing in Nietzsche’s writings indicates that he thought it wise for philosophers to follow Carnap in adopting a use of language that could clearly distinguish

²²⁶ GMI 11.

²²⁷ GMI 7.

among scientific, poetic and metaphysical statements. What Nietzsche's new philosophy seeks is to overcome metaphysics in the Nietzschean sense of the term. He rejects, then, the claim that there are hierarchical oppositions of values, and he discards the "Socratic equation" by suggesting that human beings need reason, virtue and happiness as much as they need irrationality, vice and sadness.²²⁸ The same applies to the other oppositions considered above and to Nietzsche's own opposition between health and sickness: humans, he states, "need the sick soul as much as the healthy".²²⁹ Nietzsche also claims that "health and sickness are not essentially different, as the ancient physicians and some practitioners even today suppose"; rather, "there are only differences in degree" between them.²³⁰

Likewise, Nietzsche doubts the traditional hierarchical distinction between "theory and practice": "fateful distinction as if there were an actual drive for knowledge that, without regard to questions of usefulness and harm, went blindly for the truth; and then, separate from this, the whole world of practical interests".²³¹ As a consequence, he would be inclined to problematize oppositions that feature prominently in Carnap's thought, such as those between rationality and irrationality, theoretical questions and practical decisions, cognitive function and expressive function of sentences, etc.²³² Arguably, Nietzsche would claim that Carnap overvalues the first terms of these oppositions over the second ones, so that Carnap's own work shows signs of a sick herd instinct quite similar to the thought of

²²⁸ TI II 4.

²²⁹ GS III 120. For an account of Nietzsche's view on the soul, see Günter Abel, "Consciousness, Language, and Nature: Nietzsche's Philosophy of Mind and Nature", in Manuel Dries (ed.) and P. J. E. Kail (ed.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015. For a take on the connection between Nietzsche's view on the mind-body problem and his notions of health and disease, see my own Felipe G. A. Moreira, *Nietzsche como se sem metáfora: mente, corpo, doença e saúde na obra nietzschiana*.

²³⁰ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [65].

²³¹ *Nachlass* 1888, KSA 14 [142].

²³² For a discussion of Dewey's rejection of these Carnapian oppositions, see Alan Richardson, "Carnapian Pragmatism", in Michael Friedman (ed.) and Richard Creath (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Carnap*, Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 2007: pp. 312.

Socrates or Plato. For Nietzsche, then, Carnap would likely be seen as a metaphysician (in the Nietzschean sense) who fears and oppresses the “instincts for the wild”.

Nietzsche also sees little point in the pursuit of certainty. What he often suggests is that, instead of articulating detailed and/or tedious arguments, philosophers should appeal to their opponents’ emotions. To do so is to be more open to the use of upfront rhetorical devices, such as that of relying on a series of aphorisms and explicitly articulating poetic statements, like (NP). On his part, Carnap also does not pursue certainty. Instead, he endorses a view by Neurath that he associates with the “left wing of the Circle”: “the totality of what is known about the world is always uncertain and continually in need of correction and transformation”.²³³ Distinct from Nietzsche, though, Carnap obviously aims to avoid upfront rhetorical devices; his aim is to convince others by relying on what he takes to be exclusively rational means. This is why Nietzsche would likely exclude Carnap from the philosophers of the future, that is, Carnap, would be another philosopher of the past who still values and pursues consensus by articulating detailed arguments.

Finally, Nietzsche also puts into question the claim that there is a true world, albeit without endorsing either a strong or a weak idealism. Consider the following remark: “the true world is gone: which world is left? The illusory one, perhaps?... *But no! we got rid of the illusory world along with the true one!*”.²³⁴ This passage is particularly challenging to interpret, but it seems to me compatible with a thesis Carnap explicitly endorsed throughout his career: namely, that the dispute between any kind of realism, such as those often

²³³ IAB 57. “Scientific philosophy,” Hans Reichenbach also states, “refuses to accept any knowledge of the physical world as absolutely certain”. See Hans Reichenbach, *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, California, University of California Press, 1951: pp. 304. For a discussion of the left Vienna circle, see Thomas Uebel, “Political Philosophy of Science in Logical Empiricism: the Left Vienna Circle”, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 36, 2005: pp. 754-763.

²³⁴ TI IV.

presupposed by God and physicalist-driven philosophers, and any kind of idealism, such as those embraced by human-driven ones, is ultimately irrelevant. In *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, Carnap uses the verb “to construct” in order to emphasize that the formal and empirical sciences are neutral with regard to this dispute. Carnap raises the following question: “does thinking ‘create’ the objects, as the Neo-Kantian Marburg school teaches, or does thinking “merely apprehend” them, as realism asserts?”.²³⁵ Carnap’s answer to this question is that “construction theory employs a neutral language and maintains that objects are neither ‘created’ nor ‘apprehended’ but constructed”.²³⁶ Now let me once again be very careful in stating that the last passage by Nietzsche might plausibly be read as pointing into a similar direction, that is, as indicating that Nietzsche also sought to articulate a philosophy that is neutral about realism and idealism.

As such, I do not think it is very relevant to ask whether Nietzsche took the will to power to be a realist concept that, so to speak, “carved reality at its joints” or whether he viewed it as a commitment to some sort of idealism that merely depicted or even falsified reality. Nietzsche sometimes indicates that disputes such as this are absurd. Consider his remarks on those who “say that the external world is the product of our organs”:

But then, Nietzsche states, our body, as a piece of this external worlds, would really be the product of our organs! But then our organs themselves would really be —the product of our organs! This looks to me like a thorough *reductio ad absurdum*: given that the concept of *a causa sui* is something thoroughly absurd. So does it follow that the external world is not the product of our organs —?²³⁷

Accordingly, I take that the role of the will to power as a concept is not the resolution of traditional disputes between any kind of realism and any kind of idealism. Rather, in

²³⁵ LSW 10.

²³⁶ *Ibid.* For critiques of Carnap’s neutralism, see Stathis Psillos, *Scientific Realism: How Science Tracks Truth*, New York, Routledge, 1999; and Otávio Bueno, “Carnap, Logicism, and Ontological Commitment”, in Sorin Costreie (ed.), *Early Analytic Philosophy: New Perspectives on the Tradition*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2016.

²³⁷ BGE 15.

relying on the notion of the will to power, Nietzsche aims to articulate new disputes. An example of such disputes Nietzsche cares about is the political question on whether philosophers are to promote healthy practices that do justice to the will to power. Carnap never addressed this question in his published works. In his unpublished manuscripts, however, he indicates his strong disagreements with Nietzsche's political views.

In his early manuscript *Schema für den 9. Rundbrief* from 1918, Carnap mentions a “contrast” (*Gegensatz*) between those who champion a “perpetual war” (*Ewiger Krieg*) and those who champion an “perpetual peace” (*Ewiger Frieden*).²³⁸ He associates “Nietzsche” with the former as well as with “brutal-chauvinistic-utopian” (*Brutal-Chauvinistisch-utopistisch*) “slogans” (*Schlagworte*).²³⁹ In the same manuscript, Carnap also mentions Nietzsche's name under a table entitled “individualistic morality” (*individualistische Sittlichkeit*); he indicates that Nietzsche takes “war as a moral necessity” (*Krieg als sittliche Notwendigkeit*).²⁴⁰ Carnap notices that the ideal of this individualistic morality is a “master-man (will to power)” (*der Herrenmensch (Wille zur Macht)*).²⁴¹ Note that the term Carnap uses here, “*Herrenmensch*”, is not the same as Nietzsche's “*Übermensch*”; “*Herrenmensch*” clearly belongs to the vocabulary of Nazi ideology.

An individualist morality, Carnap also contends, views “combat” (*Kampf*) as a “heroic activity” (*heroische Tätigkeit*) and as “the only effective way of selecting and testing one's efficiency” (*die einzige wirksame Auslese und Erprobung der Tüchtigkeit*) (*ibid*). In the same 1918 manuscript, Carnap likewise states that one of the reasons the ideal

²³⁸ Rudolf Carnap, “Schema für den 9. Rundbrief”, Unpublished Manuscript (1918), University of Pittsburgh, Archive for Scientific Philosophy, code: RC 081-22-05.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, code: RC 081-22-08.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

of a “heroic life” (*heroischen Lebens*) arises lies in an insight that he associates with Nietzsche: “though Christian morality is only preached in favor of the masses of the weak, the true meaning of all life lies in the development of an ingenious, self-reliant personality”. In the original German words, this passage runs as follows: *christliche Moral nur zugunsten der Masse der Schwachen gepredigt wird, der wahre Sinn alles Lebens aber in der Entwicklung der genialen, nur auf sich gestellten Persönlichkeit liegt.*²⁴²

In a manuscript entitled *Lectures in Europe (Items 43-54)* —dated to 1929 — Carnap, furthermore, associates Nietzsche’s name with those who value “strength of personality” (*Stärke der Persönlichkeit*) and champion “aristocratic ethics” (*aristokratische Ethik*) and “heroism” (*Heroismus*).²⁴³ Nothing suggests that Carnap has any sympathy with these views. Carnap also suggests that the healthy practices that ought to be promoted are those that Nietzsche would take to be sick ones. Carnap’s non-metaphysical healthy practices are those that do not confound rational and irrational tasks, theoretical questions and practical decisions as well as the cognitive and the expressive functions of sentences. Such practices altruistically and usefully contribute to making society more equal, peaceful, and/ or less chaotic. In short, they run in accordance with the will of order or, as Nietzsche would say, they are expressions of a “herd instinct”.

Carnap points to this direction when he notes that he has always been driven by an “implicit lasting attitude” in arguing that “the main task of an individual seems to me the development of his personality and the creation of *fruitful and healthy* relations among human beings”.²⁴⁴ “This aim”, he continues, “implies the task of co-operation in the

²⁴² *Ibid.*, code: RC 081-22-09.

²⁴³ Rudolf Carnap, “Lectures in Europe (Items 43-54)”, Unpublished Manuscript (1922-1933), University of Pittsburgh, Archive for Scientific Philosophy, code: RC 110-07-49.

²⁴⁴ IAB 22, my emphasis.

development of society and ultimately of the whole of mankind towards a community in which every individual has the possibility of leading a satisfying life and of participating in cultural goods”.²⁴⁵ Hence, it is not surprising that Carnap wants a “gradual development toward a world government”.²⁴⁶ Carnap’s way to contribute toward this goal is by championing the overcoming of metaphysics in the two Carnapian senses of this term. This overcoming is informed by his egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. In championing this reaction, what Carnap seeks, then, is to create a new philosophy more useful to the rest of society and less dangerously similar to the political claims of Nazi ideology. Indeed, to put in Alan Richardson’s terms, Carnap’s view is that this new philosophy is also useful in that it “offers tools to science”.²⁴⁷

Once we have embraced a scientific philosophy, Carnap claims, “the various concepts of the various branches of science are clarified; their formal-logical and epistemological connection are made explicit”.²⁴⁸ For him, then, poets and scientists already champion healthy practices useful to society. This is why neither poets nor scientists would be self-delusional. Poets would aim and provide a special expression of emotions by means of statements like (P) and (NP), while scientists would aim and likewise provide knowledge by means of statements like (S-i), (S-ii) and (NS). Philosophers are also to play a useful role in this context: they are not to use a cognitively meaningless language that dangerously and chaotically confounds rationality and irrationality, theoretical

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

²⁴⁷ Alan Richardson, “Carnapian Pragmatism”, pp. 304.

²⁴⁸ EML 60.

questions and practical decisions and the cognitive and the expressive functions of sentences. Carnap's "faith" is that his scientific philosophy would "win the future".²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ LSW xiii.

CHAPTER 3 THE WILL TO SYNTHESIS²⁵⁰

3.1 The New “Faith”

My “faith”, to paraphrase Rudolf Carnap, is that, in the future, the continental-analytic gap will be lost in the past. In the present, though, this future appears a bit remote. One reason for that was already indicated in 2.1: throughout the last century and up to ours, several continental philosophers, such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, were influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche’s libertarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. These philosophers, on the other hand, did not pay much (if any at all) attention to Carnap’s egalitarian reaction. Consider, for instance, Foucault’s 1961 *History of Madness*.²⁵¹ This work deals with a theoretical dispute that most analytic philosophers, practically speaking, have simply not considered: that on how and why some claims about madness, mentally disordered or allegedly mentally disordered people became widely shared throughout the 17th and up to the 20th century.

Examples of such claims are: the meaning and the reference of the term “madness” have not significantly changed over the last four centuries or so; in diagnosing someone as being mentally disordered, psychiatrists have usually respected scientific standards that have not significantly changed over the last four centuries or so; and psychiatry has not mainly served to isolate those (e.g., men who engage in sexual intercourse with other men or women who refuse to get married or constantly cheat on their husbands) who have a deviant behavior. In aiming to articulate a thought-provoking history of psychiatry,

²⁵⁰ I presented previous versions of this chapter in a talk at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro as well as at the University of Miami’s *Philosophy Research Forum*.

²⁵¹ Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.

Foucault defends the denials of these claims. In doing so, it is plausible to read Foucault as someone who aimed to provoke dissensus, and to even shock or embarrass, especially the community (or the “herd”) of those who have presupposed the stated claims.

Practically speaking, by simply publishing the *History of Madness*, Foucault seems to resist an egalitarian practice: that of isolating the so called “sick” or “mentally disordered” in mental institutions for the sake of protecting the supposedly “healthy” or “mentally sane” rest of the community. He also seems to promote the libertarian practice of problematizing these institutions under the basis that they are ultimately hypocritical ones, that is, while speaking in the name of apparently “peaceful” notions of “science” and/or “treatment”, such institutions would have fought a quite violent “war” against persons (especially deviants) in overly constraining and even pathologizing their singularities.²⁵² As several interpreters, such as Gary Gutting and Todd May, indicate, then, I take that Foucault was quite inspired by Nietzsche.²⁵³ Ultimately, he often appears to point to Nietzsche’s political task of resisting the “diseased” egalitarian practices and promoting the “healthy” libertarian ones.

I tend to read that this is also the case with Derrida. Consider, for instance, his take on Nietzsche himself, the one of his 1978 *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles*.²⁵⁴ In this work, as in most of his writings, Derrida addresses a theoretical dispute that, practically speaking, analytic philosophers have likewise not usually discussed: the dispute over the claim that there are exegetical claims about certain texts (especially, philosophical ones) that cannot

²⁵² For a detailed take on Foucault’s views on violence, see Leonard Lawlor *From Violence to Speaking Out: Apocalypse and Expression in Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2016.

²⁵³ Gary Gutting, *Thinking the Impossible: French Philosophy Since 1960*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; and Todd May, *Between Genealogy and Epistemology: Psychology, Politics, and Knowledge in the Thought of Michel Foucault*, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University, 1993.

²⁵⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles / Eperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1979.

be rationally contradicted by persons. Throughout his works, Derrida suggests that no such claim can be obtained. A claim that seems to contradict this suggestion, and (at least by the time Derrida was writing) was canonical among Nietzsche's interpreters is: Nietzsche has sexist views on women. Derrida problematizes this reading. He does so by considering other passages of Nietzsche's works rarely taken into account, reading famous passages anew and pointing toward the plausibility of a unique thought-provoking interpretation.

The alternative interpretation I have in mind is: Nietzsche's philosophy is "feminine" and, indeed, more "feminine" than that of most so-called feminists who still have a considerably "phallogocentric" thinking. In suggesting so, it is plausible to read that Derrida seeks to provoke dissensus and even to shock or embarrass, especially the community or the herd of those who embraced (or "constructed") the canonical reading. Practically speaking, then, Derrida seems to resist such community's egalitarian practice of taking for granted Nietzsche's canonical reading, say, for the sake of establishing a common criterion to evaluate exegetical claims about Nietzsche's writings. He also implicitly promoted the libertarian practice of problematizing educational philosophical institutions, especially French ones that focus on the history of philosophy and use standardized tests on such history to hire professors as well as to evaluate students. I tend to think that Derrida's point is that, in implicitly speaking in the name of a quite narrow notion of *logos*, such institutions excessively constrain their members' singularities, especially the ones of those whose ways of thinking are too "feminine". This would be so because these institutions would have turned canonical readings into canons as if the supporters of these readings were authorities who are never to be contradicted. Therefore,

Derrida seems to suggest that this situation would render the articulation of thought-provoking interpretations of philosophical writings, like his own readings, extremely hard.

Now note that, to paraphrase John Richardson's aforementioned claim about Nietzsche (see 2.2), it appears that: the strongest kind of claim any single reading of Foucault or Derrida can plausibly make for itself is to pick one voice or aspect of their writings, and show how to see that voice as somehow dominant, somehow trumping or subordinating the many other incompatible voices also there. The above exegetical remarks about Foucault and Derrida, I would like to presuppose, are imperfect justificatory resources; they are hopefully enough to back up the claim that one of such of voices of theirs is a Nietzschean voice. It is not this dissertation's aim, though, to articulate detailed readings of Foucault and Derrida that show how this voice dominates others, such as, say, Foucault's more Kantian voice; Derrida's more Jewish voice, both Foucault's and Derrida's more egalitarian voices that run in tension with their Nietzschean ones; etc.

What is crucial here is to emphasize that basic observation shows that, in analytic philosophy contexts (e.g., those of several (if not most) philosophy departments in the United States) norms, such as the following one, are usually implicitly embraced: one is not to even mention the likes of Foucault or Derrida, unless it is to mock the alleged "absurdity" of their writings, that is, this mockery is quite acceptable and perhaps even encouraged by several analytic philosophers who, nevertheless, have never carefully addressed the writings of these French philosophers or taken Nietzsche's libertarian reaction into account. Basic observation also indicates that, in continental philosophy contexts, such as those of several philosophy departments in France or literature ones in the United States, distinct norms are often endorsed. An example is the norm that one is to

not even mention analytic philosophers, unless it is to mock the alleged “naivety” of their thinking. This is to state that certain mockeries are also embraced by some continental philosophers, especially those who ignore Carnap’s egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. It follows that what counts as a “serious philosopher” varies quite radically from analytic to continental contexts.

Another reason why a future with no continental-analytic gap appears a bit remote is that Carnap’s reaction has been taken for granted by several analytic philosophers who, nonetheless, practically ignored Nietzsche’s libertarian reaction. Examples of such philosophers are David Lewis and Peter van Inwagen. Notice that these two philosophers have often been described as champions of a neo-Quinean approach, that is, one mainly influenced, not by Carnap himself, but by his most famous disciple: Willard Van Orman Quine. I underline that, in the fifth chapter, I will spell out several significant political differences between Carnap and Quine that are not considered by contemporary analytic philosophers, including those who have been described as being inspired by Carnap, such as the likes of David Chalmers, Huw Price, Eli Hirsch and Amie Thomasson.²⁵⁵

For now, though, I would like to indicate some Carnapian features in Lewis’s 1986 *On the Plurality of Worlds*.²⁵⁶ This book’s focus is on a theoretical dispute that, practically speaking, most continental philosophers have ignored: that on whether there are concrete possible worlds neither spatial-temporally nor causally connected to ours. Lewis endorses modal realism; the thesis that these worlds exist. Arguably, modal realism has caused more

²⁵⁵ David Chalmers, “Ontological Anti-Realism”, in David Chalmers (ed.), David Manley (ed.) and Ryan Wasserman (ed.), *Metametaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; Huw Price, “Metaphysics After Carnap: The Ghost Who Walks?”, in David Chalmers (ed.), David Manley (ed.) and Ryan Wasserman (ed.), *Metametaphysics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance and Realism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; and Amie L. Thomasson, *Ontology Made Easy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.

²⁵⁶ David Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds*, MA, Blackwell, 1986.

dissensus, is more thought-provoking and even more shocking than Foucault's history of psychiatry or Derrida's reading of Nietzsche. Yet, I do not think that Lewis aimed to provoke dissensus or to shock his readers. In defending modal realism, his aim seems to be that of reaching consensus. Under the influence of Robert Nozick, Lewis does so by criticizing coercive uses of language; those that function as implicit threats in ultimately rendering any kind of "democratic" debate improbable. What characterizes such coercive use of language are expressions, such as: "you *have* or *must* believe the conclusion of my *knockdown* argument".²⁵⁷ According to Lewis, there seems to be no knockdown argument in philosophy "or [at least] hardly ever [given that] Gödel and Gettier may have done it".²⁵⁸

Lewis also presupposes that philosophers are to "measure the price" in attempting to achieve a common philosophical "equilibrium"²⁵⁹. By this business-man metaphor ("measure the price"), Lewis means that after opponents have understood one another's philosophical claims as well as articulated their respective arguments and counter-arguments, they should take another step: that of comparing their contrasting conjunction of claims in seeking to spell out which one of them maximizes theoretical virtues. Influenced by Quine, Lewis presupposes that the theoretical virtues that need consideration are: "conservatism, generality, simplicity, refutability and modesty".²⁶⁰ Lewis does not precisely spell out whether such virtues have the same or distinct weights. He likewise does not justify why one is to attempt to maximize such theoretical virtues in the first place.

²⁵⁷ Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1981: pp. 4; and David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983: pp. x. Also see Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, New Jersey, Basic Books, 1974.

²⁵⁸ David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, pp. x.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Pursuit of Truth*, MA, Harvard University Press, 1992: pp. 20.

What seems utmost important, for him, is that a common philosophical “equilibrium” is to be reached whenever, after measuring the price of their respective conjunction of claims, two or more philosophers are convinced that one of such conjunctions maximizes theoretical virtues in being more likely true than its alternatives. As indicated in the last chapter, I am influenced by George A. Reisch. This is so in that I take that, especially after World War II, several (if not most) analytic philosophers who have been educated and/or employed in research universities in the United States have taken themselves to be politically neutral. The same, I am inclined to believe, is the case with those who have studied and/or worked in British or Australian universities. I do not think that Lewis is an exception to this alleged apolitical analytic tradition.²⁶¹ Therefore, I do not wish to attribute to him a conscious commitment to Carnap’s political task of promoting “healthy” egalitarian practices, while resisting “diseased” libertarian ones.

However, note that, regardless of his alleged political neutrality, Lewis promotes at least one egalitarian practice shared by Carnap by simply publishing *On the Plurality of Worlds*: the practice of doing philosophy by defending one’s views with detailed arguments whose rules of inference are widely shared by the community, while opposing and seeking to convince one’s opponents —at least the superficial opponents who, in Lewis’s case, are those who, practically speaking, grant that modal realism is to be discussed in the first place, that is, those who accept that one is to spend some time of one’s life by discussing modal realism, instead of, say, dealing with other disputes, such as the ones that Nietzsche, Foucault or Derrida address. In taking this practice for granted, Lewis implicitly resists the libertarian practice of doing philosophy differently, say, in following Nietzsche, Foucault

²⁶¹ In conversation, though, Michael Slote told me that Lewis was dismayed by the American Philosophical Association anti-Vietnam stance and, accordingly, withdrew himself from this organization.

or Derrida in relying on more upfront rhetorical devices that challenge any interpretation and problematize widely shared, but (in these philosophers' views) very narrow or simplistic views on what counts, to begin with, as an "argument", "science", "*logos*", etc.

Examples of such more upfront rhetorical devices are those of: articulating a conjunction of thought-provoking aphorisms without providing any explicit justification for them; relying on several poetic statements, such as (NP) discussed in the last chapter, without explicitly spelling out their meanings; problematizing the distinction between literal and metaphorical senses; often ironically playing with the dual sense of certain words; not defining the meaning of technical terms and shifting their senses with context; mocking one's opponents in seeking to spell out how hypocritical or at least ignorant they really are in presupposing simplistic notions of "argument", "science", "psychiatric treatment", "reason", "*logos*", "justification", "clarity", etc. Regardless of whether Lewis is aware, then, he problematically points to Carnap's political task and, hence, contradicts Nietzsche's. My reading is that the same is the case with van Inwagen.

Regardless of van Inwagen's apparently and/or purported political neutrality, throughout his works, he promotes the same egalitarian practice promoted by Carnap and Lewis. While also criticizing coercive uses of language and pointing toward the impossibility of knockdown arguments in philosophy, van Inwagen implicitly likewise resists the same allegedly libertarian practice resisted by Carnap and Lewis.²⁶² Consider his 2004 essay, "Freedom to Break the Laws". This essay explicitly reminds one of Carnap's depression. As explained in 2.1, this is the depression concerning the overwhelming lack of consensus in philosophy that cannot be found in logic and in the

²⁶² Peter van Inwagen, "Freedom to Break the Laws", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXVIII*, 2004: pp. 350.

empirical sciences.²⁶³ Van Inwagen approaches a traditional theoretical dispute that the likes of Foucault and Derrida have simply not focused on: that on whether free will and determinism are compatible. For van Inwagen, this is not the case, whereas Lewis points to a distinct direction in claiming that free will is, indeed, compatible with determinism.²⁶⁴

Consider that van Inwagen also problematizes the aim pursued by Lewis of measuring the price while attempting to achieve a common philosophical equilibrium. The problem, van Inwagen argues, is that even philosophers from the same period (e.g., American philosophers who were born in the 1940s, such as van Inwagen and Lewis themselves) and tradition (e.g., the English-speaking analytic tradition) have not usually reached a common philosophical equilibrium.²⁶⁵ Regardless of whether this is so or whether van Inwagen's argument for this claim is persuasive, what matters for this dissertation is that he still seeks to achieve and values consensus. This is attested by the fact that, counter to Nietzsche, van Inwagen still aims to affect "people's opinions" on free will and determinism.²⁶⁶ This is why, in pursuing this goal, he seeks to convince his opponents—at least the superficial ones, like Lewis himself—that incompatibilism is true or at least more likely true, plausible or at least persuasive than compatibilism.

What I draw, then, is the fourth claim of the system of disputes; the claim that

- (4) The contrast between Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction is to be considered, not only by the few scholars who are interested in both of these philosophers' works, but by a far larger group of philosophers that includes: those who have addressed the continental-analytic gap; those who are concerned with the development of the history of 20th and 21st century

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 334-335.

²⁶⁴ See David Lewis, "Are We Free to Break the Laws?" in *Philosophical Papers: Vol. II*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986.

²⁶⁵ Peter van Inwagen, "Freedom to Break the Laws", pp. 340-343.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 350.

philosophy; and/or those who are interested in the works of the likes of Foucault, Derrida, Lewis and/or van Inwagen.²⁶⁷

My hope, then, is that this group of philosophers, practically speaking, grants me that this chapter's practice is pertinent, that is, that, instead of following several (if not most) continental and analytic philosophers in point toward Nietzsche's libertarian reaction, implicitly indicating a commitment to Carnap's egalitarian one, taking for granted Nietzsche or Carnap's political tasks and/or a-critically embracing the stated norms, I am being pertinent in addressing a distinct kind of theoretical dispute that has not received attention. The dispute I have in mind is that over the system of disputes' fifth claim:

- (5) One is to do a synthesis of Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.

Now I would like to, first, explain what I mean by this metametaphysical normative claim. Then, I would like to back it up by relying on an imperfect justificatory resource: the quite traditional one of articulating an argument in the traditional sense of a conjunction of premises that establish a conclusion by means of certain widely shared rules of inference.

²⁶⁷ Some philosophers who are part of this group are: Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1979; Hillary Putnam *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2008; Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Inquiry*, London, Routledge, 2006; Gary Gutting, *What Philosophers Know: Case Studies in Recent Analytic Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, *Thinking the Impossible: French Philosophy Since 1960*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012; Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2015, and *I am not a Brain*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2017; Todd May, *Reconsidering Difference: Nancy, Derrida, Levinas, Deleuze*, Pennsylvania, Penn State Press, 1997; Daniel Nolan, *David Lewis*, Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005; those who contributed to Jack Reynolds (ed.), James Chase (ed.), Ed Mares (ed.), and James Williams (ed.), *Postanalytic and Metacontinental: Crossing Philosophical Divides*, London, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010; Scott Soames, *The Analytic Tradition in Philosophy, Volume 1: The Founding Giants*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2014; *The Analytic Tradition in Philosophy, Volume 2: A New Vision*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2017; those who articulated the essays gathered in John A. Keller, *Being, Freedom, and Method: Themes from the Philosophy of Peter van Inwagen*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017; etc.

3.2 Synthesis

By the practice of doing a synthesis between Nietzsche's libertarian reaction and Carnap's egalitarian one, to put it in a Nietzschean-like metaphorical way, it is to be understood one comparable to that of preparing a drink. I think, for instance, about *Caipirinha*. This is a mix of the Brazilian quite heavy alcoholic drink, *cachaça*, with three other "Apollonian" ingredients that attenuate *cachaça*'s "Dionysian" effects: lemon, sugar and ice. Let us say that *cachaça* stands for Nietzsche's libertarian reaction, whereas the other ingredients represent Carnap's egalitarian one. To put it in a more Carnapian-like literal way, the practice of doing a synthesis between Nietzsche's reaction and Carnap's is that of fulfilling three tasks: first, bringing these contrasting reactions to light, instead of merely presupposing them, like several continental and analytic philosophers have done especially after World War II; second, problematizing Nietzsche's reaction by means of Carnap's and vice-versa so that the shortcomings of their projects are avoided; and, third, still seeking to keep (hopefully positive) aspects of Nietzsche's and Carnap's projects of overcoming metaphysics. The first chapter and 3.1 were my ways of attempting to fulfill the first of these tasks. I would like to spell out what I mean by the other two tasks now.

Consider that, in relying on his libertarian reaction, Nietzsche sometimes goes as far as suggesting that persons are to not even attempt to justify their claims or practices; it would simply not be valuable to be a herd animal in seeking to do so. In Nietzsche's words, "honorable things, like honorable people do not go around with their reasons in their hand. It is indecent to show all five fingers. *Nothing with real value needs to be proved first*".²⁶⁸ There may be passages by Foucault or Derrida that also point to this excessively libertarian

²⁶⁸ TI II 5, my emphasis.

direction, even though, instead of giving up the search for any kind of “proof”, these French philosophers might have merely attempted to problematize what counts as a “proof” as well as to revise traditional notions of “proof” in relying on the stated upfront rhetorical devices. On my part, I would like to explicitly object, under the influence of Carnap’s egalitarian reaction, that the last quoted passage by Nietzsche is a shortcoming of his project: a shortcoming that indicates that he, indeed, “imprudently” over praises individualistic tendencies over communitarian ones. The notion of “prudence” will be discussed in the sixth chapter but, for the time being, I would like to apply it in loose way.

What is important now is to emphasize that Nietzsche “goes too far” in his libertarianism. Note that he imprudently over praises the likes of “Napoleon”, “Alcibiades”, “Caesar” and “Hohenstaufen Frederick II”.²⁶⁹ Under the basis that they would have lived in accordance with the will to power, Nietzsche takes these types to have been standards of health, regardless of the overwhelming and not subtle at all violence they spread. This is not a view that can be found in Foucault’s or in Derrida’s writings. On my part, I would like to align myself with analytic philosophers to a certain extent. Let me do so by explicitly claiming that Nietzsche’s view on Napoleon, Alcibiades, Caesar and Hohenstaufen Frederick II appears to be an “absurd” view that, indeed, provides reasons for taking Nietzsche to be a proto-Nazi, as Carnap (see 2.4) suggests in his manuscripts.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ BGE 199 and BGE 200.

²⁷⁰ Note that Bertrand Russell also suggests that Nietzsche is a proto-Nazi. “Suppose”, Russell states, “we wish — as I certainly do — to fund arguments against Nietzsche’s ethics and politics, what argument can we find? These are weight practical arguments, showing that the attempt to secure his ends will in fact secure something quite different. Aristocracies of birth are nowadays discredited; the only practicable form of aristocracy is an on organization like the Fascist or the Nazi party. Such an organization rouses opposition, and is likely to be defeated in war; but if it is not defeated it must, before long, become nothing but a police State, where the rulers live in terror of assassination, and the heroes are in concentration camps. In such a community faith and honour are sapped by delation, and the would-be aristocracy of supermen degenerates into a clique of trembling poltroons”. As this passage indicates, Russell and Carnap had quite similar political views. See Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1945: pp. 770.

In other words, if Nietzsche took the likes of Napoleon and Caesar to be standards of health, perhaps, he could have stated the same about Adolf Hitler or Benito Mussolini.

So, against Nietzsche and in embracing the conflictual craft described in the introduction (see 1.4), I would like to explicitly underline that I am, indeed, committed to the search for justifications (even if merely imperfect ones) for (1) through (13) as well as for the practices endorsed here. I also do not praise the likes of Napoleon, Alcibiades, Caesar, Hohenstaufen Frederick II, Hitler, Mussolini, etc. Moreover, throughout the dissertation, I rely on Carnap in problematizing Nietzsche's suggested libertarian picture of philosophy according to which philosophers have practically only valued communitarian tendencies and ignored individualist ones. As Carnap indicates (see 2.1), the mere fact that incompatible systems have been erected points to a distinct direction.

Given that I champion the conflictual craft, I also wish to avoid contradicting (1-i), that is, the claim that, among the others, some are legitimate rational peers. So, distinct from Nietzsche, I unambiguously underline that I do not think that those, such as Socrates, who in Nietzsche's view overvalue egalitarian practices are not legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are concerned. As indicated in 2.3, it is plausible to read Nietzsche as someone who dogmatically suggests otherwise. Let me also underline that I am not committed to an over-libertarian claim that sometimes is associated with Nietzsche, Foucault and/or Derrida: that mental and educational institutions are simply to be abolished, given that they over constrain people's singularities. I also do not aim to discuss whether Nietzsche and/or his followers were really committed to this claim. I tend to think

For a take on Russell's political views, consider Thomas L. Akehurst, *The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe*, London, Continuum, 2010.

that these philosophers' writings are simply quite ambiguous about this claim. Hence, I would have to spend several pages in spelling out whether they really embrace it.

On his part, Carnap relies on his egalitarian reaction in going as far as claiming that those who do metaphysics (in the two Carnapian senses) rely on a cognitively meaningless use of language, that is, a use of language that disrespects Carnap's early conditions for cognitive meaning embraced in the 1931 "Überwindung der Metaphysik" and discussed in 2.3. Carnap, as it is well-known, attenuates such conditions, at least as early as in his 1937 "Logical Syntax of Language". In the latter work, he embraces the "*Principle of Tolerance: It is not our business to set up prohibitions, but to arrive at conventions*".²⁷¹ He also states that "*in logic, there are no morals*".²⁷² The reason is that "everyone is at liberty to build up his own logic, i.e., his own form of language, as he wishes. All that is required of him is that, if he wishes to discuss it, he must state his method clearly, and give syntactical rules instead of *philosophical arguments*".²⁷³ Also consider the 1950s Carnap, such as the one of "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology". It is not my aim to address this essay in detail here.²⁷⁴ However, it is safe to assume that this paper suggests the following broader late condition for cognitive meaning: words and statements have cognitive meaning if and only if they respect the syntactical and semantical rules of any conventional formal language whatsoever. The late Carnap calls these formal languages "linguistic frameworks".

Note that, like most contemporary analytic philosophers, Lewis and van Inwagen embrace neither Carnap's early nor his late conditions for cognitive meaning. On my part,

²⁷¹ Rudolf Carnap, *Logical Syntax of Language*, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd, 1937, pp. 51.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 52.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

²⁷⁴ I address this paper more carefully in Felipe G. A. Moreira, "An Apology of Carnap", *Manuscrito* (Unicamp), Vol 37, Número 2, 2014: pp.261-289.

under the influence of Nietzsche's libertarian reaction, I would like to explicitly object to these conditions. I do so by taking them to be a shortcoming of Carnap's project; a shortcoming that shows that, throughout his career, he imprudently over praises communitarian tendencies over individualist ones in taking for granted the problematic assumption that only formal languages conventionally adopted by a community that masters the precise rules of such languages lead to cognition. To use Carnap's terms, this assumption is one that requires "philosophical arguments". In often suggesting otherwise, Carnap appears "naïve". In making this last claim, I align myself with continental philosophers to a certain extent. I am also on the side of continental philosophers in taking that it seems quite "naïve" to follow Carnap in believing that formal languages, such as those that Carnap articulated throughout his career, are "clearer" than ordinary ones.

In fact, as others, such as Karl-Otto Apel, indicate, it appears that it is inevitably by means of ordinary languages that formal ones are to be interpreted in the end.²⁷⁵ Hence, it seems "naïve" to believe that the adoption of formal languages will decrease the level of dissensus in philosophy. As Lewis and van Inwagen themselves indicate, the history of 20th and 21st century analytic philosophy attests to the opposite, that is, the adoption of formal languages has not made analytic philosophers achieve consensus with one another. In fact, they seem to disagree as much as continental philosophers.²⁷⁶ Contrary to Carnap, then, I am not committed to any condition for cognitive meaning. I also do not aim to articulate or rely on a formal language. Indeed, it is important to add that, contrary to Carnap's

²⁷⁵ See Karl-Otto Apel, *Selected Essays Volume Two: Ethics and the Theory of Rationality*, New Jersey, Humanities Press, 1996.

²⁷⁶ Consider, for instance, only the replies to Lewis's modal realism, such as: Gideon Rosen, "Modal Fictionalism", *Mind*, Vol. 99, No. 395, Jul., 1990: pp. 327-354; Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra, "Modal Realism and Metaphysical Nihilism", *Mind*, 113 (452), 2004: pp. 683-704; Otávio Bueno and Scott Shalkowski, "Modalism and Theoretical Virtues: Toward an Epistemology of Modality", *Philosophical Studies* 172, 2015: pp. 671-689; etc.

intentions, the adoption of such languages by faculty members of philosophy departments in the USA, the UK and Australia has, arguably, not fulfilled any “socialist” purpose, but, rather a quite elitist one: that of creating a considerably narrow community of analytic philosophers who are practically only interested in discussing with other analytic philosophers about allegedly “specific” disputes by means of formal or quasi-formal languages whose rules are simply ignored by non-analytic philosophers. It is also not this dissertation’s goal to deal with the epistemic dispute over the conditions for knowledge.

Moreover, throughout the dissertation, I rely on Nietzsche in putting into question Carnap’s suggested egalitarian picture of philosophy according to which philosophers have practically only valued individualist tendencies and ignored communitarian ones. As Nietzsche indicates, the fact that philosophers have taken Socratic or Platonic values for granted points to another direction. As stated above, I am a conflictual crafter who takes others to be legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake. So, I also depart from Carnap’s project because I claim that those who over-value libertarian practices, such as, arguably, Heidegger, are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are concerned. As also indicated in 2.3, Carnap may be interpreted as someone who points to a distinct direction. Finally, I also do not presuppose, as Carnap often does (see 2.2), that “rational” is a term that mainly or, perhaps, even exclusively refers to the inquiries in the formal sciences and in the empirical sciences. This is, as I take that most contemporary analytic philosophers themselves would concur, a quite narrow use of the term “rational”: a use that likewise requires “philosophical arguments” that are simply lacking in Carnap’s works.

The system of disputes, yet, still seeks to do justice to Carnap’s project of overcoming metaphysics. The reason is quite simple: in seeking to justify (1) through (13)

and the very practices performed by this dissertation, I am simply not doing metaphysics in either one of the two Carnapian senses stated in 2.2. To begin with, I am sympathetic to Carnap's view that, to say, the least, it is quite unpersuasive to back up object-level metaphysical claims (e.g., there is evil, a thing-in-itself or consciousness) by engaging oneself in a neither mathematical nor empirical inquiry, but a rather "purely intuitive process".²⁷⁷ It is important to underline, though, that Carnap does not precisely spell out what he means by such a "purely intuitive process". As indicated in 2.2, what he does, instead, is to merely suggest that this process would be an emotional process as opposed to the rational justificatory process found in the formal and in the empirical sciences. It is also important to underline that, more recently, there has been a lot of debate on what is an intuition and on whether an intuition is a reliable justificatory resource insofar as, not only the disputes associated with metaphysics focused on here are concerned, but also several other quarrels on other areas of philosophy, mathematics and/or logic. Consider Herman Cappelen and Elijah Chudnoff; their works attest to the presence of such ongoing debate.²⁷⁸

On my part, I cannot provide a detailed discussion of intuitions. Instead, I limit myself to make a distinction between two uses of intuition-talk exclusively regarding the disputes associated with metaphysics considered here. I call them the dogmatic use and the conflictual use. The dogmatic use is that of suggesting that one's intuition about a dispute is universally shared by all persons and, hence, provides a rationally undeniable justification for one's claim regarding the dispute at stake. The conflictual use is that of taking an intuition about a dispute to be simply the tendency of being persuaded by a certain

²⁷⁷ LSW 295.

²⁷⁸ See Herman Cappelen, *Philosophy Without Intuitions*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; and Elijah Chudnoff, *Intuition*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

claim, regardless of argument. Such a tendency is not universally shared by all persons and, consequently, merely provides a considerably imperfect justificatory resource that might be challenged by others who simply do not share one's intuition about the dispute at stake. I think that Carnap's objection to metaphysics becomes much more persuasive if by a "purely intuitive process", it is interpreted that what he meant was a process of justifying one's claims by very problematically adopting the dogmatic use of intuition-talk.

On my part, I am inspired by Carnap in opposing this dogmatic use under the basis that, to say the least, it lacks persuasiveness insofar as basic observation of the history of metaphysics indicates that persons have had all sorts of contrasting intuitions about disputes. I am not alone in making this last move. Consider Lewis; he points to a similar direction in problematizing any kind of "linguistic intuition', which must be taken as *unchallengeable evidence*²⁷⁹. This is not to state that I oppose myself to the conflictual use of intuition-talk that merely purports to provide challengeable evidence that others might and are likely to put into question. In fact, I would like to go as far as stating that I take (1) through (13) to be quite "intuitive" claims in this conflictual sense. Also notice that there are several philosophical writings in which it is simply very hard to understand whether the author adopted a dogmatic or a conflictual use of intuition-talk. In addressing works by Quine, Saul Kripke and Kit Fine, I will discuss this matter in the fifth chapter.

For now, I underline that, as indicated in 1.1, the claims of the system of disputes are not object-level metaphysical ones, but, rather, metametaphysical claims of two kinds: descriptive and normative ones. In backing them up, I take myself to proceed empirically, that is, as a singular kind of observer—that of the history of metaphysics itself or, in other

²⁷⁹ David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, pp. x, my emphasis.

words, the history of disputes that have occurred since immemorial times. This is someone whose data are philosophical writings themselves; someone whose specialty is that of having the proper philosophical education to interpret such writings that have been articulated, since Ancient Greece up to our time. In spelling out such interpretation (that is, in observing such writings), the observer of the history of metaphysics is the one who seeks to imperfectly justify one's descriptive and normative metametaphysical claims. There is nothing "mysterious", "irrational", "exclusively emotional" and/or derogatorily "metaphysical" in the two Carnapian senses about such procedure of mine.²⁸⁰

Indeed, this dissertation, to a certain extent, aligns itself with Carnap's political task implicitly followed by the likes of Lewis and van Inwagen. This is because I follow them in aiming to: avoid relying on a coercive use of language that threatens the possibility of any "democratic" dialogue; promote the traditional egalitarian practice of articulating detailed arguments (in the traditional sense) to justify my views, while objecting to those of others who disagree with my views; and resist overly libertarian practices. Examples of such practices are those of insinuating that one is to not justify one's view; going as far as implying that mental and educational institutions are to be abolished; and adopting the stated upfront rhetorical devices. In other words, it is evident that my procedure has simply not been that of articulating aphorisms or poetic statements, such as (NP). I have not put into question the distinction between literal and metaphorical senses. Instead, whenever I use a metaphor, I explicitly indicate so. I have also not played with the dual sense of certain words. I have also spelled out the meaning of all the technical words adopted here. In

²⁸⁰ As it will be indicated in 7.4., the connections with this procedure and those of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel is an issue which I would like to approach in the future. The same is the case with two other disputes: that on whether my procedure could also be used to back up object-level metaphysical claims, and that on whether there can be a precise distinction between the latter claims and metametaphysical ones.

addition, in order to avoid misunderstandings, I have not mocked my opponents. Rather, what I will do in the next chapters is to very explicitly (and with no irony) object to my deep opponents' practices, that is, to the very way they have done philosophy. Indeed, the only word I use in a sort of ironic way are is the word "subtle" within the expression "'subtle' violence", that is, as I proceed, I wish to make explicit that the kinds of violence I have in mind are not really subtle, but merely less easily identifiable than corporeal kinds of violence. This is why I always apply the term "subtle" within quotation marks.

What I mean is that, distinct from Nietzsche and his French followers, such as Foucault and Derrida, I have adopted a considerably simple use of the English language that hopefully more persons (or at least philosophers, both analytic and continental ones) can understand, and is less likely to be called "obscure". I will provide further reasons for embracing this perhaps more "democratic" use of language in the sixth chapter as well as for acknowledging that this use (like most, if not all, philosophical ones) is still an "elitist" use insofar as it is naïve to think that those who have not attended College are likely to easily follow my points. In the sixth chapter, I also explicitly reply to those who still think that my use of language is "obscure" at least with regard to those of analytic philosophers whose uses of language are allegedly more "ordinary". For now, to put it once again in more Nietzschean-like metaphorical terms, what is crucial is to emphasize the following: the fact that I am no pure *cachaça* drinker does not me make me a lemonade drinker.

What I mean by this is that I likewise seek to do justice to Nietzsche's project of overcoming metaphysics. The reason is also quite simple: in seeking to justify (1) through (13) and the very practices performed by this dissertation, I am likewise not doing metaphysics in the Nietzschean sense spelled out in 2.2 To begin with and as indicated by

the fact that I do not commit myself to object-level metaphysical claims, I follow Nietzsche (as well as Carnap, like indicated in 2.4) in remaining neutral on any kind of dispute over any kind of realism (“true world”) and any kind of idealism (“illusory world”). In addition, this dissertation is neutral on the disputes (see 1.1 and 2.2) that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers have focused on. Note that the bibliography on such disputes is simply too extensive.²⁸¹ I do not purport to have anything to add to it in here. What I do, rather, is to articulate, and deal with other metametaphysical disputes that have received less attention. In the next chapters, I aim to make this even more explicit. In doing so, it is to become evident that I am not at all micro-politically neutral insofar as I explicitly wish to criticize the right-wing approach to disputes, while endorsing the left-wing one.

For now, let me also grant Nietzsche that the pursuit of certainty makes little sense. As indicated in 1.4, conflictual crafters are aware that the existence of some others as persons indicates that certainty does seem to be obtainable (at least not insofar as the disputes related to “metaphysics” addressed here are concerned). This occurs because others are those who reject any criterion one may propose. Hence, I agree with Carnap (see 2.1) in believing that philosophers have neither established any common non-controversial criterion to deal with their disputes, nor articulated compatible systems. Nonetheless, I would like to take a further step that Carnap himself never takes in an upfront manner: that of explicitly recognizing myself as being likewise unable to establish such a non-

²⁸¹ For all kinds of takes on God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven disputes, see the texts respectively collected at: Michael Peterson, *The Problem of Evil: Selected Readings*, Indiana, Notre Dame University Press, 2017; Karl Ameriks, *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; and David Chalmers (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002.

controversial criterion or to erect a system that would be compatible with others. The consequences of this move will be more explicitly spelled out in the next chapters.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I am also aligned with Nietzsche's project of overcoming metaphysics insofar as I seek to avoid *some* hierarchical oppositions of value, such as those often presupposed by philosophers at least since Plato's allegory of the cave, say, between rationality and irrationality, clarity and darkness, etc. The reason the term "some" was emphasized will be spelled in what follows. First, let me dare to state that I problematize such hierarchical oppositions of values quite differently and perhaps even more radically than Nietzsche himself. Consider that, regardless of his view (already discussed in 2.4) that one needs "health" as much as one needs "sickness", Nietzsche constantly overvalues dissensus over consensus. He also often overvalues libertarian practices over egalitarian ones as well as individualistic tendencies over communitarian ones. In short, Nietzsche claims that to be in accordance with the will to power is more valuable than to be in accordance with Carnap's will to order. In doing so, Nietzsche establishes a new hierarchical opposition of value of his own. The same can be stated about Carnap himself. As indicated above, in contrast to Nietzsche, he overvalues consensus, egalitarian practices, communitarian tendencies and the will to order over dissensus, libertarian practices, individualistic tendencies and the will to power, respectively. I avoid this move. My way of doing so is by supporting (5), a claim that can also be stated as:

(5) One is to act in accordance with the will to synthesis.

In coining such a will to synthesis, I aim —metaphorically speaking once again— to do a *caipirinha* in mixing Nietzsche's will to power with Carnap's will to order. However, it is crucial to stress out that I do not need to go as far as taking the will to

synthesis to be another human-yet-physicalist conception of what Heidegger calls Being (as discussed in 2.2), that is, I am *not* committed to the claim that Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with the will to synthesis. To establish this highly controversial object-level point would require more than I settle myself to achieve in this dissertation. Here, I am also not doing metaphysics in the Heideggerian sense discussed in 2.2. For my purposes, the will to synthesis may be understood as a bit less metaphysically loaded notion: the tendency (already stated in 1.5) to either consciously or unconsciously embrace the very contradictory conflict between one's communitarian tendencies (or will to order) and one's individualistic tendencies (or will to power), while seeking to maximize and achieve a balance that prudently satisfies both of these tendencies, even if to perfectly achieve such a balance may be ultimately impossible for inevitably imperfect persons. Note that individualist tendencies and communitarian ones seem to be present in all persons. Moreover, these tendencies may be called by other names, say, respectively, the one principle and the many principle; or the identity principle and the singularity principle.

Note that were all persons able to perfectly satisfy either their individualist tendencies (the many or the singularity principle) or their communitarian tendencies (the one principle or the identity principle), disputes would likely end: persons, as Nietzsche wishes, would either fulfill the task of ceasing to care about what their opponents think about their views in ultimately isolating themselves from any community or herd; or, as Carnap wishes, they would satisfy the task of embracing a common widely shared non-controversial criterion to solve disputes in ultimately nullifying anything that is unique about themselves. To be in accordance with one's will to synthesis is to acknowledge oneself as being unable to do either one of these tasks perfectly; it is to recognize oneself

as failing to fulfill the former task because of one's urges to engage oneself in the latter (and vice-versa). To put it metaphorically, it is to take oneself as being both a bird of prey and a little lamb that needs a herd. It follows that to be in accordance with the will to synthesis is to seek what might be ultimately impossible: to actualize an ideal community that would include all beings or at least all persons and whose norms and institutions would not constrain but allow all singularities to be expressed. Indeed, I would like to go as far as imagining that this ideal community would be one in which the very distinction between egalitarianism and libertarianism would cease to matter. This is so insofar as one's individualistic tendencies would confound themselves with communitarian ones and vice-versa). Ultimately, then, the will to power would be identical to the will to order.

Also note that to defend that one is to act in accordance with the will to synthesis is to establish another hierarchical opposition of values: that between doing so, like I purport to do; and failing to do so, as most philosophers have done, like the next two chapters aim to show. Indeed, it might be ultimately impossible to avoid all hierarchical oppositions of values; one would have to fulfill what may be the ultimate wish of skeptics, that of being neutral regarding practices themselves. Thus, I have not stated above that I avoid *all* hierarchical oppositions of value, but only *some* of them, such as the very ones supported by Nietzsche and by Carnap. It is also important to underline that I do not take that my deep opponents who fail to act in accordance with the will to synthesis to not be legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake. Instead, I acknowledge the legitimate rational stance of such deep opponents of mine while, still, aiming to pressure them to drop their practices and at least accept the way I want to spend some of the time of

my life in engaging myself on practices distinct from theirs. This will become more explicit as I proceed, especially in the sixth chapter and in the dissertation's conclusion.

For now, notice that a third way to state (5) runs as follows:

- (5)'' One is to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes, by: defending claims that are both to provoke dissensus with some persons (say, one's superficial and deep opponents) *and* which are to be consensually embraced by others (say, one's deep allies who embrace both one's practices and claims), while promoting some egalitarian as well as libertarian practices and resisting other likewise egalitarian and libertarian practices.

This is to state that I expect that (1) through (13) will simultaneously provoke dissensus (and perhaps, even shock or embarrass) some persons *and* be consensually accepted by others. Let me emphasize that, under the influence of Carnap's egalitarian reaction and political task, I already indicated above that I seek to avoid using coercive use of language, while promoting at least one egalitarian practice and resisting excessively libertarian ones. Under the influence of Nietzsche's libertarian reaction and his political task, I state that I also seek to promote at least one libertarian practice similar to those championed by Foucault and Derrida: that of problematizing the excessive constraints philosophical institutions (e.g., departments of philosophy, journals and publishing companies) impose upon the singularities of their members, especially, say, "trans-non-binary-philosophers".

Trans-non-binary philosophers are those who, like myself, and the likes of Richard Rorty, Hilary Putnam, Bernard Williams, Gary Gutting, Adrian W. Moore and Markus Gabriel, are interested in responding both to the continental tradition and to the analytic tradition.²⁸² What I mean is that I do not feel much more inclined towards any of these two

²⁸² Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*; Hilary Putnam, *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life*; Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Inquiry*; Gary Gutting, *What Philosophers Know* and

traditions —a feeling that, *I almost wish to be naïve enough to believe*, more easily arises in those who, like myself, were born neither in wealthy English-speaking countries, such as the United States, the UK and Australia, nor in wealthy continental European ones, such as France and Germany.²⁸³ What I also mean is that I feel like an other regarding both the continental and the analytic tradition. Hence, I take that, to say the least, it is quite “absurd” and/or considerably “naïve” to address exclusively one of these traditions, as if the other did not exist. Accordingly, I resist the excessively egalitarian practice of those who do so, say, for the sake of overly paying respect to the ones who take the aforementioned norms for granted, while relying on strategically narrow bibliographies that consider either the continental tradition or the analytic one but never both of them. My “faith”, then, is also that “serious philosophers” would simply stop relying on such narrow bibliographies.

3.3 An Argument

I endorse (5) because of a four-premise deductive argument whose first premise is:

- P.1** An explanation for the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes is that they have relied on problematic starting points.

Thinking the Impossible; Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*; and Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist* and *I am not a Brain*.

²⁸³ I emphasize the phrase “*I almost wish to be naïve enough to believe*” because there appears to be kinds of colonialism that make several non-North American and non-European philosophers, such as Brazilian philosophers, spend their whole careers overly paying respect to analytic or continental philosophers, say, as if their roles in life was to interpret, defend and, more or less, a-critically spread the latter philosophers’ works. Neo-Pyrrhonists, such as Oswaldo Porchat and Otávio Bueno, seem to be one of the few exceptions to this situation. I cannot, though, approach the problem of this kind of colonialism here. Consider, nonetheless, Pierre Bourdieu and Jessé de Souza; they have both argued, that in taking for granted assumptions of European and/or U.S. sociologists, Brazilian sociologists have constantly misrepresented Brazil’s reality. Also consider that it could be objected that my very aim to connect analytic and continental philosophy is one of someone who has also been colonized. This is an interesting objection that I aim to address in a future project, say, one in which conditions for calling a person or a work colonized are spelled out in detail. See Jessé de Souza, *A tolice da inteligência brasileira: ou como o país se deixa manipular pela elite*, São Paulo, Leya, 2015; and Pierre Bourdieu, *Escritos de educação*, Rio de Janeiro, Vozes, 1998.

A starting point, as stated in 1.2, is a “self-evident” undeniable metaphysical claim or criterion to deal with a dispute: one that no person may rationally reject and that ultimately justifies all other claims and practices endorsed by the one who proposes the starting point. By a problematic starting point, on the other hand, it is to be understood one that merely imperfectly justifies all other claims, and practices endorsed by the one who proposes it. This is to state that such problematic starting points are not undeniable metaphysical claims or non-controversial criteria to deal with disputes. Rather, such points may be easily problematized by others who simply do not grant one’s underlying assumptions. The last chapter as well as the above sections of this chapter are my ways of imperfectly justifying the claim that: the libertarian reaction is a problematic starting point of Nietzsche and his followers, such as Foucault and Derrida, whereas the egalitarian reaction is a problematic starting point of Carnap and those influenced by him, such as Lewis and van Inwagen.

Note that the philosophers named in the last phrase are not the only ones who have embraced problematic starting points. Consider God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers. These philosophers, as indicated above, are deep opponents of one another. This is so insofar as they simply do not agree on the practical dispute concerning which disputes are to be approached in the first place, that is, the practical dispute on how, to begin with, one is to spend the time of one’s life. My view is that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers are likewise ultimately unable to justify their implicit views on such practical dispute, without appealing to any problematic starting point. Take into account God-driven philosophers. They have presupposed as a problematic starting point either the claim that one is to address the God-driven disputes or any other claim that imperfectly justifies this practical proposal. Examples of such imperfect

justifications are claims, such as the following ones: one is to respect Christian scriptures; one is to think and act in accordance with such scriptures as well as not contradict the science of one's time; one is to spell out that there is a harmony between *logos* and faith; one is to release oneself from evil (at least to the extent that human beings can do so) in being less prone to sin and becoming oneself more "holy"; one is to ultimately aim to satisfy God's will itself, like biblical figures, such as Abraham, have aimed to do; etc.²⁸⁴

Human-driven philosophers have also presupposed as a problematic starting point either the claim that one is to address the human-driven disputes or any other claim that imperfectly justifies why one is to do so in the first place. Examples of such claims are: one is to "critically" spell out what conditions human experience; one is to not take oneself as being able to think over and above such conditions; one is to strive toward a more just political community in showing that these conditions are contingent ones that have ultimately served to exclude people, such as those who come from the lower classes, women or black-skinned people; given that God does not exist, the only will one may satisfy is that of thinking and acting in accordance with a human *logos*; etc.²⁸⁵

Physicalist-driven philosophers are similar to God-driven and human-driven. This occurs because they have also presupposed as a problematic starting point the claim that one is to deal with physicalist-driven disputes or at least one claim that imperfectly backs up this attitude, such as: one is to think in accordance with the assumption that contemporary empirical sciences (especially, physics) are an ultimately authority

²⁸⁴ For more recent takes on problematic starting points, such as these, consider Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom, and Evil*, New York, Harper and Row, 1974; as well as Peter van Inwagen, *The Problem of Evil*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.

²⁸⁵ For a detailed discussion of problematic starts points embraced by human-driven philosophers, such as these, see Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, London, Continuum, 2008.

concerning what there is and, hence, provide knowledge of thing-in-themselves; one is to proceed in a way that is analogous to those of mathematicians and/or empirical scientists; one is to contribute to make approaches to disputes as respectable as those of mathematicians and/or empirical scientists to their disagreements; one has to react to what physicalist-driven philosophers (who usually work in research universities in wealthy English-speaking countries) have published over the last fifty years; etc.

What I mean is that physicalist-driven philosophers have often presupposed that philosophers' purpose is to pursue the last paragraph's goals. God-driven and human-driven philosophers have simply not done so, that is, they presuppose that philosophers are to proceed differently. More directly, they take that to do philosophy is to do something distinct than what physicalist-driven philosophers have done. It follows that, in observing the history of metaphysics, I simply do not recognize any philosopher whatsoever who has been able to start without presupposing any problematic starting point. Indeed, were anyone able to do so while approaching any dispute, it is very likely that at least one dispute would have been solved once and for all. However, this does not seem to be possible.

The second premise for my argument for (5) runs as follows:

P.2 If P.1, it *might* be ultimately impossible for persons not to implicitly embrace (5).

I used and italicized the term “might” because my observation of the history of metaphysics only backs up an empirical claim—that philosophers *have relied* on problematic starting points. This claim is not to be confounded with a much more problematic modal claim: namely, that it is simply impossible for philosophers to not rely on problematic starting points. I do not need to embrace this claim, that is, I do not want to make any predictions

concerning how future philosophers (say, from one thousand years from now) will proceed. What I do is to claim that to implicitly embrace (5) is to perform two practices.

First, it is to resist at least one egalitarian practice, while promoting at least one libertarian practice; respectively, say, the egalitarian practice of following an established tradition that does not embrace a claim that one aims to defend; and the opposite libertarian practice of committing oneself to at least one claim that has the feature of provoking some dissensus insofar as not all persons embrace it. Note that this is a feature of Nietzsche's libertarian reaction insofar as this reaction was obviously not accepted by all, that is, analytic philosophers, such as Carnap, Lewis and van Inwagen, have evidently not embraced it. This is also a feature of Carnap's egalitarian reaction. This is so insofar as this reaction was also not accepted by all; the likes of Foucault and Derrida, for instance, do not embrace it. In fact, note that the stated claims that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophy have implicitly adopted as problematic starting points also have the feature of provoking some dissensus because not all persons have embraced them.

The second practice is to resist at least one libertarian practice, while promoting at least one egalitarian practice; respectively, say, the libertarian practice of causing dissensus with all persons; and the practice of defending at least one claim that has a particular feature: that of causing some consensus insofar as there is at least one person (besides the ones who proposes the claim) who agrees with oneself. This is also a feature of Nietzsche's libertarian reaction. As indicated above, this reaction has been embraced by Foucault and Derrida. Therefore, not all persons have disagreed or been shocked by Nietzsche. In fact, he has been one of the most influential philosophers of all times. Carnap's egalitarian reaction has also obviously caused some consensus insofar as analytic philosophers, such

as Lewis and van Inwagen, have been influenced by it. Furthermore, consider once again all the stated claims that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophy have implicitly adopted as problematic starting points. All of these claims have caused some consensus insofar they have evidently been accepted by more than one person.

So, what I empirically claim insofar as the observer of the history of metaphysics is that, since immemorial times, persons have performed the two practices described in the last two paragraphs, that is, this observation indicates that it *might* be impossible for persons to do otherwise. What, on the other hand, no one has done is to argue that:

P.3 It is more valuable (and more “realist”) to be self-aware of oneself in explicitly embracing (5) than to lack self-awareness in implicitly doing so.

To paraphrase Nietzsche, this premise implies that it is more valuable to become who we already are as persons than to aim to be something we might be ultimately unable to be, such as: someone or something that exclusively values dissensus, libertarian practices, individualistic tendencies and the will to power, while ignoring one’s urges for consensus, egalitarian practices, communitarian tendencies and the will to order. To paraphrase Carnap, P.3 implies that it is more valuable to be self-aware of oneself than to succumb to self-delusion. By self-delusion here, it is to be understood the action of taking oneself to be able to exclusively value consensus, egalitarian practices, communitarian tendencies and the will to order, while ignoring one’s needs for dissensus, libertarian practices, individualistic tendencies and the will to power. To paraphrase both Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s clinical vocabulary, what I would like to suggest with P.3. is that the singular healthy mentioned in 1.4 that I pursue is that of imperfectly managing to do justice to the will to synthesis. Accordingly, what I do is to take that “sickness” is to be applied to those

who act in discordance with such will. This sickness is superficially expressed whenever one is imprudent in either following Nietzsche (and perhaps, the likes of Foucault and Derrida too) in being “too libertarian” or doing the opposite, that is, to imprudently follow Carnap (and perhaps, the likes of Lewis and van Inwagen too) in being “too egalitarian”.

However, it is important to emphasize the following: as this very chapter purports to have shown, I have obviously been influenced by Nietzsche, Foucault and Derrida as well as Carnap, Lewis and van Inwagen, even though I problematize their problematic starting points. So, regardless of the upfront differences between these philosophers, what this chapter has aimed to make explicit is that my disagreements with them are all secondary ones. The same can be stated about those who might suspend judgement on (1) through (13) but embrace the very practice of discussing these claims or at least that of allowing me to do so. On the other hand, the deep opponents of this dissertation are those who express a much deeper “sickness” that disaccords with the will to synthesis more intensively. The “sickness” I have in mind takes place when one manages to be neither libertarian nor egalitarian, but a close-minded conservative in expressing the kinds of “subtle” violence mentioned in 1.5. I will address my deep opponents in the next two chapters. For the time being, I emphasize once again that in calling them “sick”, I merely wish to pressure them to drop their practices. However, as already indicated above, I take these deep opponents of mine to be legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake.

The fourth and last premise for my argument for (5) is that:

P.4 If the consequent of P.2 is the case as well as P.3, (5).

By *modus ponens* from P.1 and P.2, the consequent of P.2 follows. Hence, a conjunction between P.3 and this consequent can be inserted. By *modus ponens* from this conjunction

and P.4, P.4's consequent follows. Hence, my argument's conclusion is: (5), the system of dispute's fifth claim according to which one is to do a synthesis of Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. This is to state, as (5)' indicates, that one is to act in accordance with the will to synthesis. This is also to state, as (5)'' indicates, that one is to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes, by: defending claims that are both to provoke dissensus with some persons *and* which are to be consensually embraced by others, while promoting some egalitarian and libertarian practices as well as resisting other likewise egalitarian and libertarian practices.

CHAPTER 4
UNDENIABLE METAPHYSICAL CLAIMS, “SUBTLE” VIOLENCE AND
PERSONHOOD²⁸⁶

4.1 A Curious Thing About Ontological Disputes

“A curious thing”, to paraphrase Willard Van Orman Quine, about ontological disputes is that they often only arise after at least one problematic claim is made or at least taken seriously.²⁸⁷ Consider the ontological disputes that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven philosophers have focused on: respectively, those on whether there is evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness. Respectively, these disputes only arise after the following highly controversial claims are embraced or taken seriously: Being (in the Heideggerian sense stated in 2.2) is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with God; Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with that which conditions human experience; and Being is to stand in some sort of non-causal relation with a neither divine nor properly human, such as the particles postulated by physics. Once these claims (also discussed in 2.2) are embraced or at least taken seriously, a tension arises: that between the practice of embracing such claims and that of endorsing the existence of evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness. Apparently, one cannot have both of these practices consistently.

It is not surprising, then, that a traditional stance has been the eliminativist approach of rejecting the existence of the entity at stake while supporting or at least keeping an open mind concerning the highly controversial claim that apparently runs in tension with the entity’s existence. Consider that God-driven, human-driven and physicalist-driven

²⁸⁶ This chapter is an extended version of a talk I gave at the 2018 *Düsseldorf Graduate Workshop, What Do We Do When We Do Metaphysics?*.

²⁸⁷ Willard Van Orman Quine, “On what there is”, *The Review of Metaphysics* Vol. 2. No. 5, Sep., 1948: pp. 21.

philosophers extremely distinct from one another, such as Saint Augustine, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Daniel Dennett, have all endorsed the eliminativist approach. Respectively, these philosophers rejected the existence of evil, of a thing-in-itself and that of consciousness.²⁸⁸ It is not this dissertation's aim, though, to discuss the persuasiveness of these moves. Indeed, as indicated above (see 3.2), the goal of making a significant contribution to the ontological disputes on evil, a thing-in-itself or consciousness is a considerably hardly achievable one, given the extensive literature on such issues.

Accordingly, what I propose to do, instead, is to develop a distinct kind of eliminativist approach: that of rejecting the existence of an entity whose existence has rarely been discussed, while keeping an open mind concerning another highly controversial claim that apparently runs in tension with this entity's existence and has likewise rarely been addressed. I will spell out this highly controversial claim in what follows. First, consider the entity whose existence has rarely been discussed that I have in mind. I call it an undeniable metaphysical claim. As stated above (see 1.1), an undeniable metaphysical claim is one that may be associated with metaphysics and that each and every person is to endorse in order to count as a legitimate rational peer concerning a certain dispute at stake. Note that, distinct from the ontological disputes over evil, a thing-in-itself and consciousness, the one over the existence of such undeniable metaphysical claim is not an object-level dispute. Rather, this is a descriptive metametaphysical dispute that concerns

²⁸⁸ Saint Augustine, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love*, trans., Albert C. Outler, London, Aeterna Press, 2014: chapter 4; Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge*, trans., Peter Heath and John Lachs, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982: pp 45 (I, 472); and Daniel Dennett, "Quining Qualia" in A. J. Marcel and E. Bisiach (eds.), *Consciousness in Modern Science*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988. Note that these three works were respectively written around 420, 1794-1795 and the late 1980s.

what philosophers, such as Aristotle and his more or less unconscious followers, have suggested about their works.

What I empirically conclude as an observer of the history of metaphysics is that most Western philosophers have not carefully observed this history. It is not surprising, then, that they have more or less unconsciously followed Aristotle in adopting the dogmatic craft discussed in 1.2 or crafts quite similar to the dogmatic one, while suggesting that their works attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim. The following claims are examples of claims that, as it will be shown in what follows, Aristotle, Saint Anselm, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Eli Hirsch have respectively suggested to be undeniable metaphysical ones: there are no impossible entities (that is, those that have and lack the very same property, such as that of being and not being round); God exists; religious and/or metaphysical claims are superstitions; critical philosophy spells out the transcendental conditions for cognitive experience; disputes arise due to our failure to understand the logic of our language; and ordinary language is not committed to mereological sums, such as that of a person's nose and the Eiffel Tower.²⁸⁹

Whether any of such claims is true or persuasive is irrelevant for my purposes. What I aim to do is to support the system of disputes' sixth claim according to which

²⁸⁹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *Complete Works of Aristotle, Volume 2: The Revised Oxford Translation*, trans. W.D. Ross, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1984; *Metaphysics: Books 1-9*, trans. Hugh Tredennick with the original Greek text, MA, Harvard University Press, 1933; Saint Anselm, *Proslogion with A reply on behalf of the fool*, trans. M. J. Charlesworth, with the original Latin text; Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1979; *Proslogion*, trans. Thomas Williams, Indiana, Hackett Publishing, 1995; David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007; Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1974; and Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance and Realism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.

- (6) There is no undeniable metaphysical claim, but a properly dogmatic “subtle” violence.²⁹⁰

The properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, as stated above (see 1.5), is that of suggesting that one’s own writings attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim, while not explicitly endorsing and, perhaps, even contradicting (1-i) and/or (1-ii). Respectively, these are the claims that: among the others, some are legitimate rational peers, and no person has settled a dispute once and for all. This is to state that those who express the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence insinuate that: *pace* (1-i), their others are not really legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake, and/or, *pace* (1-ii), one’s works, indeed, settle at least one dispute permanently. I call the properly dogmatic violence a “subtle” one because this violence’s existence is not as easily identifiable as that of corporeal upfront forms of violence, such as those of punching or shooting a person. So, distinct from, say, a drunk man who picks up a fight in a bar or a robber who shoots the owner of a convenient store, the philosophers who, I claim, perform the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence are not usually depicted as properly violent persons. In arguing that such philosophers have expressed a “subtle” violence, then, it might be objected that I defend a counter-intuitive claim; one that, assuming the conflictual use of intuition-talk discussed in 3.2, some people, regardless of argument, are not inclined to endorse. I start to try to make these people shift their intuitions to my side by mentioning three kinds of writings.

First, consider the works of Carl Schmitt, Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, Emmanuel Levinas, Frantz Fanon, Jacques Derrida, Jan Assmann and Richard

²⁹⁰ Of course, I cannot discuss all allegedly undeniable metaphysical claims that may be used to problematize (6). I take, yet, that in what follows I provide a significant extensive overview of such claims. This overview is an imperfect justificatory resource that backs up (6) in the best way I can currently develop.

Bernstein.²⁹¹ They have all identified and criticized all sorts of violence, including, but also going beyond upfront corporeal kinds of violence. In doing so, these philosophers have already problematized what counts as violence in the first place. Second, consider the likes of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Angela Davis and Cornel West.²⁹² A common feature that pervades their writings is that of suggesting that violence against black-skinned people does not merely refer to upfront corporal violence, such as that of punishing slaves by flagellating their backs. Instead, other forms of violence, such as that of looking with disgust to two black-skinned people kissing in the street, are also to be considered. The same is the case with racist “jokes”. Third, consider the feminist literature articulated by Simone de Beauvoir, Catherine MacKinnon, Linda Alcoff, Gayle Rubin, Sally Haslanger, Julia Serano, etc.²⁹³ These authors have also claimed that women, gays, transgendered and/or non-binary people have suffered not merely upfront kinds of violence, such as that of being beaten; it also has to be acknowledged that these groups have suffered other kinds of violence, such as that of being constantly interrupted in debates. In arguing for (6), I am

²⁹¹ See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996; Walter Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, vol 1: 1913-1926*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1996; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York, Median Book, 1958; Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991; Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, Grove Press, 2004; Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978; Jan Assmann, *The Invention of Religion: Faith and Covenant in the Book of Exodus*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2018; and Richard Bernstein, *Violence: Thinking Without Banisters*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2013.

²⁹² Martin Luther King, *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches*, New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 1986; Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*, New York, Merit Publishers and Betty Shabazz, 1965; Angela Davis, *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, MA, Blackwell Publishers, 1998; and Cornel West, *The Cornel West Reader*, New York, Basic Civitas Book, 1999.

²⁹³ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, London, Lowe and Brydone, 1953; Catherine MacKinnon, *Are Women Human?*, MA, Harvard University Press, 2006; Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; Gayle Rubin, *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2011; Sally Haslanger, *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; Julia Serano, *Outspoken: A Decade of Transgender Activism and Trans Feminism*, Oakland, Switch Hitter Press, 2016; etc.

inspired by the authors mentioned in this paragraph and hope that others influenced or at least aware of their works are inclined to acknowledge the existence of “subtle” violence.

Under the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche, I claim that the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence is an anti-libertarian kind of violence. This occurs because those who express it implicitly seek to constrain their others’ singularities, while implicitly speaking in the name of a community of holders of *logos* and not acknowledging that others are likewise part of this community. These others, dogmatists have suggested, have defended rationally indefensible metaphysical claims that threaten the community of all holders of *logos*. In short, dogmatists are not libertarians. This is because they simply do not seek to establish a unique criterion of their own to deal with disputes while problematizing the constraints imposed by any kind of community. Rather, what dogmatists aim is to rely on criteria that allegedly are shared by all members of such community of holders of *logos*.

The problem, this chapter aims to show, is that dogmatists have a quite narrow view on what counts as a holder of *logos*. This is because they simply do not recognize that the community of all holders of *logos* is a conflictual community, that is, a community in which, as stated in 1.4, theoretical and practical disputes constantly occur and for every member x , there is another member y so that x and y are others of one another. Under the influence of Rudolf Carnap, then, I also claim that the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence is also an anti-egalitarian “subtle” violence. The reason is that, in expressing it, dogmatists have not contributed to the creation of a really universal community, while attenuating their own singularities. What dogmatists have done, instead, has been to, implicitly, defend the interests of a quite narrow community; that of those who agree with their allegedly undeniable metaphysical claims and/or their criteria or reasons for embracing them.

It follows that those who express the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, ultimately, act in deep discordance with the will to synthesis. In other words, Aristotle and his more or less unconscious followers neither maximize their individualistic tendencies (that is, the many or the singularity principle), nor their communitarian ones (that is, the one or the identity principle). In still other words, they are neither libertarians, such as Nietzsche, nor egalitarians, such as Carnap. Instead, they are conservatives who more or less implicitly seek to defend the interests of the aforementioned quite narrow community, regardless of their own singularities or of the interests of a really universal community.

To rely on a clinical vocabulary similar to Nietzsche’s and Carnap’s, this is what I take to be the properly dogmatic “sickness”. As indicated in 3.2, it is crucial to emphasize again that in calling dogmatists sick, I do not wish to (dogmatically) suggest that dogmatists are not legitimate rational peers regarding disputes. I also do not wish to (dogmatically) suggest that I am able to solve a dispute once and for all. Instead, I am a conflictual crafter who merely takes dogmatists to be deep opponents whose practices I wish to change. In calling them “sick”, I am pressuring them to do so while still recognizing their personhood.

Now note that the dispute on whether there are undeniable metaphysical claims is one that arises mainly for someone who endorses or at least takes seriously a controversial claim that has rarely been discussed. The claim is that the Sisyphean picture of the history of metaphysics is the most persuasive picture of such history.²⁹⁴ According to this picture, the history of metaphysics can be metaphorically compared to the process of a Sisyphean

²⁹⁴ According to Greek mythology, Sisyphus was a king who was punished by being compelled to roll an immense rock up a hill. He then had to watch the rock roll back down. Such actions had to be repeated eternally. For readings of this myth, see Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus: And Other Essays*, New York, First Vintage International Edition, 1991; and Thomas Nagel, “The absurd”, in *Mortal Questions*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

hell as follows: every time a philosopher (e.g., a God-driven one, such as Anselm) endorses a criterion (e.g., respect to scriptures) to approach a theoretical dispute (e.g., the one on whether God exists) in pushing a rock up a hill with a claim about a dispute at stake (e.g., that God exists), another philosopher (e.g., a human-driven one, such as Kant) makes the rock roll down once again in interpreting the supposedly shared criterion differently or simply proposing another one (e.g., accordance with the transcendental conditions for a judgment to be a cognitive one). This distinct criterion leads the philosopher to endorse a distinct claim on the dispute at stake, say, that “God exists” is not even a cognitive claim.

Indeed, every time a philosopher (e.g., a human-driven one, such as Kant) endorses a practice in pushing a rock up a hill in formulating a dispute (e.g., that on whether there are things-in-themselves), another philosopher (e.g., a physicalist-driven one, such as Thomas Nagel) makes the rock roll down once again in endorsing a distinct practice that leads to a distinct kind of dispute (e.g., the one on whether consciousness exists). This distinct practice is just as justified or as unjustified as the previous one, since both of them are ultimately backed up by the problematic starting points discussed in 3.3. Philosophers, the Sisyphean picture adds, are persons who have rejected one another’s claims rationally. However, they have not done so conclusively in stopping the Sisyphean-hell like process in establishing at least one undeniable metaphysical claim or practice. What philosophers have done, instead, has been merely to endorse deniable metaphysical claims and practices that can be rationally rejected by persons, such as their others. Nothing indicates that someone will be able to stop the Sisyphean-hell like process in doing otherwise. Dogmatists, then, have misdescribed their works; they have overestimated these works of theirs in adopting what may be called an eliminativist attitude: that of suggesting that their

works show that one can react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes by simply putting an end to these disputes or at least to one of them.

Note that if the Sisyphean picture is the case, there seems to be no strong notion of philosophical progress according to which contemporary works of philosophy have more “knowledge”, are closer to the “truth” and/or are “significantly superior” than past philosophical works insofar as disputes are stake. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and, more tentatively and recently, Timothy Williamson point to such a strong notion of philosophical progress.²⁹⁵ On my part, I tend to think that the very theoretical dispute over the claim “there is philosophical progress” is one that cannot be approached by means of a non-controversial criterion endorsed by all persons. What I mean is that, according to the Sisyphean picture, no non-controversial criterion for what counts as philosophical progress appears obtainable; that whatever a philosopher embraces as some sort of “unit to measure” philosophical progress (e.g., “amount” of knowledge or “closeness” to the truth) will itself rely on a problematic starting point. It is not this chapter’s aim, though, to reply to the likes of Hegel and Williamson in detail while making a case for the Sisyphean picture.

What I aim to do is just to show that one is to keep an open mind regarding the Sisyphean picture insofar as (6) follows, by *modus tollens*, from:

P.1 If there is no properly dogmatic “subtle” violence or an undeniable metaphysical claim exists, there also has to be a narrow condition for personhood, that is, a necessary, but not sufficient condition according to which to be a person, one must endorse an (allegedly) undeniable metaphysical claim.

²⁹⁵ “In many areas of philosophy”, Williamson claims, “we know much more in 2007 than was known in 1957; much more was known in 1957 than in 1907; much more was known in 1907 than was known in 1857”. See Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, MA, Blackwell, 2007: pp. 280. Also consider Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy 1825-6: Volume I: Introduction and Oriental Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; *Lectures on the History of Philosophy Volume II: Greek Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; *Lectures on the History of Philosophy: Volume III: Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009.

P.2 However, there is no narrow condition for personhood.

Let me now imperfectly justify P.1 and P.2 in the next two sub-sections, respectively.

4.2 Dogmatists' Writings and Narrow Conditions for Personhood

Consider Aristotle's way of addressing the ontological dispute on whether there are impossible entities. In addressing this dispute in his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle suggests that his works attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim: namely, there are no impossible entities. In his words, translated by W.D. Ross, "the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect".²⁹⁶ Aristotle goes as far as stating that this claim is the "most indisputable of all principles".²⁹⁷ Notice that there is no evidence that he takes himself to be expressing any kind of "subtle" violence in stating so. On my part, then, I read that if Aristotle's works are, indeed, free of the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence or if the claim that there are no impossible entities is, indeed, a metaphysical undeniable one, there has to be a narrow condition for personhood that Aristotle's "opponent" violates.²⁹⁸ The narrow condition is that for one to be a person, one must endorse the very claim that there are no impossible entities.

Aristotle points to this narrow condition. This occurs because he appears to take himself to be able to refute once and for all the "opponent" who rejects that there are no impossible entities, and who "will only say something".²⁹⁹ If this opponent "says nothing", Aristotle continues, "it is absurd to attempt to reason with one who will not reason about anything, in so far as he refuses reason. For such a man, as such, is seen already to be no

²⁹⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Γ 3, 1005b 19-20.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Γ 4, 1006a 4-5.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Γ 4, 1006a 13.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

better than a *mere plant* [φυτῶν].³⁰⁰ By the expression “say something”, I interpret that Aristotle means “to be able to make meaningful utterances”. If an opponent is able to do so, Aristotle insinuates, such an opponent must endorse the claim that there are no impossible entities. Otherwise, this opponent is not really a legitimate rational peer insofar as the dispute on the existence of impossible entities is concerned. In stating that “some think Heraclitus” believes that there are impossible entities, Aristotle indicates that this might have been the case with Heraclitus and his followers.³⁰¹ Protagoras and “those who share the views of Protagoras” would also have believed in the existence of impossible entities.³⁰² Aristotle also seems to imply that they would be “no better than a mere plant”.

Now note that, as it is well-known, Aristotle never used the term “metaphysics.” Nevertheless, two neutral senses —very distinct from the derogatory ones adopted by Nietzsche and Carnap —of the word “metaphysics” have often been associated with his works, especially with his so-called *Metaphysics*; a title given not by Aristotle himself, but by that the first century C.E. editor who assembled the writings we currently call *Metaphysics* and who may have been the first to coin the term, “metaphysics.” The two neutral senses of “metaphysics” are: “the science of being *qua* being” and “an inquiry into first principles.” Therefore, it can be argued that for Aristotle, Heraclitus, Protagoras and their respective followers are “non-metaphysicians” in a derogatory sense. This is so insofar as they would have failed to think in accordance with this science and/or inquiry.

Consider Anselm’s way of addressing the ontological dispute on whether God exists. More than a thousand years after Aristotle wrote his *Metaphysics*, Anselm also

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Γ 4, 1006a 13-15, my emphasis.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Γ 3, 1005b 25.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, Γ 4, 1007b 22.

suggests that his work attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim: namely, the very claim that God exists. Notice that Anselm deals with the following passage of scriptures: “The *fool* [*insipiens*] says in his heart, ‘There is no God’”.³⁰³ In the third chapter of his 1077-1078 *Proslogion* whose translation by Thomas Williams was adopted here, Anselm asks the following questions: “So then why did the *fool* [*insipiens*] say in his heart, ‘There is no God,’ when it is so evident to the rational mind that you [that is, God] among all beings exist most greatly? Why indeed, except because he is *stupid* [*stultus*] and a fool [*insipiens*]?” (my emphasis). In raising these questions, Anselm does not seem to take himself to be expressing a “subtle” violence regarding those who deny God’s existence.

My reading, then, is that if Anselm’s works, indeed, express no properly dogmatic “subtle” violence or if the claim that God exists is, indeed, a metaphysical undeniable one, there has to be a second narrow condition for personhood. The condition —apparently suggested by Anselm, while raising the questions of the last paragraph —is that to be a person, one must endorse the very claim that God exists. Otherwise, one is a “stupid and a fool”, that is, someone who is not really a legitimate rational peer insofar as the dispute on God’s existence is at stake. Now let me emphasize that Anselm’s terms (“stupid” and “fool”) are distinct and, arguably, less aggressive than Aristotle’s (“no better than a mere plant”). To put it metaphorically, though, Aristotle’s terms echo in the writings of Anselm’s, and those of several other philosophers who more or less unconsciously follow Aristotle and his dogmatic craft. This is the case with Hume’s, regardless of the fact that, distinct from Aristotle and Anselm, he takes himself to be an “anti-metaphysician”, and associates with his opponents’ works and uses the term “metaphysics” in a derogatory way.

³⁰³ See Psalms 14:1 and 53:1, my emphasis.

Consider the very last paragraph of Hume's 1748 *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Hume summarizes his take on the dispute on whether what he calls religious and/or metaphysical claims, such as "God exists" or "there are miracles", are superstitions. Hume's view is that this is the case. He reaches this conclusion because, for him, a belief is either a relation of ideas or a matter of fact. Examples of the former and the latter, respectively, are: the mathematical claim that " $2 + 2 = 4$ ", and the empirical claim that "the sun rose yesterday". Since religious and/or metaphysical claims would be neither relations of ideas nor matters of fact, they would be superstitions. Accordingly, it is not surprising that Hume argues that any book "of divinity or school metaphysics" that only contains superstitions is to be committed "to the flames".³⁰⁴ This book, Hume goes as far as emphasizing, "can contain nothing but *sophistry* and illusion".³⁰⁵

It may be taken for granted that Hume does not believe to be expressing a "subtle" violence in making this last claim. What he suggests, instead, is that his own works attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim: the very claim that religious and/or metaphysical claims are superstitions. I interpret, then, that if this is so or if Hume's works do not after all express a properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, there must be a third narrow condition for personhood. According to this third condition, to be a person, one must endorse Hume's very claim that religious and/or metaphysical claims are superstitions. Otherwise, one is not really a rational peer concerning the dispute over the epistemic status of religious and/or metaphysical claims, but, rather, relies on books that "contain nothing but *sophistry* and illusion". Hence, almost seven hundred years after Anselm's *Proslogion* and in an atheist manner, Hume's term ("sophistry") still echoes Aristotle's.

³⁰⁴ David Hume, *Enquiry* 12, §34.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

Notice that Aristotle and, before him, Plato's Socrates have contributed to change the original meaning of the term "sophist". In making this last claim, this dissertation relies on Ancient philosophy scholars, such as W. K. C. Guthrie.³⁰⁶ Guthrie argues that at first the term "sophist" was usually applied in Ancient Greece in the non-derogatory sense of a "wise man". Yet, starting in the fifth century BCE, a derogatory sense began to be attached to the word "sophist": that of a "charlatan." This is an unserious teacher who for the sake of profit and/or fame, tricks others into believing in fallacious arguments and/or absurd claims, that is, sophistries. Plato's Socrates as well as Aristotle sometimes describe the likes of Protagoras as making such sophistries. On his part, Hume suggests that only "*ignorant and barbarous nations*" would take a sophistry seriously.³⁰⁷ Indeed, Hume goes as far as stating that "when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors [that is, in relying neither on a relation of ideas nor on a matter of fact, but in "religion" or "metaphysics"] we have for our warrant the testimony of a few *barbarous Arabians*".³⁰⁸

Let us also take Kant into account. In the last chapter of his 1783 *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* whose translation by Gary Hatfield was adopted here, Kant claims that "critique stands to the ordinary school metaphysics precisely as chemistry stands to alchemy, or astronomy to the fortune-teller's astrology".³⁰⁹ This passage attests to the fact that Kant uses the term "metaphysics" in a derogatory sense quite related to Hume's and Carnap's: that of a pre-scientific or unscientific inquiry. In seeking to know things-in-themselves, this inquiry would disrespect the transcendental conditions for judgments to

³⁰⁶ W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Sophists*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971: pp. 27.

³⁰⁷ David Hume, *Enquiry* 10, §20, my emphasis.

³⁰⁸ David Hume, *Enquiry* 10, §24, my emphasis.

³⁰⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics: With Selection from the Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Gary Hatfield, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004: (4:366).

be cognitive ones. For Kant, metaphysics would merely provide non-cognitive judgments, such as “there is an immaterial soul that persists after the body’s death” and “God exists”.

So, Kant —distinct from Aristotle and Anselm, and like Hume, Carnap and Nietzsche —often uses the term “metaphysics” to refer to the works of his opponents: those regarding which he seeks to differentiate his own project. The latter is what he calls “critique” or “critical philosophy”, that is, a purported scientific inquiry comparable to mathematics and to the empirical sciences that would spell out the transcendental conditions for cognitive experience. It is not surprising, then, that Kant claims that “in metaphysics [in the last paragraph’s sense], we have to retrace our path countless times, because we find that it does not lead where we want to go, and it is so far from reaching unanimity in the assertions of its adherents that it is rather a battlefield (*Kampfplatz*)”.³¹⁰ This last passage is part of the preface of the 1787 second edition of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, whose translation by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood was adopted here.

Kant further depicts the “battlefield” he has in mind as “one that appears to be especially determined for testing one’s powers in mock combat [*Spielgefechte*]”.³¹¹ Note that the expression “mock combat” (*Spielgefechte*) also “echoes” Aristotle’s terms insofar as Kant implies that his opponents are engaged in a non-serious and even infantile activity. Indeed, the combat Kant has in mind would be a mock combat because “on this battlefield no combatant has ever gained the least bit of ground, nor has any been able to base any lasting possession on his victory”.³¹² This passage shows that Kant’s picture of the history

³¹⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xiv-xv, my emphasis.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

³¹² *Ibid.*

of metaphysics somehow resembles the Sisyphean one. However, the view of someone, such as myself, who tends to endorse this picture is extremely distinct from Kant's.

Champions of the Sisyphean picture claim that it might be impossible to stop the Sisyphean hell-like process that characterizes the history of metaphysics. To use Kant's metaphor, there seems to be no way out of the battlefield so that Kant himself and all other mature philosophers are serious (as opposed to mock) combatants in it. Kant, on the other hand, describes himself as putting an end to the battlefield. To use my own metaphor, Kant takes himself as being able to close the Sisyphean-hell like process in turning philosophy into a science as if all philosophers before him were unserious children and he were the first serious really mature philosopher. It is not surprising, then, that in the 1781 first preface of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant goes as far as stating the following: "I make bold to say that there cannot be a single metaphysical problem that has not been solved here, or at least to the solution of which the key has not been provided".³¹³

This last passage is further evidence that Kant took his own works to attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim: namely, the very claim that his critique spells out the transcendental conditions for cognitive experience. Note that Kant does not seem to take himself to be expressing any kind of "subtle" violence in suggesting that his opponents are mock combatants whose claims lack cognitive value. My reading, then, is that if his works do not express the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence and/or attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim, there has to be a fourth narrow condition for personhood. The condition is that to be a person, one must endorse Kant's very own claim that his critique spells out the transcendental conditions for

³¹³ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A xiii.

cognitive experience. Otherwise, one is not really a legitimate rational peer insofar as the dispute over such conditions is at stake but, instead, proceeds in a pre-scientific or unscientific way that, ultimately, cannot really be taken seriously and is infantile.

It is likewise not very surprising, then, that even in his pre-critical phase in a letter from April 8th of 1766 to Moses Mendelssohn, Kant states the following about “metaphysicians”: “I cannot conceal my *repugnance*, and even a certain *hatred*, toward the inflated arrogance of whole volumes full of what are passed of nowadays as insights”.³¹⁴ In the same letter, Kant likewise “echoes” Aristotle and, even more explicitly, Anselm in claiming that his 1766 *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer* pursues “a merely negative purpose, the avoidance of *stupidity (stultitia caruisse)*”.³¹⁵ Now let me underline that my view is that philosophers may suggest that their works attest to the existence of undeniable metaphysical claims, even when they do not derogatorily describe their opponents.

Consider the first Wittgenstein of the 1921 *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*. Although he does not explicitly describe his opponents in a derogatory way, he suggests that the following claim is a metaphysical undeniable one: disputes arise due to our failure to understand the logic of our language. Wittgenstein suggests so because in “echoing” the quoted passage of the first preface of Kant’s *Critique Pure Reason*, he states that he “found, on all essential points, the final solution of the problems”.³¹⁶ The problems Wittgenstein has in mind are all of those “problems of philosophy”.³¹⁷ In 4.0030 of the *Tractatus*,

³¹⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Correspondence*, trans. Arnulf Zweig, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999:10:70, my emphasis).

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10:71. Also see Immanuel Kant. *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer: Illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, trans. Emanuel F. Goerwitz, New York, The Macmillan Co, 1900. Moreover, consider that in addressing the mentioned letter by Kant, Karl Popper calls “Kant’s attack upon metaphysics” a “violence”. See Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies: New One Volume Edition*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1994: pp. 252.

³¹⁶ Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, pp. 4, my emphasis.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.3.

Wittgenstein gives an example of the kind of problem he has in mind. The example is a dispute on “whether the good is more or less identical than the beautiful”.³¹⁸ In seeking to provide a “final solution” to this dispute and indeed to all (or at least most) other disputes, Wittgenstein himself is engaged on a metametaphysical dispute: the one on why disputes arise in the first place. Wittgenstein’s way of addressing this matter is by arguing that these disputes arise because of “our failure to understand the logic of *our* language”.³¹⁹

This last claim is what Wittgenstein labels a “final solution.” In doing so, he does not seem to take himself to be expressing a “subtle” violence regarding his opponents. This is to state that if the *Tractatus* is, indeed, free of the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence or if Wittgenstein’s final solution is, indeed, an undeniable metaphysical claim, there has to be a fifth narrow condition for personhood. According to this condition —apparently suggested by Wittgenstein insofar as he speaks in terms of a “final solution”, albeit he does not derogatorily describe his opponents —, to be a person, one must endorse the claim that disputes arise because of our failure to understand the logic of our language. Otherwise, one is not really a legitimate rational peer concerning the dispute on why disputes arise in the first place but, rather, someone who fails to understand the obvious: the very logic of our language, that is, a language that is to be understood by all holders of *logos*.

It is important to underline that there still are contemporary philosophers who suggest that their own works attest to the existence of undeniable metaphysical claims. Consider Hirsch’s take on the dispute on whether ordinary language is committed to mereological sums, that is, the dispute on whether mereological sums are objects in the ordinary sense of the term “objects”. Hirsch’s view is that this is not the case. David Lewis,

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 23.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4, my emphasis.

according to Hirsch, claims otherwise. “Lewis is one of the most influential deniers of [...] ‘*common sense sanity*’”, Hirsch states.³²⁰ So, Hirsch further argues that: “I think the short and *decisive rebuttal* of Lewis’s view is that if you try to tell ordinary folk about the gerrymandering objects [that is, mereological sums] which, on Lewis’s account, they are supposedly committed to, they will look for the *nearest place to commit you to*”.³²¹

This last passage is evidence that, more than two thousand years after Aristotle wrote his so-called *Metaphysics*, philosophers still “echo” his terms. This occurs in that Hirsch likewise suggests that his opponent, Lewis, is not really a legitimate rational peer insofar as what is at stake is the dispute on whether ordinary language is committed to mereological sums. Lewis would somehow be “insane” in needing to be committed to a mental institution. This is because Lewis defends that mereological sums are objects in the ordinary sense of the term “objects;” ordinary language would be ultimately committed to these sums in Hirsch’s reading of Lewis’s view. Notice that Hirsch also “echoes” Kant and Wittgenstein in speaking in terms of a “*decisive rebuttal*”.³²² Nothing in Hirsch’s writings indicates that he takes himself to be expressing a “subtle” violence in speaking so.

My interpretation of Hirsch’s writings, then, is similar to those I propose of the several other more or less unconscious followers of Aristotle. More explicitly, if Hirsch’s works do not express any properly dogmatic “subtle” violence or if the claim that ordinary language is not committed to mereological sums is a metaphysical undeniable one, there must be a sixth narrow condition for personhood: that to be a person, one must endorse the

³²⁰ Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance*, pp. 42, my emphasis. For further comments on this passage, see my own Felipe G. A. Moreira, “An Apology of Carnap”, *Manuscrito* (Unicamp), Vol 37, Número 2, 2014: pp.261-289.

³²¹ Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance*, pp. 42.

³²² *Ibid*, my emphasis.

claim that ordinary language is not committed to mereological sums. Otherwise, one, like Lewis, denies what Hirsch calls “*common sense sanity*” in not really being a legitimate rational peer concerning the dispute on whether ordinary language is committed to mereological sums.³²³ What follows, then, is P.1, the claim that if there is no properly dogmatic “subtle” violence or, as Aristotle and his followers suggest, an undeniable metaphysical claim exists, there also has to be a narrow condition for personhood.

4.3 Against Narrow Conditions for Personhood

However, there is no narrow condition for personhood. This is P.2. The reason for endorsing this premise is that narrow conditions for personhood seem to be ultimately arbitrary ones. This is so in the sense that: philosophers who are interested in defending certain metaphysical or metametaphysical claims seem to have constantly suggested that the claims they defend must be endorsed for someone or something to be a person. Yet, there seems to be no persuasive reason for embracing these suggestions. In fact, the six philosophers addressed in the last section have never explicitly presented these reasons; they have never explicitly argued for narrow conditions for personhood, instead, as indicated above, they have only suggested, insinuated or pointed to these conditions.

This chapter, though, faces an objection: that the proposed reading of all the passages quoted in the last section is too literal. This is so insofar as these passages were taken as evidence that philosophers have suggested narrow conditions for personhood. Instead of doing so, the objection continues, these passages should be read metaphorically, that is, not as serious claims that there are narrow conditions for personhood. Rather, these

³²³ *Ibid*, my emphasis.

passages should be interpreted as emotional outburst passages. By this, it is to be understood a passage that has one or both of the following features. First, the passage indicates that its author feels strongly emotionally invested in the metaphysical or metametaphysical claim at stake. This is because the passage is evidence that the author shows some animosity or even hatred (as it is explicit in the letter by Kant quoted above) concerning those who contradict the claim the author supports. Second, the passage is evidence that the author overestimates the level of persuasiveness of a metaphysical or a metametaphysical claim, that is, the passage implies that a merely hardly deniable or even a highly controversial metaphysical or metametaphysical claim is an undeniable claim.

It may be conceded to the objector that the metaphorical reading of the passages quoted in the last section is as persuasive as the literal one. Regardless of which of these readings is the most persuasive one, though, P.2 is to be endorsed. This is because, as stated above, narrow conditions for personhood are ultimately arbitrary ones in the stated sense. Furthermore, note that even if the metaphorical reading trumps the literal one, P.1 is still to be embraced. This takes place because this premise's consequent follows from its antecedent, regardless of whether all the six philosophers discussed above were actually committed to narrow conditions of personhood. What is crucial here is that, as the last section indicates, Aristotle and his followers have all more or less explicitly problematized (1-i) and (1-ii) in insinuating that their others are not really rational peers insofar disputes are concerned and/or that their own works settle at least one dispute permanently.

For my purposes, then, it is ultimately irrelevant whether Aristotle and his followers really believe that their others are “no better than plants”, “stupid”, etc, or terms, such as these, are to be read as derogatory metaphors whose literal meanings not even dogmatists

themselves take to hold true of their others. Analogously, consider a racist who calls a black-skinned person a “monkey” or a sexist who calls a woman a “bitch”. What is most important for the authors of the black movement and/or feminist ones mentioned in this chapter’s introduction is not to discuss whether such a racist and such a sexist literally believe so or merely rely on some sort of derogatory metaphor in using these terms.

What is relevant is that the racist and the sexist express some sort of violence in using terms, such as “monkey” and “bitch”. In other words, they proceed in a not very subtle violent way; one that may only be called “subtle” ironically, as I have done here. My view is that the case with dogmatists is analogous. In relying on terms, such as “plant” or “fool”, they express a properly dogmatic “subtle” violence regarding their others. In doing so, they suggest that others are not legitimate rational peers when disputes are concerned. Indeed, as indicated above, this “subtle” violence may be expressed, even by philosophers, such as Wittgenstein, who do not use derogatory terms to describe their opponents.

Yet, another objection arises: that P.2 is a trivial premise. The first reason for claiming so is that if the literal reading is the case, philosophers have merely suggested narrow conditions for personhood; they have never argued for them. So, P.2 is a trivial premise in that no philosopher (including the six ones addressed in the last section) rejects it. The second reason for taking P.2 to be a trivial premise is that if the metaphorical reading is the case, it also seems to follow that no philosopher has defended P.2. My reply is that even if P.2 is a trivial premise, this is not a disadvantage; the opposite is the case in that an argument that has this kind of premise is likely to be more persuasive. In fact, the very dispute on whether P.2 is a trivial premise is quite unimportant for my purposes. What is

crucial is that (6) follows, by *modus tollens*, from P.1. and P.2, regardless of whether the literal or the metaphorical reading is the case. (6), as indicated above, is the claim that there is no undeniable metaphysical claim, but a properly dogmatic “subtle” violence. (6) is no trivial claim. The reason is that this claim’s denial has been widely believed, since Ancient Greece up to today by all the more or less unconscious dogmatic followers of Aristotle.

This is to state that the denial of (6) can be attributed to all the six philosophers addressed in the last section, regardless of whether the literal or the metaphorical reading is the case. The reason is that there is no evidence that these philosophers take themselves to be expressing any kind of “subtle” violence. In addition, the passages quoted in the last section are sufficient evidence that all of them have suggested that their own works attest to the existence of at least one metaphysical undeniable claim. To put it metaphorically, these philosophers have suggested that their own works are able to stop at least partially the Sisyphean hell-like process of the history of metaphysics. It follows that dogmatists have misdescribed their works. This is so in that they have overstated what these works of theirs manage to accomplish. To argue for (6), then, is to put the self-image of dogmatists into question in spelling out that they are not self-aware that all of them are ultimately caught in the Sisyphean hell-like process of the history of metaphysics, despite their more or less unconscious wishes to stop this process. To show this is likewise no trivial task.

P.2 is also to be embraced because several traditional criteria adopted by philosophers to approach disputes are violated once a narrow condition for personhood is endorsed. Consider accordance with scriptures, a criterion adopted by Anselm as well as by all other God-driven philosophers. The only narrow condition for personhood that seems to be backed up by this criterion is that suggested by Anselm himself: that to be a person,

one must endorse the metaphysical claim that God exists. Note that in suggesting this condition, Anselm considers only one passage of scriptures already quoted above: that “the fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’”. This passage, nonetheless, is not necessarily evidence that scriptures endorse Anselm’s narrow condition mentioned in this paragraph. Indeed, this is what another God-driven philosopher, Saint Thomas of Aquinas, claims.

Consider Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica* written from 1265 to 1274, whose 1920 translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province was adopted here. In the first article of the second question of this work’s first part, Aquinas claims that the “the opposite of the proposition ‘God is’ can be mentally admitted: ‘The fool said in his heart, There is no God’ (Psalm 53:1). Therefore, that God exists is not self-evident”.³²⁴ This passage may be read as Aquinas’ way of problematizing Anselm in that it implies that there are persons who reject that God exists; that even the so-called “fool” is a legitimate rational peer regarding the dispute on God’s existence. Indeed, the existence of this “fool”, Aquinas implies, is evidence that Anselm’s narrow condition for personhood is not the case.

Consider another traditional criterion endorsed by human-driven philosophers, such as Karl Marx or, more recently, by all the black movement and/or feminist authors mentioned in this chapter’s introduction: oppression acknowledgement. This criterion, I assume, is satisfied whenever one spells out and resists practices of oppression. Examples of these practices that rely on upfront kinds of violence are the following ones: to colonize and kill millions of native Americans; to kidnap from Africa and enslave black-skinned people; to embrace the Jim Crow laws; to not allow black-skinned people to vote or to make it hard for them to not become criminals and end up going in and out of jail

³²⁴ Saint Thomas of Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Indiana, Christian Classics, 1981.

throughout their lives; to underpay and exploit poor workers in forcing them to work in inhumane conditions; to make it hard for women to fulfill more than domestic tasks or to not give them the right to vote; to suggest that the vast majority of Mexicans who immigrate to the USA are dangerous, say, they are robbers, drug dealers and/or rapists; etc.

Other examples of practices of oppression related to professional philosophy, and that resort to less easily identifiable kinds of violence are: to mock in writings, talks and/or classes philosophers who do not belong to one's tradition and/or time or that contradict one's claims; to not accept into Graduate programs those who study and/or are influenced by these philosophers; to also not employ or to not allow one's opponents to publish in philosophical journals; to make strange noises in philosophy conferences in seeking to intimidate those who disagree with one's views; etc. I claim that oppression acknowledgment may be satisfied by the one who speculates that those who have championed these practices have often presupposed narrow conditions for personhood which imply that others are not legitimate rational peers or even that such others are not exactly persons. This presupposition, it may be speculated, is what ultimately legitimated and made practices of oppression tolerable and even praised in the West, say, as a sign of masculinity. What I mean is that narrow conditions for personhood are dangerous.

Consider another traditional criterion widely shared among physicalist-driven philosophers or, more broadly, analytic ones, such as Wittgenstein and Hirsch themselves: respect to the rules of ordinary language. As Mark Rowlands claims, "the category of the metaphysical person [that is, what has been simply called "person" here] is as mottled and messy as one could imagine".³²⁵ This is so, Rowlands continues, in that "there are a variety

³²⁵ Mark Rowlands, *Can Animals be Persons?*, forthcoming: pp. 15.

of ingredients that might go into making an individual a person in the metaphysical sense, and the relative importance of each is, to say the least, not immediately clear”.³²⁶ This is why it could be argued that in order to show what is the ordinary use of the term “person,” an empirical research would have to be performed. In determining what has been the most recurrent use of the term “person” within English-speaking countries, this research would establish which use is really entitled to be called the ordinary one.

This research would also have to establish three other points. First, what are in all non-English speaking countries (e.g., France, Italy or Brazil) the most recurrent uses of foreign terms (e.g., the French term “personne,” the Italian term “persona” or the Portuguese one “pessoa”) that have usually been translated to the English term “person” and which, therefore, also deserve to be called ordinary ones. Second, whether the ordinary use of the term “person” in English-speaking countries is different from that of the foreign terms mentioned in the last phrase. Third, if this is the case, which of these ordinary uses is the most relevant regarding the dispute on whether P.2 is to be embraced and that on what is a person. Yet, I do not know anyone who has done such an empirical research into the term “person” and I cannot do so here. Let me, however, consider two other options.

The first option is to argue that, before the adequate empirical research is accomplished, respect to the rules of ordinary language simply cannot be used as a criterion to approach the dispute on whether P.2 is to be accepted or the dispute on what is a person in the first place. The second option is to claim that, regardless of the lack of a detailed empirical research, philosophers can spell out what is if not exactly an ordinary, at least a widely shared use of the term “person” by following a more informal method adopted by

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

several analytic philosophers. This method is one that Simon Evnine adopts while addressing the dispute on what is a person. As Evnine states, this is the method of simply “asking the reader to consider the concept [of “person”] and confirm that the [offered] conditions [...] are indeed necessary conditions for the application of that concept”.³²⁷ I am neutral on the dispute on which of the two options mentioned in this paragraph is the most persuasive one. However, it is important to emphasize that if the second option is endorsed, P.2 appears (at least for me) to follow. Consider the ordinary concept of “person” and the question: is any narrow condition for personhood (like the six ones discussed in the last section) a necessary condition for the application of the ordinary concept, “person”? My hope is that this dissertation’s readers are inclined to answer this question negatively.

Consider another criterion to deal with disputes that, as it will be showed in the next chapter, is widely shared by analytic philosophers, such as Quine, Saul Kripke and Kit Fine: accordance with intuitions. Assuming once again the conflictual use of intuition-talk, I take that at least some of this dissertation’s readers agree that narrow conditions for personhood imply a quite “counter-intuitive” claim: that at least one human being who most people would take to be a person is not a legitimate rational peer insofar as a dispute is concerned. Consider the six narrow conditions for personhood suggested by Aristotle, Anselm, Hume, Kant, Wittgenstein, and Hirsch. Respectively, they imply that the following human beings are not legitimate rational peers: Heraclitus, Protagoras, their followers and Graham Priest who argues that impossible entities exist³²⁸; atheists; theists; practically all philosophers who articulated their works before Kant and most physicalist-driven ones who suggest that empirical sciences, such as physics, provide knowledge of

³²⁷ Simon J. Evnine, *Epistemic Dimensions of Personhood*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008: pp. 10.

³²⁸ Graham Priest, *Doubt Truth to be a Liar*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.

things-in-themselves; practically all philosophers who articulated their works before Wittgenstein; and David Lewis. “Intuitive”, then, is a term that may be used to qualify the distinct claim that all these human beings are, indeed, legitimate rational peers, and that it is a “subtle” violence to suggest otherwise merely because they contradict one’s claims.

I underline, however, that this is not to state that all others are legitimate rational peers on all disputes. There are, indeed, others who are not really rational peers regarding disputes, say, those who are under the influence of heavy drugs; those who are simply unaware of what is at stake in the dispute at hand; those who do not have the appropriate philosophical education, etc. It is not my aim, though, to spell out necessary or sufficient condition for someone to have such an education. Indeed, I do not think that this is an easy task. What I would like to do, instead, is to illustrate my view with a contemporary example. Imagine sexy youtubers who, in posting videos in which they appear shirt-less, manage to become famous by making pseudo-philosophical funny remarks about disputes, albeit their almost complete lack of education in the field. I do not wish to suggest that these youtubers are actually really legitimate rational peers. They are only, so to speak, bare; not bare wise persons. My point regarding Aristotle and his more or less unconscious followers is that they often suggest that *all* of their others—including sophisticated philosophers who have an appropriate philosophical education and, indeed, have spent a significant amount of the times of their lives in studying disputes—are like these youtubers who are mainly seeking money and/or fame. To rely on a conflictual use of intuition-talk once more, the view supported here is that this is simply not a very “intuitive” suggestion.

Consider a third criterion widely shared among physicalist-driven philosophers: maximization of theoretical virtues, such as conservatism, generality, simplicity,

refutability and modesty. If this criterion is adopted on the dispute on whether P.2 is the case, it also appears that this premise is to be endorsed. To begin with, philosophers who deny P.2 violate at least two theoretical virtues: refutability and modesty. They violate refutability because they seem to presuppose that the very metaphysical or metametaphysical claim they aim to defend must be supported for one to be a person. They also violate modesty. In embracing a narrow condition for personhood, they make a quite arrogant move: that of suggesting that their works attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim. To put in Quine's terms, this contradicts the "experimental spirit" of being willing to revise one's view, once further evidence is presented.³²⁹ Now whether Quine really has such a spirit is another issue that will be discussed in the next chapter.

For now, note that conservatism is also, *arguably*, violated by the one who rejects P.2. The term "arguably" was emphasized because conservatism is a relational concept. Accordingly, a narrow condition for personhood can only be conservative regarding a certain context in which the condition is already embraced. Some narrow conditions for personhood (e.g., Anselm's) might be conservative regarding certain contexts (e.g., those in which theists compose a majority), while failing to be so in other contexts (e.g., those in which atheists compose a majority). However, no narrow condition for personhood is conservative regarding all contexts. Whether the one who embraces P.2 satisfies generality and simplicity is hardly determinable. To put it in more direct words, it seems that the endorsement of P.2 does not make one's view more general or simple than that of the one who rejects this premise. However, given the reasons mentioned in this and in the last paragraph, the endorsement of P.2 maximizes more theoretical virtues than its rejection.

³²⁹ Willard Van Orman Quine, "On what there is", pp. 38.

Now note that a conjunction between P.2 and a disjunction could be inserted. The disjunction is that either there are only broad conditions for personhood or there is no condition for personhood at all, that is, *logos* resists definition. By a broad condition for personhood, it is to be understood a necessary, but not sufficient condition that practically all human beings satisfy. This includes all philosophers named in this dissertation (at least during the time they wrote the works considered here). As Thomas White and Rowlands indicate, even some animals, such as dolphins, may satisfy such broad conditions.³³⁰ Indeed, the only human beings who may disrespect a broad condition are those, such as: fetuses (if it is granted that they are human beings); infants; some of those that psychiatry describes as severally mentally disordered; the ones who are on the last stages of Alzheimer's dementia or any other disease that strongly affects one's mental capacity, etc. Broad conditions for personhood, then, do not imply the stated "counter-intuitive" claim.

The following are examples of broad conditions for personhood proposed by Evnine (2008) are: "Finitude, Belief, Agency, and Second-Ordinality".³³¹ This is to state that, if Evnine is right, to be a person, one must be spatiotemporally finite. Moreover, one must have beliefs, assuming any broad notion of belief according to which all the metaphysical and metametaphysical claims discussed here as well as their denials count as beliefs. Third, one must be able to perform "individual intentional actions" as well as that of "engaging in relatively long-term plans and projects and deliberating about actions, plans, and projects".³³² Finally, one must have "the ability of have beliefs about beliefs,

³³⁰ Thomas White, *In Defense of Dolphins: The New Moral Frontier*, MA, Blackwell, 2007; and Mark Rowlands, *Can Animals be Persons?*

³³¹ Simon J. Evnine, *Epistemic Dimensions of Personhood*, pp. 16.

³³² *Ibid.*, pp. 14.

both one's own and other people's".³³³ Four other examples of broad conditions for personhood discussed by Rowlands are: "consciousness, cognition, self-awareness and other-awareness condition".³³⁴ This is to state that someone who accepts these conditions takes that to be a person, first, one must be "the subject of conscious mental states".³³⁵ Second, one must be able to "engage in cognitive processes".³³⁶ Third, one "must be conscious or aware of itself".³³⁷ Fourth, one "must be able to recognize other persons as such, and act appropriately toward them because of this recognition".³³⁸ Other examples of broad conditions for personhood that I am inclined to embrace are: that to be a person, one must have the power to engage oneself in these very disputes that have occurred since immemorial times; and that to be a person, one must have individualistic and communitarian tendencies, even though not all persons seek to maximize both of these tendencies in being in accordance with the will to synthesis, as I propose.

It is not this dissertation's goal to discuss whether any of the aforementioned broad conditions is more adequate or persuasive than any other condition, or whether any of such conditions can be subsumed to another one. It is worthy to emphasize, though, that throughout the last century up to ours, several other analytic philosophers, such as Daniel Dennett, Kathleen Wilkes, Robert Brandon, Carol Rovane, Tom Beauchamp and White, have endorsed all sorts of broad conditions for personhood.³³⁹ Nevertheless, as it might

³³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15.

³³⁴ Mark Rowlands, *Can Animals be Persons?*, pp. 27.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 18.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 19.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 21.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 23.

³³⁹ Daniel Dennett, "Conditions of Personhood," in Amélie O. Rorty, (ed.). *The Identities of Persons*, CA: University of California Press, 1976; Kathleen Wilkes, *Real People: Personal Identity without Thought Experiments*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1988; Robert Brandon, *Making it Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment*, MA, Harvard University Press, 1994; Carol Rovane, *The Bounds of Agency: An Essay in Revisionary Metaphysics*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1998; Tom Beauchamp,

have been expected given the Sisyphean hell-like process that, I tend to think, characterizes the history of metaphysics, these philosophers have disagreed on which broad conditions are to be endorsed. On my part, I remain neutral on this dispute of theirs. One reason for being so is that if the informal method described by Evnine is the method to be adopted while addressing this dispute (and all the authors named in this paragraph have more or less implicitly assumed so), it seems that all authors named in this paragraph proposed equally persuasive as well as unpersuasive broad conditions for personhood.

What is crucial for my purposes is that this dissertation only needs to commit itself to a weaker claim: that the disjunction that either there are only broad conditions for personhood or there is no condition for personhood at all may be inserted in P.2. Accordingly, this is what I would like to do, while emphasizing that (6) follows, by *modus tollens*, from P.1 and P.2 and that, if this is so, one is to keep an open mind regarding the claim that the most persuasive picture of the history of metaphysics is the Sisyphean one.

“Hume on the Nonhuman Animal”, *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 24, 1999: pp. 322-35; and Thomas White, *In Defense of Dolphins: The New Moral Frontier*.

CHAPTER 5 THE RIGHT-WING APPROACH TO METAPHYSICS

5.1 Macro-Political Conflicts: The Charlottesville-Conflict

Consider the Charlottesville-conflict. This is the conflict on whether the bronze equestrian statue of a former confederate general, Robert E. Lee, is to be removed from a public park in Charlottesville, Virginia, United States. Two approaches to this conflict are the left-wing approach and the right-wing approach. To put in Willard Van Orman Quine's terms, these approaches deal with "the balance of tolerance" differently.³⁴⁰ The left-wing approach is that of those who tend to be more tolerant; those who tend to privilege their powers to show empathy toward their others over their needs for self-defense. The right-wing approach is that of those who tend to be less tolerant in doing the opposite in privileging self-defense over empathy. Another way to understand the left-wing / right-wing distinction I have in mind is by claiming that those who champion the former tend to be more open-minded, whereas the champions of the latter tend to be more close-minded.

I would like to presuppose that empathy and self-defense refer to conscious or unconscious feelings that have a passive and an active component. As Michael Slote indicates, to passively empathize is to feel the suffering of someone (e.g., an other), or at least to recognize that this suffering exists.³⁴¹ To actively empathize is to act under the influence of this suffering in ceasing to give or at least attenuating the importance of one's particular identities so that this suffering is reduced. To passively self-defend oneself is to feel that others are a threat to one's own particular identities, or even to one's very life. To

³⁴⁰ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary*, MA Harvard University Press, 1987: pp. 207.

³⁴¹ Michael Slote, *From Enlightenment to Receptivity: Rethinking our Values*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; "Philosophy's Dirty Secret: What Virtue Epistemology Needs to Learn about Human Irrationality", forthcoming; and "Philosophical Sin", forthcoming.

actively self-defend oneself is to act under the influence of this feeling in seeking to protect one's life and/or conserve one's particular identities. By a particular identity, it is to be understood one shared by some, but not all entities. As indicated in 2.2, I call an identity shared by all entities and that ultimately characterizes them insofar as entities a universal identity. As also indicated in 2.2, God-driven philosophers suggest that to be into some sort of non-causal relation with God is an universal identity, whereas human and physicalist-driven philosophers point to distinct directions: respectively, that to be into some sort of non-causal relation with that which conditions human experience is a universal identity; and that a universal identity is that of being in some sort of non-causal relation with a neither divine nor human entity, such as the particles postulated by psychics.

To be Southern or descendent of Confederate soldiers, on the other hand, are particular identities. The same is the case with the identity of being someone who endorses a criterion to deal with disputes (e.g., accordance with intuitions) that others do not endorse. It is important to emphasize that a particular identity is an implicit kind of communitarian or, to put in Friedrich Nietzsche's terms, herd constrain. This occurs because someone who has or is recognized by a certain community as having a particular identity is expected to use language, behave and even to feel in a certain matter. Consider someone who has or is recognized by the contemporary American Southern community as having the particular identity of being a heterosexual male. This community implicitly coerces this person; it implicitly imposes upon him the norm that he is not supposed to wear or to even want to wear pink shirts, say, as opposed to white ones, black pants, blue suits, etc.³⁴²

³⁴² In giving this example, I am inspired by Julia Serano, *Outspoken: A Decade of Transgender Activism and Trans Feminism*, Oakland, Switch Hitter Press, 2016: pp. 264.

Imagine a left-winger and a right-winger who share some particular identities. They are both white-skinned, cisgender, heterosexual, Christian, middle-class males who were born and raised in Charlottesville. They are also descendants of soldiers who from 1861 to 1865 fought in the American Civil War alongside the defeated confederate forces championed by Lee. Imagine that, passively, the left-winger feels or at least recognizes the existence of the suffering of some of his others, say, black-skinned people who take that Lee's statue represents an endorsement of slavery, the segregationist Jim Crow laws enforced in the Southern states after the Civil War up to the 1960s and/or, to say the least, "problematic" ongoing attitudes, such as that of policemen who are more inclined to use physical force against black-skinned people than against white-skinned ones. Actively, the left-winger acts under the influence of this feeling. He does so by ceasing to give or at least attenuating the importance of his own particular identities, especially that of being a descendant of confederate soldiers. So, the left-winger stops taking seriously the implicit communitarian constrain shared in Southern states according to which such descendants are to feel proud of their heritage and show signs of this proudness in public spaces.

Indeed, the left-winger suspects the philanthropic intents of Paul Goodloe McIntire. This is the man who bought the land of the current Charlottesville park in 1917, named this park Lee Park and commissioned Lee's statue from Henry Shrady, the sculptor who worked on it from 1917 to 1922. Notice that Lee's statue would only be inaugurated in 1924, after another sculptor, Leo Lentelli, also worked on it. The left-winger favors the decision from June of 2017 of the Charlottesville City Council to change the name of the park from Lee Park to Emancipation Park. The latter name, the left-wing believes, is a much better one. This is so insofar as it represents, not an endorsement, but a condemnation

of slavery, the Jim Crow Laws and the aforementioned “problematic” attitudes. The left-winger is also firmly convinced that Lee’s statue is to be removed and opposes those who organized the rally of August 11th and 12th of 2017, that is, the *Unite the Right Rally* against the statue’s removal. In fact, the left-winger goes to this rally to counter-protest it. He seeks to embarrass the rally’s champions in screaming words of order, say, “Black lives matter”.

Imagine that, on the other hand, the right-winger passively feels that some of his others (e.g., black-skinned people in general or those who champion the removal of Lee statue) are a threat to his very life and/or at least to his particular identities, especially that of being a descendant of confederate soldiers. Such others of his, the right-wing believes, make it very hard for him to follow the implicit communitarian constrain widely shared in Southern states that descendants of confederate soldiers are to feel proud of their heritage and explicitly show signs of this proudness of theirs in public spaces. Actively, then, the right-winger acts under the influence of this feeling of self-defense in detriment of his power to show empathy. In order to protect his very life and/or his particular identities, he opposes those who put into question the philanthropic intents of Paul Goodloe McIntire.

Moreover, imagine that the right-winger opposes the decision of the Charlottesville City Council to change Lee Park’s name to Emancipation Park. For him, this is, to say the least, an extremely disrespectful decision, not only regarding Lee, but also the confederate soldiers who fought on his side as well as these soldiers’ descendants, including the right-winger himself. He, then, joins the *Unite the Right Rally*. In marching with a torch alongside hundreds of others who share particular identities with him, the right-winger screams words of order, such as “blood and soil”, “you will not replace us”, “white lives

matter” and/or “Jews will not replace us”. Indeed, perhaps, he even goes as far as getting himself involved in fist fights with those who counter-protest the *Unite the Right Rally*.

Note that, throughout this dissertation (starting in 1.5), I have associated the term “libertarian” to Nietzsche, that is, someone who privileges the individualistic tendencies of either consciously or unconsciously acting in accordance and contributing to affirm one’s own singularity and/or those of others, while problematizing the constraints communities impose upon such singularities. I have opposed libertarians to egalitarians, such as Rudolf Carnap, that is, a philosopher who in my view privileges communitarian tendencies to either consciously or unconsciously contribute to create a really universal community, while seeking to attenuate one’s own’s singularity and/or the singularity of others.

In contemporary United States, nonetheless, “libertarian” is sometimes applied in the sense of someone who endorses traditional Republican-party policies, such as that of defending the right to bear guns; passing more restrict immigration laws; cutting taxes; reducing public subsidies to health insurance; problematizing affirmative actions; decreasing government’s aids, such as loans, for those who attend educational institutions; promoting military interventions in foreign countries, such as Middle-Eastern ones; etc. Hence, “egalitarian” is also sometimes used in reference to those who oppose these policies, say, in embracing traditional Democratic-party policies that contradict them.

It is not my aim, though, to discuss whether any use of the terms “libertarian” and “egalitarian” is more “ordinary” or “legit” than mine. Indeed, I tend to believe that points quite similar to the ones I made about the term “person” in 4.3 can be made about practically all philosophical terms and that, hence, appeals to “ordinary language” are highly problematic. Regardless of whether this is so, yet, what is crucial, for my purposes,

is to imagine that the left-winger is unsympathetic to the stated Republican-party policies. Such policies, he believes, have overprivileged the needs for self-defense of those who have particular identities similar to his over their powers to show empathy toward their others who do not have such identities. Such others, the left-winger is persuaded, have more often being killed for unjustified reasons and have had a harder time to come to United States, to support their families, to treat their health problems, to get in and pay their College's debts because of these Republican policies. The left-winger also believes American military interventions have had mainly negative effects, such as that of making young middle-Eastern men more inclined toward terrorism. On this turn, the right-winger endorses Republican policies. His view is that such policies have made it easier for him to defend himself and his family; to live in a safer country; to spend and invest his stipends with his own needs, not those of others; to get in and be more fairly treated by educational institutions; to make the Middle East and the rest of the world a better place; etc.

What is also crucial is to imagine that the left-winger seeks to be in accordance with his will to synthesis, while being both a libertarian and an egalitarian in this dissertation's sense. This is to state that he is a more open-minded person who embraces the very tension that he is in aiming to be both in accordance with Nietzsche's will to power and Carnap's will to order, that is, he seeks to maximize and to do justice both to individualistic tendencies (that is, the many or singularity principle) and to communitarian tendencies (that is, the one or identity principle), even if it may be ultimately impossible for a person to perfectly do so. This is to state that the left-winger seeks to act in accordance and contribute to affirm his own singularity or those of others insofar as beings who exist over

and above their particular identities and the implicit communitarian constraints they impose upon their behaviors, that is, he problematizes or seeks to problematize such constraints.

Indeed, the left-winger has a considerably Utopian Nietzschean aim: that of making people simply cease to care about these constraints in being in accordance with what is singular about them. To do so, to use metaphors already used in 3.2, is to become a pure *cachaça* drinker or a bird of prey that establishes one's own criteria for anything, say, for what counts as a proper moral behavior, beauty, etc. On the other hand, to continue to speak metaphorically, the left-winger also seeks to be a lemonade drinker or a little lamb that follows a community's criteria for anything. This is to state that the left-winger paradoxically also pursues a likewise Utopian Carnapian aim: that people or, more broadly, beings in general lived in accordance with universally shared norms, regardless of what is singular about them. Hence, while seeking to attenuate his own's singularity and/or the singularity of others, the left-winger also paradoxically aims to act in accordance and contribute to create a really universal community. Given that right-wingers do not do so, the left-winger takes them to be deep opponents of his. This is why he resists them, while aiming to make them drop their practices in ultimately ceasing to be right-wingers.

A more direct way to state this is by imagining that the left-winger wishes that right-wingers were no longer *xenophobes*, *classists*, *racists*, *sexists*, *transphobes*, *fascists* who cowardly and insensitively accept (in the left-winger's view) unacceptable policies, such as the one discussed in 1.3 of separating immigrant children from their parents and that of constantly using the state's power to spread a sort of biological or pseudo-biological controversial claim: that people are born, to put in Donald Trump's terms, either as

“winners” or as “losers” who are responsible for their own destiny and, consequently, merit what they have accomplished, regardless of any social constrain they might have faced.³⁴³

Imagine that the right-winger, on his part, does not take these policies to be unacceptable ones —after all, he believes, there have been those who have been successful, regardless of social adversity and those who came to the United States illegally are to be punished for such a behavior; otherwise, people will continue to illegally cross the U.S. / Mexico border. Moreover, the right-winger does not believe that the last paragraph’s italicized terms are to be applied to him. Indeed, he feels considerably shocked or embarrassed when he is described by such words. The matter is that the right-winger simply does not seek to be in accordance with the will to synthesis, that is, he is a more close-minded person who aims to maximize neither his individualistic tendencies nor his communitarian ones. This is to imagine that the right-winger is what I would like to call a conservative, regardless of other possible uses the term “conservative” may have.

Negatively speaking, the right-winger is a conservative because he is simply no libertarian in this dissertation’s sense. This is so insofar as he does not seek to act in accordance with what is ultimately singular about himself or others. What he values the most, instead, are the particular identities that he shares with others, such as the identities of being white-skinned, from the South of the U.S., decedent of confederate soldiers, cisgender, heterosexual, Christian, etc. Negatively speaking once again, the right-winger is a conservative also because he is no egalitarian in this dissertation’ sense. This is because the community whose members’ interests he seeks to defend is an extremely narrow one.

³⁴³ For a more detailed take on the close connection between right-wing policies and biological or pseudo-biological discourse, see Jason Stanley, *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*, New York, Random House, 2018.

This narrow community only includes and aims to defend the interest of those who share particular identities with the right-winger, that is, those who also seek to satisfy the norms implicitly implied by such identities, such as the norm that descendants of confederate soldiers are to feel proud of their heritage and explicitly show signs of this proudness of theirs in public spaces. As stated above, the right-winger also consciously or unconsciously privileges his need for self-defense over his power to show empathy toward others. Indeed, the right-winger thinks that to do otherwise is imprudent because this attitude puts one's very life in danger or at least one's particular identities and the implicit communitarian constraints they imply. Positively speaking, the right-winger is a conservative because he presupposes that such constraints are to be maintained. So, he takes left-wingers to be deep opponents who must be resisted, and he aims to make them drop their practices. More directly, he takes left-wingers to be anti-patriotic hypocrites; racists against whites; heterophobes; oversensitive users of politically correct language or even, to put in the non-politically terms right-wingers appreciate, "degenerated whores, faggots and communists"; etc. I will address political correctness in the next chapter.

For now, note that the Charlottesville-conflict is an example of a macro-political conflict. As stated in 1.5, three features characterize this kind of conflict. First, a macro-political conflict explicitly has a significant social importance, that is, not only a single individual, family or group of acquaintances care about it. Instead, a macro-conflict is one that matters for hundreds, thousands, millions or, perhaps, even billions of people. As the worldwide media coverage of the Charlottesville-conflict indicates, this quarrel has had a social importance. The second feature of a macro-political conflict is that the conflicting parties involved in the conflict seek to pressure a considerably large group of people (that

is, beyond their one's own families or group of acquaintances) to change their practices. While doing so, parties involved in a macro-conflict might even go as far as resorting to upfront violence. This is also the case with the Charlottesville-conflict. In pressuring opponents to drop their practices, parties involved in this conflict have marched with torches, screamed words of order, fist-fought one another, etc. In the end, several people got injured. In fact, a 32-year old woman, Heather Heyer, died after being hit by a car driven by James Alex Fields Jr., a 20-year old who describes himself as a neo-Nazi and was condemned on December of 2018 for first degree murder.

The third feature of a macro-political conflict is that it explicitly involves normative issues. This feature is also present in the Charlottesville-conflict. First, because whether one is to engage oneself in this conflict in the first place is a normative matter. Given that in the past countless statues have been erected and removed without causing any conflict, it may be argued that one is not to spend any time of one's life in discussing about Lee's statue, that, to begin with, there simply are more urgent matters to be addressed. Moreover, those who do not believe so in addressing the Charlottesville-conflict have disagreed on whether Lee's statue is to be removed. This is another normative issue. The same is the case about another quarrel conflicting parties on the Charlottesville-conflict have disagreed: the one on which criterion, to begin with, is to be used in addressing this conflict.

Consider that right-wingers have often relied on, say, the proud criterion according to which one is to be proud of one's historical heritage, whereas left-wingers have frequently endorsed, say, the care criterion; one that states that one is to care about those who are hurt by one's historical heritage. Some conflicting parties may also have endorsed a common criterion, say, the balance criterion according to which one must find a balance

between being proud of one's heritage and caring about others who are hurt by it. Yet, macro-right-winger and macro-left-wingers seem to have interpreted this criterion differently in reaching no consensus on what counts as a balance in the first place.

Hence, the Charlottesville-conflict is a macro-political conflict. This claim, I expect, will not face much significant resistance, and is not a very controversial one. The same cannot be stated about the system of disputes' seventh, eight and ninth claims: that

- (7) Disputes are micro-political conflicts analogous to macro-political conflicts, that is, they are micro-wars.
- (8) There has been a right-wing allegedly apolitical approach to disputes that, perhaps, avoids the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but still expresses the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence.
- (9) The properly dogmatic and the pseudo non-dogmatic "subtle" violence are to be avoided.

The reason I expect to find resistance to (7), (8) and (9) is related to a fact acknowledged by Socrates in the second book of Plato's *Republic*.³⁴⁴ The fact is that it is easier to read big letters than little ones. Socrates's view is that, analogously, it is easier to understand a just city than a just man because it would simply be easier to observe the phenomenon of justice in a larger scale as opposed to a smaller one. It is not my goal to discuss whether this is so. What I would like to do, instead, is to confront the resistance to (7), (8) and (9) by backing up the similar analogies that just like it is easier to read big letters than little ones, it is easier to: first, acknowledge the existence of macro-political conflicts than that of micro-political conflicts; second, identify a right-wing approach to macro-political conflicts than to micro ones; and, third, criticize the upfront kinds of

³⁴⁴ Plato, *The Republic of Plato* (2nd edition), trans., Allan Bloom, New York, Basic Books, 1991: 368d, to use the standard quotation method for Plato.

violence present in macro-political conflicts than the “subtle” ones at stake in micro-political conflicts. Let me carefully spell out these analogies out by explaining what I mean and imperfectly justifying (7), (8) and (9) in the next three sub-sections, respectively.

5.2 Micro-Political Conflicts: Disputes as Micro-Wars

A micro-political conflict has (on a smaller scale) the very same features that (on a larger scale) can be found in a macro-political conflict. As indicated in 1.5, this is to state that a micro-political conflict, like a macro-political one, is characterized by three features: social importance; conflicting parties that aim to influence a significant group of people’s practices; and presence of normative issues. Yet, whereas in a macro-political conflict these features are very explicit and, so, considerably easily identifiable, these three features are merely implicit and, so, very hardly identifiable in a micro-political conflict. Indeed, the very parties involved in a micro-political conflict are often unaware of such features. The same does not usually occur with parties involved in macro-political conflicts. Consider the left-winger and the right-winger; it is not problematic to assume that they are both aware that they are political agents engaged in a macro-political conflict with one another.

It is not surprising, then, that (7) has never been explicitly defended.³⁴⁵ What philosophers (at least, roughly, around the 17th century) have traditionally supported,

³⁴⁵ This is not to state that philosophers have not addressed the political assumptions of approaches to metaphysics or pointed toward other theses closely connected to (7). Consider the following philosophers who have inspired me: Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989; Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways*, Illinois, Open Court, 2000; George A. Reisch, *How the Cold War Transformed Philosophy of Science: to the Icy Slopes of Logic*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005; Thomas L. Akehurst, *The Cultural Politics of Analytic Philosophy: Britishness and the Spectre of Europe*, London, Continuum, 2010; David Plunkett, “Conceptual History, Conceptual Ethics, and the Aims of Inquiry: A Framework for Thinking About the Relevance of the History / Genealogy of Concepts to Normative Inquiry”, *Ergo*: Vol 3, no. 2 (2016): pp. 27-64; Sally Haslanger, *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; etc.

instead, is the following disjunction: disputes are analogous to the disagreements of mathematicians and/or empirical scientists, *or* at least one person deals with disputes in a way that is analogous to the manner mathematicians and/or scientists have dealt with their disagreements. Consider that, in the first paragraph of his 2nd *Meditation* released in 1641, René Descartes likens his project to that of Archimedes in suggesting that he is such a person. In his 1748 *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (see Book 1, §15), David Hume points to a similar direction in suggesting that his project is considerably similar to Newton's. In the second preface of the 1887 edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (see B xxii), Kant compares his critique to Copernicus's revolution. This indicates his commitment to the stated disjunction. More recently, Quine and others influenced by him, such as David Lewis, Timothy Williamson and Theodore Sider have all pointed to a similar direction.³⁴⁶ On my part, I would like to remain neutral on the stated disjunction.

In order to do otherwise, I would have to engage myself in a challenging task that, as indicated in 1.1, is not pursued here: that of articulating a reading about the disagreements of mathematicians and empirical scientists. For my purposes, it suffices to endorse a conditional: that if the disagreements of mathematicians and/or empirical scientists are not micro-political conflicts analogous to macro-political ones, disputes are not analogous to such disagreements. There may be reasons (even strong ones) for endorsing this conditional's antecedent. To discuss these reasons, though, is another challenging task that I do not pursue. What is crucial is to emphasize that albeit I have described myself in 3.2 as the observer the history of metaphysics, I would like to remain

³⁴⁶ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*; David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983; *On the Plurality of Worlds*, MA, Blackwell, 1986; Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, MA, Blackwell, 2007; and Theodore Sider, *Writing the Book of the World*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.

neutral on whether this procedure of mine is analogous to those of empirical scientists and/or mathematicians. Note that the three previous chapters have already pointed to (7).

This is because it has hopefully been spelled out that Nietzsche and Carnap have been ultimately engaged in a micro-political conflict, a micro-war, on how one is to do philosophy. This micro-war has continued throughout the 20th century up to today insofar as continental and analytic philosophers have been influenced either by Nietzsche's libertarian reaction or by Carnap's egalitarian one to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. It has also been insinuated that those who express the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence are not exactly politically neutral. This chapter's aim, though, is to make a much more explicit case for (7) by making two new moves.

The first move is to exclusively focus on a single dispute that may seem (especially for those who have endorsed the aforementioned disjunction) apolitical, perhaps, even obviously apolitical. I call it the essence dispute: that on whether, independently of the way entities are described, they have essences. The points I make about this dispute, it will be indicated throughout this section, generalize to all disputes mentioned in this dissertation. Henceforth, for short, I will refer to these disputes simply as all disputes. As indicated in 2.1, let me underline again that I use the term "entity" in a loose way that is to cover all sorts of objects or things philosophers have talked about, such as evil, things-in-themselves, consciousness, undeniable metaphysical claims, cyclists, the number 9, Socrates, the set whose sole member is Socrates (henceforth, for short, singleton Socrates), etc.

The second move is that of exclusively focusing on three approaches to the essence dispute that were articulated in the second half of the 20th century: those of Quine's 1960 *Word and Object*; Saul Kripke's 1980 *Naming and Necessity*; and Kit Fine's 1994 article,

“Essence and Modality”.³⁴⁷ Note that these philosophers share the following particular identities: they have been described as analytic philosophers; they are supposedly apolitical philosophers; they have been educated and worked in universities in wealthy English-speaking countries, such as the United States and the UK; they have not usually discussed macro-political conflicts; they have presupposed that they did not have to justify themselves for not discussing these matters;³⁴⁸ they have been very influential within the narrow community of those who share these particular identities with them; and, indeed, in an anti-cosmopolitan way, they have primarily (if not practically, exclusively) addressed the views of those who are likewise part of this community of theirs. In other words, Quine, Kripke and Fine rely on strategically narrow bibliographies that do not include, say, German and French continental philosophers, such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, etc.³⁴⁹ Also note that I do not aim to approach three other disputes quite closely related to the essence one that are also discussed by Quine, Kripke and Fine: respectively, the dispute on whether modal logic is useful; the dispute on whether proper names have meaning and/or refer to

³⁴⁷ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1960; Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1980; and Kit Fine “Essence and Modality”, in *Philosophical Perspectives Vol. 8*: 1994: pp.1-16.

³⁴⁸ In contrast, consider Foucault’s debate with Chomsky. More precisely, the moment in which Foucault answers Fons Elders’ question on why “he is so interested in politics” by stating the following: “I can’t answer the question of why I should be interested; I could only answer it by asking why shouldn’t I be interested? *Not to be interested in politics, that’s what constitutes a problem.* So instead of asking me, you should ask someone who is not interested in politics and then your question would be well-founded, and you would have the right to say, ‘Why, damn it, are you not interested?’”. Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *The Chomsky-Foucault Debate: On Human Nature*, New York, The New Press, 2006: pp. 37, my emphasis.

³⁴⁹ This did not impede Quine from signing a letter published at *The Times* in May 9th of 1992 against Derrida’s nomination for an honorary degree by Cambridge University.

essences; and the dispute on whether there is a useful metaphysical idiom of grounding that cannot be identified with modal notions, such as that of supervenience.³⁵⁰

To begin with, the essence dispute, like all disputes, has a significant social importance; not merely a single individual, family or group of acquaintances has cared about it. At least since Ancient Greece, hundreds, thousands or perhaps even millions of philosophers (or, more broadly, people in general) have given a lot of importance to this dispute. Hence, they have spent a significant amount of their lives in dealing with it. Note that they have not merely done so privately, say, in sharing their thoughts in personal diaries or discussing them with family members, beloved ones or acquaintances. What philosophers, such as Quine, Kripke and Fine, have done is to deal with the essence dispute publicly. What I mean is that they have taught about this dispute in educational institutions; they have dealt with this dispute in giving public lectures, publishing books and/or papers in philosophical journals that in principle may be accessed by all persons. This is not to state that the essence dispute has the same social importance of the Charlottesville-conflict. The latter conflict has currently gathered much more attention than the former one. Nonetheless, this is not a reason for taking that the essence dispute has no significant social importance. Rather, this is merely a reason for taking this dispute to be a micro-political conflict as opposed to a macro-political conflict. The same is the case with all disputes.

Furthermore, conflicting parties on the essence dispute have pressured a significant amount of people to change their practices, say, by even going as far as resorting to violence. Of course, the violence I have in mind is not of an upfront corporeal kind, such

³⁵⁰ See Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*; Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*; and Kit Fine, "Guide to Ground", in Fabrice Correia and Benjamin Schnieder (eds.), *Metaphysical Grounding: Understanding the Structure of Reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

as the ones expressed in the *Unite the Right Rally*. In the essence dispute, like in all disputes, the kinds of violence that often are at stake are “subtle” ones, such as the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence discussed in the last chapter. As stated above in 1.5 and 4.1, this is the violence of using one’s writings to suggest that there is at least one undeniable metaphysical claim, while not explicitly endorsing and, perhaps, even contradicting (1-i) and/or (1-ii). Respectively, these are the claims that, among the others, some are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake; and that no person has settled a dispute once and for all, that is, in a way that others could not rationally unsettle. To reject these claims, then, is to insinuate that others are not really legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake, and/or that one’s works, ultimately, settle at least dispute once and for all.

I am influenced by Quine in assuming that the principle of charity is that according to which a text’s reader is to attempt to make most of the text’s statements true or at least plausible and/or persuasive.³⁵¹ In embracing this principle, I claim that, while pressuring their opponents to change their practices, Quine, Kripke and Fine, perhaps, avoid the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence. This last claim is not very easy to sustain. Consider Quine’s take on the essence dispute. According to him, this dispute is to be dismissed. Quine’s argument for concluding so will be addressed in what follows. First, I approach his way of dealing with his opponents, that is, the significant social group of thousands (if not millions or even billions) of philosophers and persons in general who have relied on terms, such as “essences”, “necessary attributes” or “internal relations”, and who make a distinction between these terms and “accidents”, “contingent attributes” or “external relations”.³⁵² This is a “distinction,” Quine states in seeking to pressure his opponents to

³⁵¹ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 35.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 199.

drop their practices of embracing this distinction, “that one attributes to Aristotle (subject to contradiction by scholars, such being the penalty for attributions to Aristotle)”.³⁵³

In this passage, it seems that Quine relies on a slightly coercive use of language of the sort, as indicated above (see 3.1), criticized by the likes of Robert Nozick, David Lewis and Peter van Inwagen. Indeed, my interpretation is that Quine not very subtly mocks Aristotle and/or Aristotelian scholars in that he insinuates four points: that whether Aristotle actually made the stated distinction is quite irrelevant; that the exegetical dispute concerning whether this is so is not a very important one; that accordance with Aristotle’s works is an ultimately useless criterion to deal with the essence dispute; and that historical studies of the history of philosophy are ultimately quite irrelevant for contemporary philosophers. In the end, Quine concludes by going as far as stating that “however venerable the [accident-essence] distinction, it is surely *indefensible*”.³⁵⁴

Note that the term “indefensible”, to speak metaphorically, “echoes” Immanuel Kant’s claim that “there cannot be a single metaphysical problem that has not been solved here”; Ludwig Wittgenstein’s “final solution” and Eli Hirsch’s “decisive rebuttal” discussed in 4.2. Indeed, the accident-essence distinction would be “*baffling*” in provoking an “*appropriate sense of bewilderment*”: a sense that Quine seeks to make explicit by underlying that alleged essences of cyclists and mathematicians are that of being two-legged and that of being rational, respectively.³⁵⁵ Quine asks his readers to imagine someone who would be both a cyclist and a mathematician. He, then, argues that “there is *no semblance of sense*” in rating some attributes of this person “as necessary and others as

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 199-200, my emphasis.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 199, my emphasis.

contingent”.³⁵⁶ Hence, these passages by Quine may be read as evidence that —like Aristotle, after all —he likewise expresses the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence.

Also notice that if this is so, Quine’s works would, then, attest to George Santayana’s famous phrase: “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it”.³⁵⁷ This is because, like Aristotle after all, Quine would suggest that his writings attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim: namely, that the accident-essence distinction makes no sense. Quine would also imply that those who defend the “indefensible” accident-essence distinction are not really legitimate rational peers insofar as the essence dispute is at stake, and/or that his works settle this dispute once and for all.

Let us also consider Kripke’s take on the essence dispute. His view, distinct from Quine’s, is the traditional Aristotelian one: that entities have essences as well as accidents, independently of the way they are described. Accordingly, while pressuring his opponents, such as Quine and the several hundreds or even thousands influenced by Quine, to endorse this distinction, Kripke commits himself to the very kinds of claims Quine takes to cause “bewilderment”. Two examples of such claims are that to be odd is an essence or a necessary property of the number 9, and that to be the number of planets in our solar system is an accident or a “contingent property” of the number 9.³⁵⁸ Kripke’s argument for embracing these claims will likewise be discussed in what follows.

For now, note that Kripke makes the following (arguably) slightly coercive and (evidently) ironic claim: “people [like Quine himself, it is crucial to add] who think the

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

³⁵⁷ George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, New York, Prometheus Books, 1998: pp. 82

³⁵⁸ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 40. Note that back in 1970 when Kripke gave the lectures at Princeton University that became known as *Naming and Necessity*, Pluto was still considered a planet. Hence, scientists understood our solar system to have nine planets, not eight as it is believed today.

notion of accidental property unintuitive have *intuition reversed*, I think”.³⁵⁹ This passage may be read as evidence that Kripke also follows Aristotle in a much more implicit way that has not been noticed: that of expressing the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence. This is to interpret that Kripke suggests that his own works attest to the existence of an undeniable metaphysical claim: that entities have essences and accidents, independently of the way they are described. It is plausible to read Kripke in such a way because he states that to have “intuitive content” is “very heavy evidence in favor of anything”.³⁶⁰ “I really don’t know,” he continues, “what more *conclusive evidence* one can have about anything, ultimately speaking”.³⁶¹ So, Kripke may be read as insinuating that his opponents on the essence dispute are not really legitimate rational peers. This is because Kripke’s opponents would have “intuition reversed”. In fact, given that Kripke relies on what is supposed to be the most “conclusive evidence”, that is, his non-reversed intuition, he may be read as suggesting that his works settle the essence dispute once and for all. I also underline that Kripke neither explicitly spells out what he means by an intuition, nor relies on the distinction made above (see 3.2) between the dogmatic and the conflictual use of intuition-talk. Given the passages quoted in this paragraph, the latter use may be attributed to him.

Also consider Fine’s view on the essence dispute: that, regardless of whether entities have essences independently of the way they are described, the notion of essence is not to be conflated with that of a necessary property. As Fine indicates, several philosophers or people in general (perhaps, even millions of them) have presupposed otherwise. Arguably, this is the case with Quine and Kripke insofar as, indicated above,

³⁵⁹ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 42, my emphasis.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

they may have believed that terms, such as “essence” and “necessary property”, are interchangeable. In doing so, they may have suggested a biconditional: that an entity has a property necessarily if and only if this property is the entity’s essence. On his part, while implicitly pressuring his opponents to change their practices, Fine rejects this biconditional. Fine’s view is that it is not the case that if an entity has a property necessarily, this property is the entity’s essence. For him, only the converse would be the case.

Fine’s view, then, is that an entity’s essence is to be understood, not in modal terms, but as a “real definition” that spells out what the entity ultimately is just like a verbal definition would spell out what a word ultimately means.³⁶² I postpone to a few paragraphs below the presentation of Fine’s argument for claiming so. For now, I focus on Fine’s description of his opponents. “I am aware”, Fine argues, “that there may be readers [perhaps, like Quine and Kripke themselves] who are so in the grip of the modal account of essence that they *are incapable of understanding the concept in any other way*”.³⁶³ “One cannot, of course”, Fine continues, “argue a *conceptually blind person* into recognizing a conceptual distinction, any more than one can argue a colour blind person into recognizing a colour distinction”.³⁶⁴ Indeed, there would be an “*absurdity* involved in attempting to recover the essential properties of things from the class of necessary truth”.³⁶⁵

These passages, then, seem to back up a reading according to which Fine expresses the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, while suggesting that his own works attest to the existence of at least one undeniable metaphysical claim: the very one that, regardless of whether entities have essences independently of the way they are described, the notion of

³⁶² Kit Fine, “Essence and Modality”, pp. 3.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 5, my emphasis.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 9, my emphasis.

essence is not to be conflated with that of a necessary property. In fact, consider Fine's expression, "conceptually blind person". This expression echoes Aristotle's ("no better than a mere plant") and Anselm's ("stupid" and "fool") discussed in 4.2 insofar as Fine suggests that his opponent is impaired in being "conceptually blind". This is to state that Fine may likewise be read as someone who suggests that his others are not legitimate rational peers concerning the essence dispute and/or that his take on this dispute is a once and for all one. In assuming the principle of charity, though, this is not how I would like to read Fine. This is to state that, regardless of the passages quoted in the last two paragraphs, I do not wish to attribute to him the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence.

Instead, my reading is that Fine, perhaps, avoids expressing this kind of violence. At least two passages of "Essence and Modality" appear to back up this reading of mine. The first passage runs as follows: "it *seems* to be possible to agree on all modal facts and yet disagree on the essentialist facts".³⁶⁶ The second passage is that in which Fine states that: "it *seems* to me that far from viewing essence as a special case of metaphysical necessity, we should view metaphysical necessity as a specially case of essence".³⁶⁷ Perhaps, these two passages would not have been made by someone who more or less unconsciously follows Aristotle. From the latter, one would expect a much stronger claim, such as: ultimately, only a stupid fool no better than a mere plant understands essence as a special case of metaphysical necessity (as opposed to the opposite) or rejects that it is rational to agree on all modal facts and still disagree on the essentialist facts.

In presupposing the principle of charity, I also do not attribute to Kripke and Quine the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence. Instead, I claim that, perhaps, they avoid such

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 8, my emphasis.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 9, my emphasis.

violence, regardless of the passages by them quoted above. I read them so because there are also excerpts from Kripke and Quine that problematize the attribution of a properly dogmatic “subtle” violence to them. Consider once again a passage by Kripke already quoted above: that “people who think the notion of accidental property unintuitive have intuition reversed, *I think*”.³⁶⁸ Perhaps, the expression, “I think”, is not one that would be expected from a dogmatist. The latter is expected to show no signs of uncertainty regarding one’s own views. In using the expression “I think”, this is what Kripke does. Kripke also claims that the feature of being “wrong” is “probably common to all philosophical theories”.³⁶⁹ Therefore, he does not take himself to be providing a philosophical theory, but merely a “*better picture*” on the issues he approaches.³⁷⁰ This move is not to be expected from a dogmatist. A dogmatist, instead, is expected to describe one’s works, not as a “better picture”, but as putting an end to the Sisyphean hell-like process described in the last chapter and that, I tend to think, characterizes the history of metaphysics.

Quine, it is also important to underline, endorses a view of the left-wing Vienna circle already discussed in 2.4. The view, as Carnap puts it, is that “the totality of what is known about the world is always uncertain and continually in need of correction and transformation”.³⁷¹ This is, I interpret, the lesson that Quine takes from a metaphor of Otto Neurath.³⁷² In Quine’s words well-known words, “Neurath has likened science to a boat

³⁶⁸ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 42, my emphasis.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

³⁷¹ IAB 57.

³⁷² Notice that *Word and Object* has the following passage by Neurath as its epigraph: “Wie Schiffer find wir, die ihr Schiff auf offener See umbauen muffen, ohne es jemals in einem Dock zerlegen und aus bellen Befandteilen neu errichten zu können”. This passage can be translated as follows: “We are like seamen having to rebuild their ship on the open sea, without ever being able to dismantle it in a dock and rebuild it from scratch”. See Otto Neurath, “Protokollsätze”, *Erkenntnis* Vol. 3 (1932): pp. 206.

which, if we are to rebuild it, we must rebuild plank by plank while staying afloat in it”.³⁷³ Quine has a particular way of describing this action of rebuilding a boat afloat, that is, the scientific community’s action of rejecting some scientific theories and endorsing others. Quine’s way is that of spelling out that scientific theories are embraced insofar as they maximize theoretical virtues, such as “conservatism, generality, simplicity, refutability and modesty”. Hence, theories that fail to do so, on the other hand, would be rejected.³⁷⁴

Like Lewis, Quine sometimes suggests that philosophers are to approach disputes in a similar way. In my reading, this is what he means by the claim that “the philosopher [at least the one who proceeds, like Quine] and the scientist are in the same boat”.³⁷⁵ In a less-known passage, Quine also states that “philosophy enjoys less firmness and conclusiveness than astrophysics, so that there is some lack of professional consensus as to what even qualified as responsible philosophy”.³⁷⁶ These passages by Quine are also not to be found in writings by dogmatists, such as the ones discussed in the last chapter. Such dogmatists are more likely to argue or suggest much stronger claims, such as: science can provide necessary claims, not merely contingent ones; the same can be stated about one’s own metaphysical claims; and “responsible philosophy” provides undeniable metaphysical claims that are as rationally undeniable as empirical and/or mathematical claims.

The reading supported here, though, is that the works of Quine as well as those of Kripke and Fine express a second kind of “subtle” violence already mentioned in 1.5. I call it the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence. This is the violence of avoiding the properly

³⁷³ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 3.

³⁷⁴ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Pursuit of Truth*, Cambridge, Harvard University, 1992: pp. 20. For a detailed discussion of these virtues, see Willard Van Orman Quine and J.S. Ullian, *The Web of Belief*, New York, McGraw-Hill Education, 1978: pp. 40-48.

³⁷⁵ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 3.

³⁷⁶ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quiddities*, pp. 209.

dogmatic “subtle” violence in, perhaps, embracing (1-i) and (1-ii), while still contradicting (1-iii). As indicated in 1.1, the latter is the claim that (1-i) and (1-ii) are extremely important points insofar as those who fail to acknowledge them react in a quite unpersuasive manner to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. What I mean is that the one who rejects (1-iii) suggests two points: that the existence of persons who are others as well as legitimate rational peers is irrelevant, and that the same can be stated about the claim that no person has settled a dispute once and for all. Accordingly, the one who rejects (1-iii) reacts to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes, by taking a dismissivist attitude. This is the attitude of simply ignoring or acting as if this fact did not matter, say, because those who disagree with oneself have, after all, “baffling” views, “intuition reversed”, are “conceptually blind”, etc.

The dismissivist attitude is embraced by those who, like Quine, Kripke and Fine, simply do not pay much attention to the history of metaphysics and/or to methodological matters while: first, embracing a controversial criterion to deal with disputes (e.g., accordance with intuitions) as if this criterion were universally shared by all persons, that is, as if one could start without embracing any problematic starting point; and, second, making supposedly persuasive claims about disputes, regardless of whether there are others who interpret one’s criterion differently or simply do not accept it. Accordingly, Quine, Kripke and Fine proceed as if God-driven simply did not exist or were not really worth replying to.³⁷⁷ They also simply do not address human-driven philosophers or continental

³⁷⁷ Arguably, nonetheless, most non-philosophers think quite similarly to God-driven philosophers. This claim is backed up by a 2012 demographic study of the *Pew Research Center*. According to this study, 84 % of the human beings alive in 2010 were religious at that time. This amounts to a total of 5.8 billion people. The Pew study also concluded that there are “2.2 billion Christians (32% of the world’s population), 1.6 billion Muslims (23%), [...] and 14 million Jews (0.2%) around the world as of 2010”. On my part, then, I follow Markus Gabriel in believing that “we can no longer afford not to understand religion, as we effectively live in an epoch of religious wars”. For the same reason, the God driven approach can neither be ignored, nor

philosophers, such as Nietzsche and those influenced by him, as if practically all of their legitimate rational peers were physicalist-driven philosophers and/or had more or less the very same aforementioned particular identities shared by Quine, Kripke and Fine. Note that, in attributing the dismissivist practice to Quine, Kripke and Fine, I am influenced by someone who also has these particular identities of theirs: namely, Peter van Inwagen who claims that “present-day analytical philosophers tend simply not to permit the fact that philosophical disagreement is irresolvable to come to their attention”.³⁷⁸

On my part, I claim that the writings of Quine, Kripke and Fine express the pseudo non-dogmatic “subtle” violence. This is, perhaps, the “subtlest” of all kinds of “subtle” violence. Now, in order to further distinguish the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence from the properly dogmatic one, an analogy with a more macro-conflict may be helpful. Imagine two kinds of bullies during a school recess: popular student-athletes who verbally and physically harass unpopular students in explicitly stating that they are, say, “losers” to think and act how they do; and popular theater-students who very quietly make mean comments to one another about unpopular students, giggle once they pass in front of them and do not invite them to parties. Dogmatists who embrace the eliminativist attitude and express the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence are analogous to the popular student-athletes. On their parts, those who endorse the dismissivist attitude and express the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence are analogous to the popular theater-students.

depicted as an unimportant one that is no longer adopted; key political figures themselves, such as Osama bin Laden, and George W. Bush, also seem to think in a way considerably similar to that of God-driven philosophers. See the *Pew Research Center's "The Global Religious Landscape"*, published online on 2012 and (as of March 3rd of 2019) available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>. Also see Markus Gabriel, *Why the World Does Not Exist*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2015: pp. 145.

³⁷⁸ Peter van Inwagen, “Freedom to Break the Laws”, *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XXVIII*, 2004: pp. 335.

The essence dispute also involves normative issues. These issues, though, are not as explicitly present in this dispute as they are in the Charlottesville-conflict. Indeed, the essence dispute is a descriptive dispute on whether, independently of the way entities are described, they have essences; not a normative dispute on whether entities are to have essences. My point, though, is that philosophers involved in the essence dispute presuppose views on and, hence, implicitly address at least two normative issues. The first normative issue concerns a practical matter: namely, whether one is to address the essence dispute (as opposed to any other dispute) in the first place. Note that Quine, Kripke, Fine simply take for granted that they may spend some of time of their lives in doing so. On the other hand, deep opponents of theirs disagree with this attitude. In fact, such opponents may go as far as claiming that the books and/or papers Quine, Kripke and Fine published about the essence dispute were not to be articulated (not to mention published) in the first place. The reason, these opponents believe, is that there are much more urgent matters, that is, matters that deserve much more attention than the essence dispute. It is important to emphasize that anyone engaged in any dispute seems to have or presuppose a view on the practical dispute on whether the dispute at stake (as opposed to any other) is to be addressed.

The second normative issue is that, once it is granted that one may practically engaged oneself in the essence dispute, a new practical dispute arises: that on which criterion is to be adopted to deal with the essence dispute in the first place. Note that similar practical disputes arise for anyone engaged in any dispute. In other words, the dispute on which criterion is to be adopted when dealing with a dispute is inevitably implicitly present, even though parties involved in the dispute may not be aware of such issue in “naively” taking their criteria for granted. Also note that Quine, Kripke and Fine endorse

incompatible criteria to deal with the essence dispute. This is because they interpret what counts as an “intuition” differently.³⁷⁹ Now I underline that, in dealing with the essence dispute, Quine does not use terms, such as “intuition” and its cognates, like “intuitively”, “intuitive” or “intuitiveness”. However, I still interpret that he presupposes that accordance with intuition is the criterion to be adopted when dealing with the essence dispute.

The reason I make this move is that, as indicated above, Quine states that the accident-essence distinction is “baffling” and provokes an “appropriate sense of bewilderment”. These expressions, I interpret, are Quine’s way of indicating that the accident-essence distinction is a very counter-intuitive one. His quite simple argument is that, given that this is so, this distinction should be dismissed. The same, then, would have to be done regarding the essence dispute, given that this dispute relies on such distinction. As indicated above, Quine seeks to spell out the counter-intuitiveness of the accident-essence distinction by imagining someone who is both a mathematician and cyclist. He presupposes that philosophers who endorse the accident-essence distinction take mathematicians to be “necessarily rational and not necessarily two-legged”.³⁸⁰ Such philosophers would also take cyclists to be “necessarily two-legged and not necessarily rational”.³⁸¹ “Is this concrete individual”, that is, a mathematician-cyclist, Quine asks “necessarily rational and contingently two-legged or vice-versa?”.³⁸² For Quine, this

³⁷⁹ Note that Herman Cappelen claims that though analytic philosophers have relied heavily on intuition-talk, they do not take intuition as evidence or a source of evidence of philosophical theories. If this is so, accordance with intuitions is not a criterion to approach disputes widely shared. I cannot discuss Cappelen’s view in this dissertation. See Herman Cappelen, *Philosophy Without Intuitions*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012. For an objection to Cappelen that I am inclined to endorse, see Berit Brogaard, “Intuitions as Intellectual Seemings”, in *Analytic Philosophy* Volume 55, Issue 4 (December 2014): pp. 382–39.

³⁸⁰ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 199.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

³⁸² *Ibid.*

question is extremely odd. Consequently, this very question would show that the accident-essence distinction is, indeed, an extremely counter-intuitive one.

Notice, though, that it is simply not clear whether Quine relies on a dogmatic or on a conflictual use of intuition or intuition-like talk when adopting expressions, such as “baffling” and “appropriate sense of bewilderment”. As it might have been expected from a pseudo-non-dogmatic, Quine’s use of language, like Kripke’s, is quite unprecise in this regard. It follows that, in *Word and Object*, it is not clear: whether he takes this “sense of bewilderment” to be universally shared and, hence, able to provide a rationally undeniable justification for his take on the essence dispute; or whether Quine is aware that what is “baffling” for oneself is “intuitive” for others so that to state that a claim seems “baffling” ultimately merely provides, to say the least, a considerably imperfect justification.

On his part, Kripke relies heavily and very explicitly on intuition-talk, even though, as stated above, it is also unclear whether he makes a dogmatic or a conflictual use of such talk; Kripke’s use of language is also quite imprecise on this issue. Notice that Kripke’s argument for embracing the accident-essence distinction is also a quite simple one and, in the end, surprisingly similar to Quine’s. Kripke’s argument is that, given that the accident-essence distinction is intuitive (that is, after all, only someone with “intuition reversed” does not endorse it), the distinction is to be embraced.³⁸³ Kripke does not address the person who is both a mathematician and cyclist. What he does, instead, is to give examples that are supposed to show the extreme intuitiveness of the accident-essence distinction, such as that to be odd is an essence of the number 9 and that to have originated from a particular “biological sperm and egg” is an essence of Queen Elizabeth.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 42.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 112.

Like Kripke, Fine also explicitly relies on intuition-talk without stating what he means by an “intuition” or spelling out whether his use of intuition-talk is a dogmatic or a conflictual use as if this issue did not matter. As indicated above, Fine’s view, though, is not Kripke’s. Fine claims that, regardless of whether entities have essences independently of the way they are described, the notion of essence is not to be conflated with that of a necessary property. This conclusion would follow from the premise that “intuitively” there are entities that have necessary properties that are not identical to their essences.³⁸⁵ In proceeding in a way that resembles Quine’s and Kripke’s, Fine discusses a case that is supposed to make his intuition evident: the case of Socrates, and the singleton Socrates.

It is “necessary, according to standard views within modal set theory”, Fine claims, “that Socrates belongs to singleton Socrates if he exists”.³⁸⁶ The reason, Fine continues, is that “necessarily, the singleton exists if Socrates exists and, necessarily, Socrates belongs to singleton Socrates if both Socrates and the singleton exist”.³⁸⁷ Hence, those who believe that the notion of essence is to be understood in modal terms would have to conclude that to be part of Socrates singleton is, not only a necessary property of Socrates, but also his very essence. In Fine’s view, this conclusion is extremely counter-intuitive. This is why it would be “inappropriate” to conflate the notion of a necessary property with that of essence.³⁸⁸ An essence would have to be understood as a real definition. According to Fine, Aristotle himself indicates so in stating “in the *Metaphysics* 1031a12 [...] that ‘definition

³⁸⁵ Kit Fine, “Essence and Modality”, pp. 4.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

is the formula of essence’”, even though Aristotle would also sometimes suggest otherwise by likewise pointing toward a modal interpretation of the notion of essence.³⁸⁹

Notice that, recently, there has been a lot of empirical work on whether intuitions vary with nationality, class, gender, race, etc.³⁹⁰ For my purposes, though, this empirical inquiry is not very relevant. What is crucial here is that Quine, Kripke or Fine do not spell out necessary and/or sufficient conditions for something to be an intuition. What is also crucial is that they presuppose accordance with intuition as a criterion to deal with the essence dispute and, ultimately, simply interpret this criterion differently from one another. Another more explicit way to put this is by stating that Quine relies on what might be called intuition^{Quine}, Kripke embraces intuition^{Kripke} and Fine endorses intuition^{Fine}. It follows that it is not surprising that they do not agree on the essence dispute, that is, how could they, given that they simply do not embrace a common criterion to deal with this dispute?

What is surprising, instead, is the fact that Quine, Kripke and Fine simply do not explicitly acknowledge that intuition^{Quine}, intuition^{Kripke} and intuition^{Fine} are distinct from one another and not universally shared, not even by the quite narrow community of those who have particular identities similar to theirs and they care to mention in their writings. It follows that Quine, Kripke and Fine rely on what may be called overly imperfect justificatory resources, whose lack of persuasiveness is explicit, at least for those who are aware of the fact that, since immemorial times (as opposed to, say, the 1960s, 1980s or 1990s) persons have been engaged in disputes; those who proceed as observers of the history of metaphysics in carefully studying this history and suspecting that the essence

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁹⁰ See, for example, the essays gathered at Joshua Knobe and Shaun Nichols, *Experimental Philosophy: Volume I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.

dispute, like any other, would have been solved long ago, were persons to have the very same universally shared intuition about it. To put it metaphorically, my view is that there would be an easy way to stop the Sisyphean-hell like process that (arguably) characterizes the history of metaphysics, if there were a universally shared intuition about the essence dispute, that is, it seems extremely “unrealistic” to believe that there is such an intuition and only someone who has not carefully observed the history of metaphysics could take one’s intuition to be of such kind. Given that, as the very works of Quine, Kripke and Fine indicate, persons have had all sorts of contrasting intuitions about essence, we appear to be all part of such Sisyphean-hell like process whose end is unpredictable.

More importantly, it follows that the essence dispute is a micro-political conflict or, as I prefer to put it, a micro-war whose political character is merely implicit and, hence, hardly identifiable. This a reason for embracing (7) in taking that all disputes are similar to the essence dispute insofar as they are micro-wars analogous to macro-political conflicts.

5.3 The Right-Wing Political Practice of Depoliticization

I claim that the approaches to the essence of dispute of Quine, Kripke and Fine also attest to the eighth claim of the system of disputes, (8), there has been a right-wing allegedly apolitical approach to disputes that, perhaps, avoids the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence, but still expresses the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence. Let me start to explain what I mean and to imperfectly justify this claim by underlying that my wish is not that of suggesting that Quine, Kripke and Fine have views on macro-political conflicts.

Consider a 1993 interview by Quine. When asked by Steven Vita of *Veery* whether philosophy has “any business” with “social/political concerns,” Quine’s reply was: “I don’t

think my philosophy does”.³⁹¹ Kripke and Fine, I think it is quite safe to presuppose, would give similar answers. In fact, in an informal interview from February 25th of 2001 that can be found online at *David Boles, Blogs*, Kripke is quoted by Andreas Saugstad as having stated that “a lot of philosophy does not have relevance to life”; he suggests that this is also the case with his own philosophy.³⁹² My reading is that what Kripke means is that his philosophy simply does not address any macro-political conflict. I do not challenge that the same is the case with Fine’s philosophy. What I do, instead, is to claim that Quine, Kripke and Fine are supposedly apolitical philosophers in a quite specific sense.

The sense is that they do not acknowledge or are not aware that, in dealing with the essence dispute, they are themselves engaged in a micro-war characterized by: its implicit social importance; conflicting parties’ aims to change the practices of a significant amount of people; and presence of normative issues. Analogously, these philosophers are like those who, say, march with torches, scream words of order and fist-fight others in actively participating in the *Unite the Right*, while still, nonetheless, taking themselves to be politically neutral. Accordingly, what I mean by the claim that Quine, Kripke and Fine champion practices of depoliticization is that these philosophers deal with the essence dispute by acting: first, *as if* this dispute did not have a social importance (and, say, they were merely stating their views privately among a few beloved ones or acquaintances); second, *as if* they were not pressuring their opponents to change their practices while expressing the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence regarding their others (and, say, their uses of language were “peaceful” uses that are not at all offensive regarding hundreds,

³⁹¹ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quine in Dialogue*, MA, Harvard University Press, 2008: pp. 34.

³⁹² As of January 28th of 2019, this interview could be found in the following website: <https://bolesblogs.com/2001/02/25/saul-kripke-genius-logician/#comments>.

thousands or even millions of their actual or potential readers); and/or, third, *as if* they did not presuppose views on normative issues, such as the practical disputes on why one is to deal with the essence dispute, and on which criterion is to be adopted in doing so.

Note that there are those who, to begin with, are simply not very interested in the essence dispute and do not engage themselves on it. Also note that, throughout the 20th century up to today, this dispute has been dealt in a way very distinct from Quine's, Kripke's and Fine's by those who are also never mentioned in these philosophers' strategically narrow bibliographies that practically only include those who have particular identities similar to theirs. I once again have in mind the likes of Simone de Beauvoir, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Catherine MacKinnon, Linda Alcoff, Gayle Rubin, Sally Haslanger, Julia Serano, etc.³⁹³ Regardless of their differences, these activists and/or philosophers have more or less explicitly addressed the essence dispute by embracing a distinct criterion. I call it oppression acknowledgement. As stated in 4.3, this criterion is satisfied whenever one spells out and resists practices of oppression, such as that of spreading the stereotype that Mexicans are dangerous, that is, that to be dangerous is the very essence of Mexicans. It is also crucial to underline that those who embrace oppression acknowledgement are not interested in the examples of essence-talk considered by Quine, Kripke or Fine. What matters for them, instead, is to

³⁹³ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, London, Lowe and Brydone, 1953; Martin Luther King, *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches*, New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 1986; Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*, New York, Merit Publishers and Betty Shabazz, 1965; Angela Davis, *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, MA, Blackwell Publishers, 1998; Cornel West, *The Cornel West Reader*, New York, Basic Civitas Book, 1999; Catherine MacKinnon, *Are Women Human?*, MA, Harvard University Press, 2006; Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; Gayle Rubin, *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2011; Sally Haslanger, *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; Julia Serano, *Outspoken: A Decade of Transgender Activism and Trans Feminism*, Oakland, Switch Hitter Press, 2016; etc.

spell out whether talk about the essences of underprivileged groups (e.g., black-skinned people, women, Jews, Latinos, etc) has served to legitimize practices of oppression, such as the one just stated. This is not an issue that Quine, Kripke or Fine discuss or mention.

However, it is worth to address passages from Quine's 1985 autobiography, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography*, that point to the stereotype that to be dangerous is an essence of Mexicans. In the passages (surprisingly, rarely mentioned) that I have in mind, Quine recalls his mother's "honorary Uncle Ellis".³⁹⁴ "*Never turn your back on a Mexican*", Uncle Ellis used to say, if my mother was to be believed, and believed indeed she was, implicitly", Quine remembers.³⁹⁵ In visiting Mexico in 1941, Quine also recalls his mother's Uncle Ellis. He states that "the average townsman was an Indian with a dash of Spanish. He wore a sarape, either impaled as a poncho or shawl-wise, and a big sombrero. If elegant he might wear a holster and a pearl-handled pistol".³⁹⁶ "*Echoes of Uncle Ellis: 'Never turn your back on a Mexican'*", Quine goes as far as emphasizing.³⁹⁷

The "echoes" I expect readers to hear are those of the current American President, Donald Trump. As it is well-known, he has promised to build a wall in the U.S. / Mexico border. In a speech in June 16th of 2015 in New York, he stated that Mexicans are "bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists, and some, I assume are good people". I emphasize that I am neutral on whether oppression acknowledgement is the best criterion to deal with the essence dispute. What is crucial for my purposes is to make explicit that Quine, Kripke and Fine are implicitly engaged in a normative quarrel with those who they

³⁹⁴ Willard Van Orman Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1985: pp. 128.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 153.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

simply do not care to mention; those who simply do not grant that accordance with any kind of intuition (say, intuition^{Quine}, intuition^{Kripke} or intuition^{Fine}) is the criterion that, to begin with, is to be adopted when dealing with the essence dispute. What I also would like to emphasize is that, regardless of their differences, Quine, Kripke and Fine all champion right-wing micro-political practices, when addressing the essence dispute.

Before I spell out what I mean by this last claim, it is important to underline that the distinction between left-wingers and right-wingers is not a very strict one. This distinction is, rather, one merely of degree. This can be spelled out by considering what may be called a political spectrum whose left-extremity and right-extremity are occupied by the left-winger-in-itself and the right-winger-in-itself, respectively. In the exact middle of such a political spectrum, imagine that there lies a centrist-in-itself. The left-winger-in-itself deals with the balance of tolerance in an ultimately imprudent way in exclusively showing empathy toward others and ultimately disregarding any need for self-defense. To put it metaphorically, the mind of the left-winger-in-itself is simply “too open” like an open field. The right-winger-in-itself exclusively privileges one’s need for self-defense and shows no empathy toward his others. Hence, to put it metaphorically again, the mind of right-winger-in-itself is simply “too close”, like a vault. The centrist-in-itself deals with the conflict between empathy and self-defense in showing an equal “amount” of the two.

It is safe to presuppose that no actual person can be identified with the left, the right or the centrist-in-itself. It seems, instead, that actual people never exactly fall in the extremities or in the very middle of the political spectrum, that is, they are always more or less inclined toward the left or the right-extremity. For instance, the historical Jesus Christ seems to have been quite close to the left-extremity, whereas Julius Caesar seems to have

been considerably close to the right-extremity. Barack Obama seems to fall out of the center of the spectrum by being a bit more inclined toward the left-extremity. The same is the case with the Southern left-winger mentioned in this chapter's introduction or the former Brazilian president, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva. Like the Southern right-winger, Donald Trump or Jair Bolsonaro seem to be more inclined toward the right-extremity.

Moreover, it may be impossible to precisely measure an individual's overall "balance of tolerance", to put in Quine's terms again.³⁹⁸ This happens because people, I take it for granted, have constantly acted as left-wingers concerning one micro or macro-political conflict, but as right-wingers regarding other ones, that is, one may be quite open-minded about a conflict, while being quite close-minded regarding a distinct conflict. What I mean is that someone who tends to privilege empathy over self-defense in certain occasions might do otherwise in others and vice-versa. For instance, a white person who seems to be often more inclined to privilege one's needs for self-defense might sometimes be somehow "off-guard" in a foreign country in entitling oneself to accept an invitation to go into the house and have a *cachaça* with a "mulatto".³⁹⁹ It follows that it is more careful to qualify approaches to conflict or practices (as opposed to people) as being from the left,

³⁹⁸ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary*, pp. 207.

³⁹⁹ Consider that Quine lived in Brazil from 1941 to 1942. He learned how to speak and even published a book in Portuguese: *O Sentido da nova lógica (The Sense of the New Logic)*. In Quine's autobiography, he recounts his experiences in my hometown, Rio de Janeiro, such as the time in which he "was wondering how to get through the solid ring of houses that girdled the base of [a] hill". Quine tells, then, the following: "I saw a black woman with laden head go through a doorway that proved to lead between houses rather than into a house. The path meandered up the hill and I followed it to the top. There I talked with a mulatto who was raking the arid little fenced yard in front of his humble house. He invited me in and we had a tot of *cachaça*, the colorless cane spirit that is the common man's tippie in Brazil. He was in the navy and proudly showed me his identification card. Along with his photograph and other data, it indicated his color. There were *preto* (black), *mulato*, *pardo*, and *branco* (white). His was ticked off as *pardo*". Another "curious thing", to paraphrase Quine once again, is the fact that Quine describes the man he met as a "mulatto", even though the man's navy card indicated that he was a "pardo". In Portuguese, a "mulato" is someone whose skin color is darker than that of a "pardo". See Willard Van Orman Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography*, pp. 168; and "On what there is", *The Review of Metaphysics* Vol. 2. No. 5, Sep., 1948: pp. 21.

right or center. I do not claim, then, that Quine, Kripke or Fine are right-wing persons. What I argue is that, regardless of their differences, Quine's, Kripke's and Fine's approaches to the essence dispute are right-wing ones analogous to the right-wing approach to the Charlottesville-conflict. This is to state that, in dealing with the essence dispute, these philosophers embrace practices that are less inclined toward the left-extremity and more inclined toward the right-extremity of the political spectrum.

Consider Quine's approach once again. What the passages by him quoted above indicate is that, passively, he seems to feel or deals with the essence dispute as if his others were a threat, if not to his very life, at least to one of his particular identities. Notice that Quine's others are not exactly those of the Southern right-winger, albeit there might be some overlaps. Quine's others are those who strongly disagree with his take on the essence dispute, say, they, to begin with, simply do not grant that one is to spend any time of one's life in discussing this issue; they do not endorse Quine's presupposition that accordance with intuition^{Quine} is the criterion to deal with this dispute in the first place; they do not think that to focus on the person who is cyclist and a mathematician is a pertinent move when the essence dispute is at stake; they simply do not have intuition^{Quine}; they defend what Quine takes to be "indefensible"; and/or they do not have all the aforementioned particular identities that Quine shares with Kripke and Fine; etc.

The particular identity of Quine that is relevant is also not to be confounded with those that matter on the Charlottesville-conflict, such as that of being a descendant of confederate soldiers. Quine's relevant particular identity is that of being a champion of the empiricist tradition of the likes of David Hume and the logical positivists, such as Carnap and Neurath. This is to state that, regardless of Quine's objections to these philosophers

and of the fact that he ignores Carnap's and Neurath's political views discussed in the second chapter, he takes himself to belong to their tradition. In Quine's interpretation, members of this tradition deal or should deal with disputes in a way that is analogous to the way empirical scientists and/or mathematicians approach their disagreements. The latter, the Quine of *Word and Object* interprets, have no need for what he calls "intensional objects", such as meanings, propositions and essences.⁴⁰⁰ He suggests, then, that those who share with him the particular identity of being empiricists are to endorse intuition^{Quine}.

Actively, then, Quine seeks to protect his particular identity of being a champion of the empiricist tradition by acting under the influence of the feeling that his others are a threat. What backs up this last claim is the textual evidence provided in the last section, that is, the evidence that, in dealing with the essence dispute, Quine champions a dismissivist attitude regarding the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. He simply acts as if this fact did not matter or could simply be ignored. While doing so, he perhaps avoids the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but not the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence. More directly, Quine acts under the assumption that he may disregard the fact that some others are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are concerned and that, especially given so, Quine's very take on the essence dispute is not a once for one take. Of course, this is not an upfront kind of violence, such as those expressed by the Southern right-winger of marching with torches, screaming words of orders, fist-fighting, etc. However, Quine's procedure concerning the essence dispute (a micro-political conflict, a micro-war) is analogous to the way this right-winger deals with the Charlottesville-conflict. This is to read that, ultimately, Quine and the right-

⁴⁰⁰ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, pp. 206.

winger (respectively, in a micro-scale and in a macro-scale) privilege their needs for self-defense over their powers to show empathy toward their others. Note that it is extremely hard to see, to put in Quine's own terms, the "experimental spirit" of this attitude.⁴⁰¹

I read Kripke along similar lines, as my take on the passages by him addressed above indicates. What I mean is that, passively, Kripke also seems to feel or deals with the essence dispute as if his others were a threat, if not to his life, at least to one particular identity of his: that of being a champion of the counter-empiricist tradition. This tradition is that of defending what its champions take to be "common sense" by using analytic resources (e.g., that of differentiating distinct theories of proper names) that (allegedly) show the shortcomings of empiricism, such as its (allegedly) disrespect to the intuitions of the "ordinary man" and its (allegedly) unwarranted defense of materialism.⁴⁰² Actively, Kripke appear to seek to protect this particular identity of his. Like Quine, he does so by championing a dismissivist attitude regarding the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. In doing so, he also perhaps avoids the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but not the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence.

Kripke's others are those who strongly disagree with his take on the essence dispute, say, they, to begin with, simply do not grant that one is to spend any time of one's life in discussing this matter; they do not endorse Kripke's presupposition that accordance with intuition^{Kripke} is the criterion to deal with this dispute in the first place; they do not think that to focus on the examples focused by Kripke is a pertinent move when the essence dispute is at stake; they do not have intuition^{Kripke}; they take it to be an overly imperfect justificatory resource to speak in the name of an "ordinary man" as if such a man were

⁴⁰¹ Willard Van Orman Quine, "On what there is", pp. 38.

⁴⁰² Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 41.

more inclined toward intuition^{Kripke} as opposed to intuition^{Quine}, intuition^{Fine} or any other intuition; they wonder whether the “ordinary man” Kripke has in mind is a right-winger or a left-winger; and/or they get annoyed by the “jokes” of *Naming and Necessity*; etc.

The passages by Fine quoted above likewise attest to the fact that he, like Quine and Kripke, ultimately adopts a right-wing approach to the essence dispute. My reading is that, passively, Fine seems to feel or deals with the essence dispute as if his others were a threat, if not to his life, at least to one of his particular identities. The particular identity I have in mind here is that of being a champion of a neo-Aristotelian tradition. By this, I understand a tradition that understands itself to be engaged in “metaphysics” in a way allegedly inspired by Aristotle: that of an inquiry that relies on a priori-methods; has a considerably general subject-matter; uses “transparent concepts” (that is, those, such as identity, that are not significant distinct from what they are concepts of); is concerned with the nature of things and aims to play a “role as a foundation for what there is”.⁴⁰³

Note that, in allegedly following Aristotle, this tradition contradicts Quine in having no reservation concerning the use of intensional concepts or even hyper-intensional ones, like “essence” turns out to be in Fine’s interpretation.⁴⁰⁴ By Fine’s others, it is to be understood those who strongly disagree with his take on the essence dispute. In other words, those who: do not believe that one is to spend any time of one’s life in discussing this dispute; simply do not endorse Fine’s presupposition that accordance with intuition^{Fine} is the criterion to deal with this dispute in the first place; do not think that to focus on the

⁴⁰³ Kit Fine, “What is Metaphysics?”, in Tuomas E. Tahko (ed.). *Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012: pp. 8-25.

⁴⁰⁴ To distinguish extensional, intensional and hyperintensional notions from one another and to spell out the distinct approaches to metaphysics these notions imply are tasks that I cannot pursue here. For such an inquiry, see Daniel Nolan, “Hyperintensional metaphysics”, *Philosophical Studies*, October 2014, Volume 171, Issue 1: pp 149-160.

Socrates/Socrates singleton example is a pertinent move when the essence dispute is at stake; simply do not have intuition^{Fine}; are offended by Fine's claim that to reject this intuition is to be "conceptually blind"; and/or find the fact that Fine (like Kripke and Quine) address the problem of essence, without mentioning oppression acknowledgment an extremely "problematic" move, to put it in polite terms; etc. Actively, Fine appears to seek to self-defend himself from such others in aiming to protect, if not his life, at least this particular identity of being a neo-Aristotelian. I claim so because, as the textual evidence provided above indicates, he also adopts the dismissivist attitude in, perhaps, avoiding the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but not the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence.

Note, nonetheless, that the fact that Quine, Kripke and Fine disagree on a theoretical dispute and implicitly champion slightly distinct traditions (that is, the empiricist, the counter-empiricist and the neo-Aristotelian one, respectively) is not to be overestimated. Indeed, as Slote (in conversation) emphasizes, Kripke might after all agree with Fine's distinction between necessary properties and essences, even though Kripke himself does not explicitly make such distinction in *Naming and Necessity*. As Slote (in conversation) also indicates, Kripke might likewise agree with Quine's reading of the mathematician-cyclist example, regardless of the fact that he disagrees with Quine's view that modal vocabulary is to be simply dismissed. What I mean is that Quine, Kripke and Fine are merely superficial opponents of one another. This is to state that, practically speaking, these philosophers have benefited one another in publicly reacting to one another's works; have studied and been employed by similar departments; published on similar journals; dealt with similar disputes; embraced quite similar methods of justification; etc. Quine's, Kripke's and Fine's deep opponents have not done so, that is, such deep opponents of theirs

are those who they do not care to mention and who do not share the dismissive attitude concerning the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. Analogously, on a macro-level, consider any right-wing party, such as the American Republican party. Such parties have had all kinds of internal disagreements and distinct factions within themselves. This has not been a reason for overestimating such differences in failing to emphasize right-wing parties' deep opponents: namely, left-wing parties.

Like the approach of the right-winger to the Charlottesville-conflict, then, those of Quine, Kripke and Fine to the essence dispute are neither libertarian nor egalitarian ones (in this dissertation's sense). Their approaches are not libertarian ones because they do not seem to act in accordance with what is singular about themselves, say, in attempting to deal with disputes in a way that resists being associated with any tradition in articulating an ultimately unique criterion to deal with disputes. What Quine, Kripke and Fine propose are criteria that the members of their respective traditions or herds are likely or at least are supposed to endorse, that is, accordance with intuition^{Quine}, intuition^{Kripke} and intuition^{Fine}. Once again, though, the differences between these philosophers is not to be overestimated; the fact that they share distinct intuitions is not to hide the distinct fact that they all act in accordance with the assumption that philosophers are to speak in the name of intuitions, without explicitly determining whether a dogmatic or a conflictual use is at stake.

Quine's, Kripke's and Fine's approaches to the essence dispute are also not egalitarian ones. This is because the communities whose criteria they aim to satisfy and whose members' interests they implicitly seek to defend are extremely narrow communities: respectively, the empiricist community of those who proceed in way similar to Quine's (say, by embracing intuition^{Quine}); the anti-empiricist community of those whose

procedure remind one of Kripke's (say, in endorsing anti-intuition^{Kripke}); and the neo-Aristotelian community of the ones who do philosophy similarly to Fine (say, in taking intuition^{Fine} for granted). More broadly, they all seek to defend the interests of a slightly larger community that includes the ones mentioned in the last phrase, that is, a community that presupposes that the dismissivist reaction is persuasive in accepting Quine's, Kripke's and Fine's procedures. Hence, what appears to be utmost important for Quine, Kripke and Fine, then, is not to defend the interest of a really universal community. Rather, what seems to matter, for them, is to defend their particular identities as champions of their respective considerably narrow communities and/or of the aforementioned slightly larger community. It follows that, regardless of their superficial theoretical disagreements, Quine, Kripke and Fine have all practically proceed as close-minded conservatives on the essence dispute.⁴⁰⁵

5.4 The Critique of "Subtle" Violence

Now consider a passage by Ned Block: "You ask: What is it that philosophers have called qualitative states? I answer, only half in jest: As Louis Armstrong said when asked what jazz is, 'If you got to ask, you ain't never gonna get to know'".⁴⁰⁶ The critique of "subtle" violence I would like to make in endorsing (9)—that is, the claim that the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence are to be avoided—is a quite simple one. Ultimately, such a critique consists of a paraphrase of Block's passage. In other words, you ask: Why are the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle"

⁴⁰⁵ I am also inclined to believe that Aristotle and his more or less unconscious followers addressed in the last chapter have also proceed as micro-right-wingers regarding disputes. Unfortunately, I do not have the space to carefully back up this problematic claim in this dissertation. My hope, though, is that this chapter as well as the last one have provided some reasons for others to share this inclination of mine.

⁴⁰⁶ Ned Block, "Troubles with Functionalism", *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, volume IX, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1978: pp. 281.

violence to be avoided? I answer, only half in jest: As João Gilberto might have said when asked what *Bossa Nova* is, “If you got to ask, you ain’t never gonna get to know”.

By arguing so, I do not wish to rely on a dogmatic use of intuition-talk while suggesting that one is to endorse (9) because it runs in accordance with an allegedly universally shared intuition, say, intuition^{Moreira}. I acknowledge that those who do not endorse (9) and/or (1-i), (1-ii) and (1-iii) are legitimate rational peers when disputes are at stake. What I do, instead, is to rely on a conflictual use of intuition talk in emphasizing that (9) appears at least to me to be an appealing claim that does not require much justification.

Let me also underline once again that I do not take any claim of the system of disputes to be an undeniable metaphysical claim. To put it metaphorically, this dissertation does not purport to put an end to the Sisyphean-hell like process that, I tend to think, characterizes the history of metaphysics; rather, it merely aims to be one way of engaging oneself in such a process by expressing the singular health mentioned in 1.3 and in 3.2 and which will still be further described in what follows. What I take myself to have done, then, is to have relied throughout this dissertation on an imperfect justificatory resource that (inevitably imperfectly) backs up (9). The resource I have in mind is that of proceeding as an observer the history of metaphysics in seeking to spell out a likewise (inevitably imperfect) observation of this history according to which philosophers have constantly expressed (on a smaller-scale) “subtle” kinds of violence that are analogous to non-subtle (large-scale) kinds of violence. The latter kinds of violence are usually criticized, that is, I take that even the likes of Quine, Kripke or Fine do not endorse the right-wing macro and upfront violence of marching with torches, screaming words of order, fist-fighting, etc.

This chapter's micro-political goal is, then, to criticize "subtle" violence while pressuring the likes of Quine, Kripke and Fine to drop their right-wing micro-political practices of depoliticization. Note, though, that I have not used terms, such as "right-wing", "conservative", "close-minded" and their corollaries derogatorily. Indeed, if Quine, Kripke and Fine are inclined to endorse the right-wing conservative approach to the Charlottesville-conflict or to other macro-conflicts, the claim that they champion a right-wing conservative approach to the essence dispute is not to count as an objection. In this case, this claim serves to spell out an aspect of these philosophers' work that has not been brought to light by their interpreters.⁴⁰⁷ The aspect is that they endorse at least one approach to a micro-political conflict consistent with their views on macro-political conflicts.

In fact, Quine sometimes gives hints that he is also a conservative regarding macro-political conflicts, albeit he refrains from determining "where to strike the delicate balance of tolerance".⁴⁰⁸ The passages about Uncle Ellis attest to this. The same can be stated about Quine's interview for *Veery* mentioned above. Quine acknowledges that John Rawls's philosophy is "genuinely philosophical and worthwhile".⁴⁰⁹ Yet, "*I don't agree with his politics: he's too liberal for me*", Quine underlines.⁴¹⁰ As Hilary Putnam states in a 1988 review of Quine's 1987 *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary*, "although Quine steers clear of political themes for the most part, there is one beautifully formulated statement of his *conservative creed*—the essay on Freedom".⁴¹¹ In this essay, Quine states that "freedom to remodel society, gained by revolution, can be a delicate affair. Society up

⁴⁰⁷ See Peter Hylton, *Quine*, New York, Routledge, 2007; Scott Soames *Analytic Philosophy in America: And Other Historical and Contemporary Essays*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2014; etc.

⁴⁰⁸ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quiddities*, pp. 210.

⁴⁰⁹ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quine in Dialogue*, pp. 34.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

⁴¹¹ Hilary Putnam, "Misling" (review of Quine's *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary*). *London Review of Books* (April 21, 1988): pp. 11.

to that point, if stable at all, was stable in consequence of the gradual combining and canceling of forces and counter-forces”.⁴¹² “The constraint imposed by social tradition”, Quine concludes “is the gyroscope that helps the keep of state on an even keel”.⁴¹³

I suspend judgment on whether Kripke and Fine are also inclined toward right-wing approaches to macro-political conflicts. Their writings simply do not mention any of these conflicts. Hence, I do not wish to speculate on what they might think about them. What I do is to claim that if Kripke and Fine do not endorse right-wing approaches to macro-conflicts, they are also to revise their approaches to the essence dispute. What they are to do, in order to be coherent, is to aim to articulate a left-wing micro-political approach to micro-political conflicts, that is, to micro-wars. This task is pursued in the next chapter.

⁴¹² Willard Van Orman Quine, *Quiddities*, pp. 69.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 6 THE LEFT-WING APPROACH TO METAPHYSICS⁴¹⁴

6.1 Deleuze's Immaculate Conception

In his 1973 "Letter to a Harsh Critic", Gilles Deleuze calls his method of reading an "immaculate conception".⁴¹⁵ Metaphorically speaking, this method is an action of "taking an author from behind and giving him a child".⁴¹⁶ The "child" stands for the resulted reading: one that deserves to be called the author's "own offspring" in that it uses the author's writings as evidence in supporting exegetical claims.⁴¹⁷ However, the reading that results from an immaculate conception is also "monstrous".⁴¹⁸ This is because it also interprets passages from the author's texts in problematic ways, say, it translates the author's terminology to a distinct terminology the author never adopted; it justifies such claims in manners the author never endorsed (at least not in an upfront way); it connects passages by the author that are not very obviously connected to one another; it ends up spelling out the author's view on issues that the author never explicitly addressed; etc.

Deleuze claims that his book on Henri Bergson illustrates his immaculate conception.⁴¹⁹ The same can be stated about his readings of David Hume, Friedrich Nietzsche, Baruch Spinoza, Michel Foucault and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.⁴²⁰ Note that

⁴¹⁴ This chapter is an expanded version of an article of mine that is to appear in *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* by the end of 2019. A short version of this chapter was also presented at the University of Miami's 2018 Modern Languages and Literature Graduate Conference, *Lands of Freedom? Oppressions, Subversions and Pursuits of Justice in a Changing World*.

⁴¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, "Letter to a Harsh Critic" in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin, New York, Columbia University, 1995: pp.5.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.* See Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, NY, Zone Books, 1998.

⁴²⁰ See Gilles Deleuze *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin V. Boundas, New York, Columbia University Press, 1991; *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, London, Athlone Press, 1983; *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin, NY,

Deleuze is not precise on the proportion between the “non-monstrous” and the “monstrous” aspects of his readings. This does not seem particularly relevant to him. What he takes to be crucial is whether the reading that adopts the immaculate conception “relates a book [or a text] directly to what’s Outside”.⁴²¹ This can be done by spelling out what in the text is hopefully pertinent for the interpreter’s context as opposed to that of the text’s author.

Deleuze’s interpreters are, then, confronted with a dilemma. While reading Deleuze’s texts, they can either (a) embrace Deleuze’s immaculate conception as well, or (b) dismiss this method while relying on more traditional methods that aim to accurately represent Deleuze’s writings. Option (a) was adopted by Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek.⁴²² Option (b) has been taken, for instance, by Todd May, Gary Gutting and Adrian W. Moore.⁴²³ These options are equally “non-monstrous” and “monstrous”. The reason is that neither interpreters who endorse option (a), nor those who embrace option (b) read Deleuze’s writings in their own terms. This is the case with those who endorse option (a) because they, metaphorically speaking, take Deleuze himself from behind and give him a child. Those who embrace option (b) also do not read Deleuze’s writings in their own terms. This is because, in seeking to accurately represent Deleuze’s writings, they contradict these writings in disregarding that Deleuze believes “in the power of falsity” and

Zone Books, 1990; *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998; and *The fold: Leibniz and the baroque*, trans. Tom Conley, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1992.

⁴²¹ Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp.8.

⁴²² Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, trans. Louise Burchill, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1999; and Slavoj Žižek, *Organs Without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences*, New York, Routledge, 2004.

⁴²³ Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005; Gary Gutting, *Thinking the Impossible: French Philosophy since 1960*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; and Adrian W. Moore, *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

rejects any “lamentable faith in accuracy and truth”.⁴²⁴ Note, yet, that it may be impossible for an interpreter to express such a “lamentable faith” when reading Deleuze’s works.

What justifies this last claim is the fact that, like Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Deleuze constantly relies on the upfront rhetorical devices discussed in 3.1 Consider, for example, the following statements from works by Deleuze, Deleuze and Félix Guattari or Deleuze and his wife, Denise Paul “Fanny” Grandjouan:

- (D-1) “Politics precedes being”.⁴²⁵
- (D-2) The one who is from the right-wing “starts from the self, and to the extent that one is privileged, living in a rich country, one might ask, what can we do to make this situation last? One senses that dangers exist, that it might not last, it’s all so crazy, so what might be done for it to last?”.⁴²⁶
- (D-3) “In the West, the standard that every majority presupposes is: 1) male, 2) adult, 3) heterosexual, 4) city dweller... [...] A majority, at the limit, is never anyone, it’s an empty standard”.⁴²⁷
- (D-4) “It’s too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see the fascist inside you”.⁴²⁸
- (D-5) “Practice does not come after the emplacement of the terms and their relation, but actively participates in the drawing of the lines”.⁴²⁹
- (D-6) “To be on the left” is “a matter of perception” and “being by nature [...] or never ceasing to become minoritarian. [...] First, you see the horizon. And you know that it cannot last, that it’s not possible; these millions of people are starving to death, it just can’t last. [...] The left is never of the majority as left, and for a very simple reason: the majority is something that presupposes [...] a standard”.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp.11.

⁴²⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987: pp.203.

⁴²⁶ This passage is part of the eight-hour long series of interviews that Deleuze gave to Claire Parnet from 1988 to 1989, *L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*. This work has not been published in literary form, but it is available in DVD under the title, *Gilles Deleuze: from A to Z*, trans. Charles Stivale, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2011. The passages from the *Abécédaire* quoted here are from the section “G comme gauche”, henceforth, (ABC-G).

⁴²⁷ (ABC-G).

⁴²⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp.160.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁰ (ABC-G).

- (D-7) “How necessary caution is, the art of dosages, since overdose is a danger”.⁴³¹
- (D-8) “What do my relations with gays, alcoholics, and drug-users matter, if I can obtain similar effects by different means?”.⁴³²
- (D-9) “I feel like a pure metaphysician”.⁴³³
- (D-10) “In Christ’s love, there was a [...] *an ardor to give without taking anything*. [...] There was something suicidal about him”.⁴³⁴
- (D-11) “Philosophy and schizophrenia have often been associated with each other. But in one case the schizophrenic is a conceptual persona who lives intensely within the thinker and forces him to think, whereas in the other the schizophrenic is a psychosocial type who represses the living being and robs him of his thought”.⁴³⁵
- (D-12) Philosophy “*turns its back against itself so as to summon forth a new earth, a new people*”.⁴³⁶
- (D-13) “The use of philosophy is to sadden. A philosophy that saddens no one, that annoys no one, is not philosophy. It is useful for harming stupidity [*bêtise*], for turning stupidity into something shameful”.⁴³⁷

In backing these statements up, Deleuze never explicitly developed arguments in the traditional sense of the term “argument”, that is, a conjunction of premises that justify a conclusion by means of a widely shared rule of inference. The same can be stated about practically all other statements found in Deleuze’s works. Indeed, as May claims,

⁴³¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp.215.

⁴³² Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp.11.

⁴³³ Gilles Deleuze, “Réponses à une Série de Questions (Novembre 1981)”, in Arnaud Villani, *La guêpe et l’orchidée: essai sur Gilles Deleuze*, Paris, Éditions Belin, 1999: pp.130, my translation.

⁴³⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Denise Paul “Fanny” Grandjouan, “Nietzsche and Saint Paul, Lawrence and John of Patmos”, in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans., Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, London, Verso, 1998: pp.50.

⁴³⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, NY, Columbia University Press, 1994: pp.70.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴³⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, pp.106. Also see Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la Philosophie*, Presses Paris, Universitaires de France, 1962: pp.120.

“philosophy, as he does it, is not about argument” in the traditional sense.⁴³⁸ Let me underline, though, that it is not my aim to compare options (a) and (b) in detail.

What I would like to do, instead, is to claim that the fact that Deleuze himself relied on the immaculate conception throughout his career is sufficient reason to imperfectly justify the claim that, in following Badiou and Žižek, one is to adopt option (a), that is, one is to apply Deleuze’s particular method of reading (his “immaculate conception”) to Deleuze’s works themselves. This is not to state that one is not to adopt option (b) in a context distinct from the one of this dissertation or that I would go as far as objecting to those, such as May, Gutting and Moore, who have adopted this option. Indeed, consider that, throughout this dissertation, I have relied on quite traditional methods of reading in backing up exegetical claims about all sorts of philosophers, such as Pyrrho of Elis, Rudolf Carnap, Aristotle, Willard Van Orman Quine, Saul Kripke, Kit Fine, etc. I also would like to suspend judgment on whether one may use Deleuze’s immaculate conception while reading authors who have never themselves adopted this method of reading.

Moreover, let me underline that were I to adopt option (b), my reading of Deleuze would be along the lines of those briefly proposed about Foucault and Derrida in 3.1, that is, I would read Deleuze as someone who was influenced by Nietzsche’s libertarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. Hence, I would claim that, like Foucault, Deleuze was interested, theoretically speaking, in defending claims whose purpose was that of provoking dissensus and even shocking the French community of health care specialists of his time, roughly, from the 1940s, when Deleuze was a student, up to the early 1990s, when he got cancer and ended up killing

⁴³⁸ Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze*, pp. 22.

himself. I would argue that, practically speaking, by publishing the 1972 *Anti-Oedipus* and the 1980 *A Thousand Plateaus* (both co-authored with Guattari), Deleuze resisted an egalitarian practice and promoted a libertarian practice: respectively, that of isolating the so-called “mentally disordered” in mental institutions for the sake of protecting the supposedly “mentally sane” majority; and that of problematizing such institutions under the basis that they overly constrained the singularities of deviants, like Antonin Artaud who would not have “succeed for himself” to resist such constrains and collapsed.⁴³⁹

Were I to adopt option (b), I would also read that, like Derrida, Deleuze also had the theoretical aim of defending exegetical claims that provoke dissensus and even shock the French academic philosophical community of his time. In relying on traditional methods of reading and focusing on the history of metaphysics, this community was championed by the likes Martial Gueroult and Ferdinand Alquié, philosophers who have established the canonical French readings of traditional philosophers, such as René Descartes and Spinoza.⁴⁴⁰ I would interpret, then, that, practically speaking, by publishing his books on Bergson, Hume, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Foucault and Leibniz, Deleuze resisted this community’s egalitarian practice of endorsing canonical readings, say, for the sake of establishing a common criterion to evaluate exegetical claims in standardized tests on the history of metaphysics. So, I would read that Deleuze embraced the libertarian practice of problematizing the constrains that French educational philosophical institutions placed

⁴³⁹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 164. Also see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, London, The Athlone Press Ltd, 1984.

⁴⁴⁰ See Martial Gueroult, *Descartes’ Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reason Volume 1: The Soul and God*; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984; *Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reason Volume 2: The Soul and the Body*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985; and Ferdinand Alquié, *La Découverte métaphysique de l’homme chez Descartes*, Paris, PUF, 1950, and *Nature et vérité dans la philosophie de Spinoza, Les Cours de Sorbonne*, Paris, CDU, 1965.

upon its members' singularities. Such constraints would have made it hard for unique readings of the history of metaphysics to be developed. In Deleuze's words, members of French philosophical institutions would have believed that "you can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that".⁴⁴¹ Deleuze's immaculate conception was his way of resisting this attitude.

This chapter's aim, yet, is not to further spell out the last two paragraphs' exegetical claims about Deleuze. A distinct goal is pursued: while adopting option (a), I propose a particular reading of (D-1) to (D-13). This reading: translates these claims to this dissertation's terminology; imperfectly justifies them in ways never explicitly proposed by Deleuze; systematically connects such claims to one another; and, ultimately, spells out Deleuze's view on matters he never explicitly addressed. In doing so, then, my wish is not that of suggesting that Deleuze was, indeed, explicitly committed to the claims I attribute to him. To put it metaphorically, what I mean is that I do not seek to paint a sort of "representative" portrait of Deleuze, such as Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa". My view is that the claims I attribute to Deleuze can be drawn out, but not explicitly found in his writings. My point is that he has inspired me to endorse these claims and, indeed, that, after Nietzsche and Carnap, he is the philosopher who has influenced me the most. To put it metaphorically, my aim is to paint a quasi-abstract portrait of Deleuze comparable to Francis Bacon's portraits, such as his "Portrait of George Dyer Talking".⁴⁴² In doing so, my goal is to imperfectly justify the system of disputes' tenth, eleventh and twelfth claim:

- (10) A left-wing political practice of politicization that deals with micro-wars by

⁴⁴¹ Gilles Deleuze, "Letter to a Harsh Critic", pp.5.

⁴⁴² Note that Deleuze himself wrote a whole book on Francis Bacon. See Giles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

avoiding the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence is to be pursued as an alternative to the right-wing allegedly apolitical approach.

- (11) The left-wing political practice of politicization is to be prudently pursued in a metamodernist way as opposed to a modernist way.
- (12) This very dissertation illustrates how one can do so.

I carefully explain and imperfectly justify (10) in section 6.2. I do the same with (11) and (12) in section 6.3. Before I start to pursue this task, though, I emphasize that this chapter seeks to connect Deleuze’s works in a pertinent way to two contexts outside of them.

The first context is that of Deleuze’s interpreters themselves, such as: all the ones named above, that is, Badiou, Žižek, May, Gutting and Moore; as well as Nathan Widder; Véronique Bergen; John Protevi; those who contributed with the essays gathered in the 2014 *Deleuze and Metaphysics*; and hundreds (or perhaps even thousands) of others.⁴⁴³ Among Deleuze’s interpreters, an exegetical tendency can be quite easily identified. This tendency is that of focusing on Deleuze’s views on object-level metaphysical disputes, such as whether being is univocal; what is the virtual if there is such an entity; whether there is a difference in itself over and above any condition settled by human entities; what are the possible and the impossible; whether Deleuze is a sort of human-driven philosopher or a quite peculiar kind of physicalist-driven one; etc. On the other hand, not much has been published on Deleuze’s take on metametaphysical disputes, such as the one focused on here on which criterion, to begin with, one is to be adopted in addressing disputes. This

⁴⁴³ Alain Beaulieu (ed.), Edward Kazarian (ed.) and Julia Sushytska (ed), *Deleuze and Metaphysics*, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2014; Nathan Widder, “The rights of simulacra: Deleuze and the univocity of being”, *Continental Philosophy Review* 34, 2001: pp. 437–45; Véronique Bergen, *L’Ontologie de Gilles Deleuze*, Paris, Editions L’Harmattan, 2001; and John Protevi, *Political Physics: Deleuze, Derrida and the Body Politic*, New York, The Athlone Press, 2001.

chapter, then, aims to fill this gap by spelling out that Deleuze proposes an alternative criterion. I call it accordance with the left-wing political practice of politicization.

The second context this chapter aims to connect Deleuze's works to is that of analytic philosophers, such as Quine, Kripke and Fine, who deal with disputes by more or less unconsciously championing the right-wing political practice of depoliticization discussed in the last chapter. As indicated in 3.1, there has been a lot of animosity between analytic philosophers and continental ones. Moreover, as also indicated in 3.1, some continental philosophers have been influenced by Nietzsche's libertarian reaction, while ignoring Carnap's egalitarian reaction. On their parts, analytic philosophers have often done the opposite. Hence, it is not surprising that, among such philosophers, an objection against the likes of Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze is widely shared, even though not usually explicitly stated in writing. I call it the obscurity objection according to which these French philosophers have simply no criterion to approach disputes. What they have, instead, is an obscure use of language by means of which they ultimately perform authoritarian practices, such as that of more or less arbitrarily endorsing claims, such as (D-1) to (D-13), and allowing oneself to have followers who uncritically repeat one's claims as if they were undeniable religious dogmas.⁴⁴⁴ Note that this objection is quite similar to Carnap's objection to Martin Heidegger, already discussed in the second chapter.

⁴⁴⁴ Consider, for instance, that, without naming the authors he has in mind, Timothy Williamson points to the obscurity objection. He states that: "when law and order break down, the result is not freedom or anarchy but the capricious tyranny of petty feuding warlords. Similarly, the unclarity of constraints in philosophy leads to authoritarianism. Whether an argument is widely accepted depends not on publicly accessible criteria that we can all apply for ourselves but on the say-so of charismatic authority figures. Pupils cannot become autonomous from their teachers because they cannot securely learn the standards by which their teachers judge". See Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, MA, Blackwell, 2007: pp. 290. For objections to French authors closely-related to the obscurity one, also see Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont, *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals' Abuse of Science*, NY, Picador, 1998; and John Searle, "The Word Turned Upside Down", *The New York Review of Books*, October 27th, 1983.

It is important to emphasize that: first, it is not my aim to spell out whether and/or how Heidegger might have replied to Carnap's objection; second; it is also not my aim to show whether and/or how Derrida, Foucault or other French authors very influenced by Nietzsche, such as Georges Bataille, Pierre Klossowski or Maurice Blanchot, could resist the obscurity objection; and, third, I suspend judgment on whether interpreters who adopt option (b) may reply to this objection on Deleuze's behalf.⁴⁴⁵ What I would like to do, instead, is to commit myself to the claim that, if option (a) is embraced, it is possible to attribute to Deleuze the stated alternative criterion to deal with disputes, accordance with a left-wing political practice of politicization. It follows that, once this criterion is attributed to this, to put it metaphorically, immaculately conceived Deleuze of mine, a reply on his behalf to the obscurity objection may be provided.

6.2 The Left-Wing Political Practice of Politicization

What (D-1) has inspired me to think and, consequently, what I would like to draw out of this statement is the system of disputes' seventh claim: that disputes are micro-political conflicts analogous to macro-political conflicts, that is, they are micro-wars. Given that this claim arises out of a translation of Deleuze's writing into this dissertation's terminology, I would like to rename it (MCC 1). (MCC) is short for monstrous child claim. (D-2) through (D-13) will receive similar translations to claims of this kind in what follows. Before I do so, nonetheless, let me underline that (MCC 1) was already imperfectly justified in the last chapter. The same can be stated about the following claim:

⁴⁴⁵ Georges Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, New York, Suny Press, 2015; Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, London, Athlone Press, 1997; Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1989; Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*, Oxford, Routledge, 2006; and Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles / Eperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1979.

(MCC 2) A right-wing approach to a macro or to a micro-political conflict is a practice characterized by its champions' tendency to privilege their needs for self-defense over their powers to show empathy regarding their others. This is to state that such champions, passively, feel or act as if their others were a threat to their particular identities or even lives. Furthermore, actively, right-wingers act under the influence of this feeling in seeking to protect their lives and/or to conserve their particular identities.

I draw (MCC 2) out of (D-2), that is, (MCC 2) is what (D-2) has inspired me to think. I would like to further back up (MCC 2) and my forthcoming translations of (D-3) to (D-13) by considering another macro-political conflict. I call it the immigration-conflict: the one on whether illegal immigrants in France (the so-called *sans-papiers*) are to be deported. In addressing this issue, I aim to further back up points suggested in the last chapter.

Consider, then, a right-wing approach to the immigration conflict. This approach is that of the Parisian right-winger, someone who has particular identities, such as: to be male; to be adult; to be cisgender; to be heterosexual; to be white-skinned; to have been born and raised in Paris; to speak French; to be a French citizen; to have attended a public French university; to be from a high or middle-class; to be Christian, etc. Imagine that the Parisian right-winger, passively, feels that his others are a threat to his life and/or to his particular identities. Actively, then, he acts under the influence of this feeling in seeking to protect his life and/or to conserve his particular identities. He does so by opposing the presence of illegal immigrants in France, that is, those who are not Christians; do not come from a high or middle class; have not attended public French or any university at all; are not French citizens; were not born and raised in Paris; are not white-skinned, etc. For the right-winger, these illegal immigrants are not to receive the same benefits the French state has provided to French citizens. The state, he believes, is not to provide, say, health care or education

for illegal immigrants. This is because, in doing so, the state would over privilege illegal immigrants in detriment of French citizens, such as the right-winger himself.

The Parisian right-winger, accordingly, supports conservative politicians, such as Marine Le Pen, who promise, if elected, to deport illegal immigrants. In fact, he takes himself to be doing his part in attempting to intimidate illegal immigrants in public places, such as streets, supermarkets, squares and subway stations. Imagine that, when confronted with such immigrants, the right-winger goes as far as screaming slurs or words of order, such as “go back to where you belong, go back to Africa”. He also joins anti-immigration protests, and, perhaps, even gets involved in fist-fights with those who favor the presence of illegal immigrants in France. In the end, the right-winger may beat illegal immigrants. He may also throw stones at their houses. He might even go as far as burning their shops.

As stated above (see 5.1), I take that a particular identity is an implicit kind of communitarian or herd constrain. This is because those who have or are publicly interpreted as having a particular identity are expected to use language, behave and even to feel in accordance with this identity. Another way to put this is by stating that to have a particular identity is to be implicitly bounded by certain norms publicly attached to such an identity. These norms are, so to speak, “in the air” in that they are presupposed by majorities at given contexts. This is why I read that Deleuze in (D-3) calls the conjunction of all such norms a “standard” that such majorities implicitly seek to fulfill and which, consequently, oppresses those (that is, minorities) who fail to do so. Note that a majority is distinct from a really universal community. A majority is the most amount of people which, at a given context, presuppose certain norms while seeking to defend their own

interests as opposed to those of each and every being or at least each and every person. Hence, a majority is a quite narrow community, such as that of all right-wingers in Paris.

Note that if one has or is taken to have the identity of being a heterosexual French woman in Paris, the majority in this context implicitly supposes that one is to follow the norms attached to this identity, such as those of using and wanting to use makeup, dresses, panties, etc. On the other hand, if one has particular identities similar to those of the Parisian right-winger, this very same majority in this very same context implicitly assumes that one is to follow the distinct norms attached to such identities, such as that of not using or wanting to use makeup, dresses, panties, etc.

Let us also imagine that the Parisian right-winger, like the Southern right-winger, seeks to fulfill and conserve all the norms implicitly attached (or, at least, that he takes to be implicitly attached) to his particular identities. I take that is pertinent to imagine so because a considerably basic observation of the history of the West appears to attest to a fact that the likes of Karl Marx as well as Simone de Beauvoir, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Catherine MacKinnon, Linda Alcoff, Gayle Rubin, Sally Haslanger and Julia Serano have all more or less explicitly emphasized.⁴⁴⁶ Let us read that Deleuze also acknowledges the fact that I have mind: namely, that

(MCC 3) It appears that, throughout the history of the West, majorities have

⁴⁴⁶ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, London, Lowe and Brydone, 1953; Martin Luther King, *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches*, New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 1986; Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*, New York, Merit Publishers and Betty Shabazz, 1965; Angela Davis, *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, MA, Blackwell Publishers, 1998; Cornel West, *The Cornel West Reader*, New York, Basic Civitas Book, 1999; Catherine MacKinnon, *Are Women Human?*, MA, Harvard University Press, 2006; Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; Gayle Rubin, *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2011; Sally Haslanger, *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; Julia Serano, *Outspoken: A Decade of Transgender Activism and Trans Feminism*, Oakland, Switch Hitter Press, 2016; etc.

presupposed that all concrete persons (that is, those that exist in time and space) are to satisfy Western norms that ultimately none of them, but only an abstract object (that is, one that is supposed to exist over time and space) could fulfill. This abstract object deserves to be called the white-man-in-itself.

I draw (MCC 3) out of (D-3). Notice that concrete white men who have particular identities similar to those of the Parisian right-winger have never perfectly satisfied the Western norms Deleuze has in mind. Yet, they have fallen short of doing so much less explicitly than the concrete others of the white man who have suffered with all kinds of practices of oppression, such as that of being underpaid and exploited by French citizens who, when dealing with illegal immigrants, entitle themselves to misapply labor laws. Deleuze suggests, then, that the abstract object mentioned in (MCC 3) deserves to be named the white-man-in-itself: an entity that behaves, uses language and even feels how each and every person is supposed to behave, use language and feel in accordance with all kinds of Western majorities.⁴⁴⁷ Another way to put this is by claiming that this entity satisfies all Western criteria for knowledge, morality, beauty, solving disputes, etc. By the others of the white man, I understand those who have existed in time and space and have particular identities, such as: to be native American; to be black-skinned; to be female; to be transsexual; to come from a low class; to be an illegal immigrant in France, etc.

Note that, like the Southern right-winger, the Parisian right-winger is neither a libertarian Nietzschean, nor an egalitarian Carnapian. He is no libertarian because he does not aim to act in accordance and contribute to affirm his own singularity or those of others.

⁴⁴⁷ Of course, the dispute on whether this abstract entity exists as well as the traditional one over any kind of Platonism versus any kind of nominalism is not at stake here. For a detailed take on the latter, see Guido Imaguire, "In Defense of Quine's Ostrich Nominalism", in *Grazer Philosophische Studien* 89, 2014, and *Priority Nominalism: Grounding Ostrich Nominalism as a Solution to the Problem of Universals*, Switzerland, Springer, 2016.

What he aims, instead, is to attenuate such singularities of his while contributing with the community constituted by the majority that conserves and seeks to satisfy the Western norms that ultimately only the white-man-in-itself can fulfill. A metaphorical way to state this is by claiming that the Parisian right-winger is the “slave” of this abstract object. He is the server of a majority. Hence, he is also no egalitarian. This occurs because, instead of seeking to defend the interests of a really universal community, the Parisian right-winger only cares about the interests of an extremely narrow community that, ultimately, only includes those who share particular identities with him and seek to satisfy the norms or what they take to be the norms implied by such identities. An example of such norm is that, if one who has the identity of being a French citizen, one is to, accordingly, defend French citizens in detriment of non-French citizens, such as illegal immigrants. Thus, the Parisian right-winger, like the Southern right-winger, deserves to be called a conservative.

What (D-4) has inspired me to think is a claim that was suggested in the last chapter:

(MCC 4) It has often happened that one opposes right-wing approaches to macro-political conflicts, such as the Charlottesville-Conflict or the immigration conflict, but (perhaps unconsciously) endorses analogous right-wing approaches to micro-political conflicts, that is, micro-wars, like disputes.

As indicated in the last chapter, arguably, this has been the case with Kripke and Fine, albeit I do not wish to speculate on their views on macro-political conflicts they have never cared to address. What I would like to speculate, though, is that perhaps most contemporary analytic philosophers would never go as far as Quine in publicly suggesting (in a more macro-level) that Mexicans are dangerous and that, hence, one is to follow his mother’s

Uncle Ellis' advice: "never turn your back on a Mexican".⁴⁴⁸ I will provide other reasons to back up this speculation in the next section.

For now, I emphasize that those who champion right-wing approaches to micro-wars have suggested that they have, to put it metaphorically, some sort of "shortcut to what there is", that is, an allegedly extremely persuasive criterion to deal with disputes, such as accordance with intuition^{Quine}, accordance with intuition^{Kripke} or accordance with intuition^{Fine}. Accordingly, as indicated in the last chapter, champions of this approach assume that they may ignore those who ignore or violate such criterion, say, because their others would have "baffling" views, "intuition reversed", be "conceptually blind", etc. I also emphasize that those who champion right-wing approaches to micro-wars serve Western majorities; majorities that presuppose that one is supposed to do philosophy in accordance with the implicit norms attached to certain particular identities. Consider some particular identities of Quine, Kripke and Fine: respectively, that of being a champion of the empiricist tradition; a champion of the counter-empiricist tradition; and a champion of the neo-Aristotelian tradition described above. Three norms implicitly attached to these identities or that Quine, Kripke and Fine seem to assume to be attached to these identities, respectively, are: that one is to satisfy accordance with intuition^{Quine}; one is to satisfy accordance with intuition^{Kripke} and one is to satisfy accordance with intuition^{Fine}. I read that, respectively, Quine, Kripke and Fine aim to satisfy these norms in implicitly defending the interests of the narrow community of those who, to begin with, presupposes such norms.

Let us read that by (D-5), what Deleuze and Guattari really mean is that

(MCC 5) Philosophers have often championed micro-political practices of

⁴⁴⁸ Willard Van Orman Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1985: pp. 153.

depolicization in not acknowledging or not been aware of themselves insofar as micro-political agents engaged in micro-political conflicts.

As indicated by the system of disputes' eighth claim, this is exactly what I take to be the case with Quine, Kripke and Fine. It follows that if these philosophers have championed right-wing political practices of depolicization when dealing with micro-political conflicts, such as the essence dispute, there is a reason for embracing (10), that is, the claim that a left-wing political practice of politicization that deals with micro-political conflicts by avoiding the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence is to be pursued as an alternative to the right-wing allegedly apolitical approach. The reason I have in mind is: it appears to be motivated to resist or, at least, to show that there is a distinct approach to disputes. Indeed, let me dare to state that even philosophers who have endorsed the micro-right-wing approach may want to change the way they do philosophy, that is, they may want to embrace such alternative approach, if they are not inclined toward right-wing approaches to macro-political conflicts, such as those of the Southern right-winger and the Parisian right-winger. In case such philosophers are after all persuaded by the latter approaches, I think that there is not much I can do to make them revise their practices.

This last claim will be addressed in more detail in the conclusion. For now, I start to spell out (10) in reading that by (D-6) what Deleuze means is that, as indicated above:

- (MCC 6) A left-wing approach to a macro or to a micro-political conflict is a practice characterized by its champions' tendency to privilege their powers to show empathy over their needs to self-defend themselves from their others. As Michael Slote indicates, these champions: passively, feel or at least recognize the existence of the suffering of other people, including others. Actively, in order to contribute to make this suffering cease to exist, left-wingers act under the

influence of this suffering in ceasing to give or at least attenuating the importance of their own particular identities.⁴⁴⁹

Consider, then, the approach to the immigration-conflict of the Parisian left-winger, someone whose practices are quite similar to those of the Southern left-winger. Imagine that, like the Parisian right-winger, the Parisian left-winger has particular identities, such as: to be male; to be adult; to be heterosexual; to be white-skinned; to have been born and raised in Paris; to speak French; to be a French citizen; to have attended a public French university; to be from a high or middle-class; to be Christian; etc. Distinct from the Parisian right-winger, nonetheless, the Parisian left-winger, passively, feels or at least recognizes the existence of the suffering of his others, such as illegal immigrants in France. Actively, he acts under the influence of the suffering of these people in ceasing to give or at least attenuating the importance of his own particular identities. This is to state that the Parisian left-winger is more open-minded, whereas the Parisian right-winger is more close-minded.

The Parisian left-winger starts to do so by emphasizing a fact that right-wingers tend to ignore: that illegal immigrants in France have constantly ran away from wars and/or poverty in their own home-countries and faced all kinds of struggles once they arrived in France. The Parisian left-winger, then, simply ceases to take seriously a claim that Western majorities have often presupposed: that the French state is to primarily protect the interests of its own citizens as opposed to those of illegal immigrants. Hence, to put in Deleuze's terms, "he is or becomes minoritarian" in voting for politicians who promise to guarantee the rights and integrate illegal immigrants into French culture. He also seeks to pressure those who threaten (sometimes, the very life of) illegal immigrants. Imagine, then, that the

⁴⁴⁹ Michael Slote, *From Enlightenment to Receptivity: Rethinking our Values*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; "Philosophy's Dirty Secret: What Virtue Epistemology Needs to Learn about Human Irrationality", forthcoming; and "Philosophical Sin", forthcoming.

left-winger screams words of order against the words of order of right-wingers, say, he screams “filthy racist” against those who scream “go back to Africa” in public spaces. He also counter-protests marches against illegal immigration. He joins pro-immigration protests. In proceeding so, the Parisian left-winger seeks to problematize the Western norms that can only be perfectly satisfied by the white-man-in-itself.

Another way to describe the Parisian left-winger, then, is by metaphorically stating that he is not the “slave” of this entity. This occurs because he does not aim to serve the interests of a majority that oppresses minorities that fail to be in accordance with a standard. What the left-winger seeks to be is a libertarian Nietzschean. This is someone who aims to be his own, to put it metaphorically once again, “master” in being in accordance with what is singular about himself over and above his own particular identities and the implicit norms attached to them. In other words, he aims to be someone who ultimately creates and satisfies one’s own standard; one’s own criteria for knowledge, beauty, morality, dealing with disputes, etc. Paradoxically, though, the left-winger is also an egalitarian Carnapian. This occurs because he likewise seeks to attenuate his own singularities as well as those of others in striving toward the creation of a really universal community that would really defend the interests of all as opposed to those of the narrow communities defended by right-wingers. What I mean is that the Parisian left-winger also seeks to be the “slave” of this really universal community. This is to state that, in short, he aims to be in agreement with the will to synthesis, even though he may be ultimately unable to do so perfectly.

Then, I draw out of Deleuze’s works or these works have inspired me to articulate a left-wing approach toward micro-wars. This approach is analogous to those of the Parisian left-winger and the Southern left-winger to their respective macro-political

conflicts. So, this approach is to appeal to those who are already convinced that the latter approaches are more pertinent than those of right-wingers. This is to read that Deleuze deals with disputes by, passively, feeling or at least recognizing the existence of the suffering of other people, especially that of those who are others. Such others are: those who simply do not agree with any criterion one may propose; those who do not share one's intuitions; do not speak what one assumes to be ordinary language or seek to maximize one's theoretical virtues; those who, consequently, ignore or disrespect norms concerning how disputes are to be approached or, more broadly, how philosophy is to be done; those who have not often been accepted into undergraduate or graduate educational programs of philosophy; those who have failed to pass public philosophy tests, such as the French "*agrégation de philosophie*"; those who have rarely published their writings or been invited to speak at philosophical conferences; those who have not been hired by universities in wealthy countries, such as the USA, the UK, Australia, Germany and/or France itself; those who, to begin with, do not grant that the disputes one approaches are motivated; etc.

I also read that Deleuze addressed disputes by, actively, acting under the influence of the suffering of his others or at least under the influence of the recognition of the existence of this suffering. In doing so, he aimed to cease to give or at least to attenuate the importance of his own particular identities, like that of being a member of any philosophical tradition, such as that of being a French continental philosopher educated in a French university or being someone able to articulate works that satisfy widely shared criteria to deal with disputes. Indeed, from a left-wing perspective, these criteria, such as accordance with any kind of intuition, respect to the rules of ordinary language or maximization of theoretical virtues, are ultimately quite irrelevant. What is relevant, from

the left-wing perspective, is to negotiate with others by attempting to understand and even feel what they take to be intuitive, ordinary language or a theoretical virtue. Hence, from the left-wing perspective, over-simplistic broad appeals to an “experimental spirit”, “common sense”, or to what is “conceptually obvious” are to be dismissed; there is not much properly “experimental”, “common sensical” or “conceptually obvious” about works that champion right-wing supposedly apolitical approaches to micro-wars.

It follows that I am inspired or draw out of Deleuze’s works a way of avoiding the properly dogmatic “subtle” violence. This may be done by the left-winger on micro-disputes who, distinct from Aristotle and his more or less unconscious followers, does not seek to defend one’s own particular identities and the implicit norms attached to them by speaking in the name of a philosophical tradition and suggesting a narrow condition for personhood. A left-winger on micro-wars, rather, acknowledges that some others are legitimate rational peers and that, given that this is so, no person has settled a dispute once and for all by making an undeniable metaphysical claim. This is also to suggest that those who have dealt with disputes are all inserted in the Sisyphean-hell like process of the history of metaphysics: oneself is no exception to this process insofar as one’s very claims are not undeniable metaphysical ones. A left-winger, then, is a conflictual crafter who acknowledges one’s impossibility of not relying on problematic starting points.

I also draw out of Deleuze’s works a way to avoid the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence. This can be done by acknowledging the importance of (1-i) and (1-ii): respectively, the claims that some others are legitimate rational peers; and that it seems impossible to solve disputes once and for all. Hence, in order to have a persuasive view, one is to take these claims into account when reacting to the fact that, since immemorial

times, persons have been engaged in disputes. I claim, then, that the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence may be avoided by the conflictual crafter. In carefully, but inevitably imperfectly observing the history of metaphysics and all kinds of methodological issues, this is someone who concludes that, regardless of whether philosophers have been aware, they have been micro-political agents, that is, they have been engaged in micro-wars. Deleuze, then, embraces a political practice of politicization: that of recognizing oneself as a micro-political agent engaged in such micro-wars while seeking to spell out the lack of political neutrality of allegedly apolitical philosophers, such as Quine, Kripke and Fine.

My “immaculate conceived reading”, then, is that Deleuze’s goal was to be a particular kind of micro-political agent engaged in such micro-wars: an agent that articulates and endorses an ultimately unique criterion of *his-my* own to deal with micro-wars. I call it accordance with the very left-wing political practice of politicization just described. Note that, on the one hand, to adopt this criterion is to be a libertarian Nietzschean. This occurs insofar as no philosopher has explicitly adopted this criterion and, consequently, this move is very likely to cause dissensus and, perhaps, even to shock or embarrass, especially, supposedly apolitical philosophers who are actually right-wing ones. To put it metaphorically, then, to endorse this criterion is to seek to be one’s own “master” insofar as disputes are concerned. This is to state that the left-winger on micro-wars aims to be in accordance with what is ultimately singular about oneself over and above any philosophical tradition, such as the analytic tradition or the continental tradition. To aim so is to promote the libertarian practice of establishing one’s own norms on how disputes are to be approached or, more broadly, on how philosophy is to be done while violating several

norms of the continental tradition and the analytic tradition, such as the norm that one is to rely on strategically narrow bibliographies that only mention one of these traditions.

Paradoxically, though, to adopt accordance with a left-wing practice of politicization as a criterion to deal with disputes is also to be an egalitarian Carnapian. This occurs because to propose this criterion is also, as indicated above, to seek to achieve consensus with others by seeking to negotiate with their criteria, that is, with whatever they take to be intuitive, an ordinary use of language, a theoretical virtue, etc. Hence, the left-winger, metaphorically speaking, also aims to be a “slave”, but not one of a majority, such as that of a particular philosophical tradition. The goal of the left-winger is to serve a really universal community. This is to state that this philosopher also promotes an egalitarian practice: that of, while attenuating one’s singularities, to contribute to the creation of this really universal community that would defend the interests of all beings or at least all persons as opposed to those of a mere majority that, say, shares one’s intuitions, respects one’s rules of ordinary language, seeks to maximize one’s theoretical virtues, etc. To pursue this egalitarian practice, then, is to seek to act in accordance with the much more cosmopolitan norm that one is supposed to have a bibliography as plural and extensive as possible. Accordingly, I have addressed Brazilian neo-Pyrrhonists; several continental philosophers; several analytic philosophers; and those who resist being qualified by such terms and who simply contradict one’s intuitions, disrespect what one takes to be the rules of ordinary language and do not maximize what one presupposes to be theoretical virtues.⁴⁵⁰ This is to state that the left-winger seeks to be open-minded in achieving the

⁴⁵⁰ Unfortunately, though, I did not discuss the views of eastern philosophers; my current education simply does not allow me to do so.

singular health of being in accordance with the will to synthesis, regardless of one's likely impossibility of perfectly satisfying one's individualist and communitarian tendencies.

It follows that my immaculate conceived reading of Deleuze is hopefully pertinent to two contexts outside of that of his works: that of his interpreters who have focused on his views on object-level metaphysical disputes as well as that of analytic philosophers who have embraced the obscurity objection against Deleuze. The reason is that, in spelling out that Deleuze endorses accordance with the left-wing political practice of politicization as a criterion to deal with disputes, this reading of mine: first, shows a distinct aspect of Deleuze's works that his interpreters have not yet taken into account; and, second, provides a reply to the obscurity objection on Deleuze's behalf by indicating that he (or at least the, so to speak, deformed child that arises out of my immaculately conceived reading) had an alternative criterion of his own to deal with disputes and, hence, did not champion the aforementioned authoritarian practices. This monstrous child of mine, then, does not proceed, like a "warlord", without having any sort of "constrain in philosophy", to put in Timothy Williamson's terms, but, rather, articulates an alternative constrain of his own.⁴⁵¹

In doing so, Deleuze also aimed to show resistance and self-defend himself from those who champion right-wing allegedly apolitical approaches to micro-wars. I spell this out in the next section by addressing two ways by means of which the left-wing political practice of politicization can be pursued: the modernist way and the metamodernist way.

⁴⁵¹ See Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, pp. 290.

6.3 From the Modernist to the Metamodernist Way

An imprudent practice is a sort of suicidal practice; one that is very likely to lead to the practitioner's death or that at least severely puts at risk something that the practitioner cares deeply, such as a marriage, a family, a career, etc. A prudent practice is one that does not do so. Consider the practices of having sexual intercourse, drinking alcohol or taking drugs. These practices can be imprudent ones, say, when one has "one partner too many", when one has "one drink too many" or takes "one drug too many". On the other hand, when one manages to have sexual intercourse, to drink or take drugs without excessively doing so, one's practice is a prudent one. Hence, what I draw out of (D-7) is the claim that

(MCC 7) Prudent practices are to be preferred to imprudent ones.⁴⁵²

The reason is simple: the latter can ultimately lead the practitioner to death. Now it is very important to emphasize that the distinction between prudent and imprudent practices cannot be very precisely made. Rather, this distinction is one of degree. Moreover, there is no precise definition of "one partner, drink, drug or anything else too many", that is, one who has never had a *Caipirinha* may need to stop after the first one, whereas more experienced drinkers may drink it throughout the night. What I mean is that each person needs to figure out what counts as a prudent or as an imprudent practice for oneself. The action of doing so is a craft or, in Deleuze's and Guattari's words, an "art" in the Greek

⁴⁵² In conversation, Irene Olivero has pointed out that this is not always the case, insofar as there may be macro-political-conflicts, say, that of fighting against the Italian fascist regime of the 1930s and 1940s, regarding which it may be inevitable (insofar as resistance is at stake) for left-wingers to proceed imprudently in being willing to sacrifice their own lives. This is an interesting point that cannot be addressed in this essay, which remains neutral on whether there are counter examples to (MCC 7).

sense stated above (see 1.1) of a conjunction of disciplined practices or ways of doing something. Henceforth, the term “artist” as opposed to the term “crafter” will be used in the sense of someone who deeply masters a craft in practicing it in a prudent way.

Note that the “harsh critic” referred in the text by Deleuze mentioned in this chapter’s first paragraph is Michel Cressole.⁴⁵³ Cressole claims that Deleuze is “someone who’s always just tagged along behind, taking it easy, capitalizing upon other’s people’s experiments, on gays, drug-users, alcoholics, masochists, lunatics, and so on, vaguely savoring their transport and poisons without ever taking any risks”.⁴⁵⁴ My reading is that the core Deleuze’s reply to Cressole is to be drawn out of (D-8) by claiming that:

(MCC 8) Deleuze never purported to be an artist of sexual intercourse, drinking or drug-use. In fact, his sexual, drinking or drug-use practices are ultimately irrelevant.

What is relevant is Deleuze’s practice of doing metaphysics; his practice of dealing with micro-wars by means of the left-wing political practice of politicization. This is because

(MCC 9) Deleuze is (or at least wishes to be) the artist of such micro-wars.

I draw (MCC 9) out of (D-9). Now consider the immigration-conflict once again. Imagine that the left-winger on this macro-political conflict goes as far as fostering in his apartment in Paris an illegal immigrant who has particular identities, such as: to be male; to be adult; to be cisgender; to be heterosexual; to be brown-skinned; to have been born and raised in a Muslim country; to speak Arab and French with an African accent; to be a citizen of a Muslim country; to have not attended a university; to come from a low class;

⁴⁵³ Michel Cressole, *Deleuze*, Paris, Éditions Universitaires, 1973.

⁴⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp. 11.

to have experienced poverty throughout his life; to have ran away from a war; to be Muslim; etc. Imagine that the illegal immigrant has a right-wing attitude toward those who have particular identities similar to those of the Parisian left-winger himself, that is, those who are not Muslims; have not ran away from wars; have not experienced poverty; have disrespected norms of the *Qur'an* or at least what the illegal immigrant takes to be such norms; etc. Imagine that, passively, the illegal immigrant feels that his others are a threat to his particular identities (especially, that of being a Muslim) and even to his very life. Actively, he acts under the influence of this feeling, say, by planning and ultimately championing a terrorist attack in Paris that kills hundreds or even thousands of people, including people regarding which the Parisian left-winger cares deeply, such as family members or close friends. It follows that the Parisian left-winger has an imprudent approach to the immigration-conflict. He is no artist of this macro-political conflict. This is because he, ultimately, simply ignores his own needs for self-defense in placing himself too far left within the political spectrum mentioned in the last chapter at 5.3

Hence, this left-winger's imprudent attitude is comparable to that of the historical

(MCC 10) Jesus Christ who seems to have championed similar imprudent approaches toward some of the macro-political conflicts of his time, such as the one on how to resist the Roman oppression while revising the Jewish law.

I draw (MCC 10) out of (D-10). In doing so, I wish to further underline that Deleuze, as indicated by (MCC 7), endorses prudent left-wing approaches to political-conflicts as opposed to imprudent ones. Indeed, I read that he takes that the mere fact that imprudent practices are sort of suicidal ones that are likely to lead one to death or, at least, to the loss of something that one cares deeply is sufficient reason for avoiding them and pursuing

prudent practices. To put it in Nietzsche's terms, what Deleuze seeks to establish is an approach to micro-wars of a "Roman Caesar with the Christ's soul", that is, someone who shows empathy toward others but still cares about one own's need for self-defense.⁴⁵⁵ I do not think that it is impossible to draw out of Deleuze's works a "Caesar-yet-Christ" driven approach to the immigration-conflict. Yet, it is not easy to do so. As the European and the American immigration crisis indicate, it is hard to determine the requirements for an approach to the immigration-conflict to be qualified as a prudent one. To do so or to discuss what kind of state policies on the immigrant-conflict are to be adopted today are not aims pursued here. I also do not wish to spell out what counts as a prudent left-wing political approach toward the Charlottesville-conflict. I am also neutral on whether the Southern and the Parisian left-winger are to use upfront kinds of violence regarding right-wingers.

What I would like to do, instead, is to claim that an imprudent left-wing approach to micro-wars is analogous to the Christ-driven approach of the left-winger who fosters a terrorist in his house. This is so in that imprudent left-wingers on disputes also risk, if not their lives, at least something that they care deeply, such as their careers insofar as members of a philosophy faculty. This occurs when, for the sake of increasing the level of tolerance in philosophy, one disrespects the norms on how philosophy is to be done in resorting to not very subtle kinds of violence. Imagine that a supposedly apolitical, but actually micro-right-wing philosopher is invited by one's faculty colleague to give a talk on an issue that micro-right-wingers like to discuss, say, the distinction between extensional, intensional and hyperintensional notions. As expected, the right-winger speaks in the name of an "experimental spirit", "common sense" and/or of what is "conceptually obvious" and

⁴⁵⁵ *Nachlass* 1884, 27 [60], my translation.

presupposes that one's view is motivated mainly because it contradicts that of another right-winger who recently published a paper about a similar issue in a specialized journal.

An imprudent micro-left-wing approach would be that of the one who invites to the talk a non-philosopher left-wing activist who strongly and even passionately agrees with left-wing approaches to macro-conflicts and who: often interrupts the micro-right-winger, say, in asking for definitions of each and every term used or by raising aggressive questions; makes disapproving sounds or coughs while aiming to spell the lack of motivation of the speaker's view; cursers and/or mocks the speaker supposedly non-problematic conceptions of "science" or "common sense"; ultimately, throws objects, such as pens or even chairs, at the right-winger etc. My Deleuze does not propose the adoption of such not very subtle kinds of violence; it is simply imprudent to resist in such a way.

Now, before I spell out the kind of prudent resistance my Deleuze takes to be justified, it is crucial to emphasize that the actual Deleuze himself practiced philosophy at a particular context quite distinct from the North American one in which this dissertation is inserted. Deleuze's context was that of France, roughly, from 1940s up to early 1990s. I read that, in this context, a prudent left-wing approach to disputes could be pursued in a modernist way. Indeed, I tend to believe that it can be historically observed that this way was adopted, not only by Deleuze and Guattari, but by several other 20th century French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche, such as Bataille, Klossowski, Blanchot, Foucault and Derrida. This way deserves to be named a modernist one because the three features that characterize it resemble features easily found in the writings of late 19th century poets who have been described as modernistic ones. I have in mind the likes of Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine, Tristan Corbière, Arthur Rimbaud, Stéphane Mallarmé, etc.

The first modernist feature is the adoption of a use of language that is alternative regarding the uses endorsed by one's tradition. Consider once again the aforementioned upfront rhetorical devices that, as (D-1) through (D-13) indicate, can be easily found in Deleuze's writings as well as in the writings of all the other aforementioned French philosophers significantly influenced by Nietzsche. I take that, roughly, from the 1940s up to the 1990s, to rely on such devices was, indeed, to rely on an alternative use of language regarding those of most French philosophers, such as Guérault and Alquié. Analogously, to articulate a verse, such as Rimbaud's "the star has wept rose-colored in the heart of your ears" already discussed in 2.3, was likewise to adopt an alternative use of language regarding verses traditionally adopted by poets before the 19th century.

The second modernist feature is the impersonation of at least one other by means of philosophical writings that, say, seek to emphasize that some others are persons who are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake. This can be done by, metaphorically speaking, painting a quasi-abstract portrait (comparable to Francis Bacon's) of them. To use another metaphor, Deleuze aims his writings to strike his readers as if one of their others were knocking at their doors in the middle of the night in demanding to have the existence of their personhood as well as the importance of this personhood acknowledged. Note that this second modernist feature can likewise be considerably easily found in Deleuze's writings, especially in those he co-authored with Guattari, such as the *Anti-Oedipus*. This is because, as (D-11) indicates, Deleuze aimed to impersonate or, to put in his terms, to embrace the "conceptual persona" of an other of the white man: the so-called mentally disordered schizophrenic. Therefore, what (D-11) inspires me to think, that is, what I would like to draw out of this statement is the claim that:

(MCC 11) It has to be underlined, though, that the conceptual persona of the schizophrenic impersonated in Deleuze's writings is distinct from someone psychiatrists would describe as a schizophrenic; the former is a way by means of which Deleuze seeks to prudently adopt a left-wing political practice of politicization, whereas the latter is someone who has been isolated and suffered in mental institutions.

I also underline that the second modernist feature can be easily found in the writings of other French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche. Consider once again the Foucault of *History of Madness*. I read that he also aimed to impersonate an other of the white man, that is, he aimed to embrace the conceptual persona of a mad person or even of the ultimate other of reason: madness itself, one that cannot be identified with the madness attributed to the so-called mentally disordered. The Derrida of *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles* also appears to aim to embrace a conceptual persona who is an other of the white man: that of an ultimate feminine woman whose way of thinking would be over and above "phallogocentrism" and, hence, distinct from that of any actual woman. Analogously, starting in the 19th century with the named French modernist poets and continuing throughout the 20th century, poets have also constantly impersonated all kinds of others of the white man, such as black-skinned people, Jews, Latinos, women, transsexuals, drug-users, immigrants, kids, criminals, mentally disordered people, animals, etc. Some of the poets I have in mind are: Guillaume Apollinaire, Giuseppe Ungaretti, Fernando Pessoa, E.E. Cummings, Florbela Espanca, Manuel Bandeira, Antonin Artaud, André Breton, Tristan Tzara, Federico García Lorca, Francis Ponge, Langston Hughes, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, João Cabral de Melo Neto, Charles Bukowski, Paul Celan, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Sylvia Plath, Allen Ginsberg, Haroldo de Campos, Ferreira Gullar, and several others.

The third modernist feature is that of praising and pointing toward a utopian new context, such as one in which others would simply be recognized as members of a really

universal community as opposed to threats to a narrow majority. Hence, what (D-12) inspires me to think or what I would like to draw out of this statement is the claim that:

(MCC 12) Philosophers are to praise and point toward a utopian new context.⁴⁵⁶

This is, I read, what Deleuze has attempted to do throughout his career. Hence, I am inclined to follow Frederic Jameson in reading that Deleuze was “in many ways a quintessential modernist, passionately committed to the eruption of the genuinely, the radically, and, dare one even say, the authentically New”.⁴⁵⁷ This is also more or less explicitly the case with the aforementioned French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche as well as with the named poets. Indeed, consider the last verse of Baudelaire’s 1857 *Les Fleurs du mal* in its original French words: “*Au fond de l’Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau!*”. This verse can be translated to English as: “To the depths of the Unknown to find something new!”. I do not think that I exaggerate in claiming that this verse was some sort of imperative for French Nietzschean philosophers and modernist poets, that is, they, throughout the 20th century, have all more or less been unconsciously influenced by Baudelaire in likewise praising and engaging themselves in the search for something new.

What I draw out of (D-13) is the claim that, in championing the left-wing political practice in a prudent modernist way characterized by the three described features,

(MCC 13) Philosophers are to pursue a goal similar to that of modernist poets: to shock or embarrass their readers, especially right-wing ones, in pressuring them to change the way they have proceed.

⁴⁵⁶ For a detailed take on Deleuze’s utopian politics, see Paul Patton, “Utopian Political Philosophy: Deleuze and Rawls”, *Deleuze Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2008: pp 41-59.

⁴⁵⁷ Frederic Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present*, New York, Verso, 2002: pp. 4.

To pursue this goal, then, is to: first, recognize that, among the others, some are deep opponents who, practically speaking, attack the very way one aims to spend some of the time of one's life, say, by making it very hard for one to deal with disputes in accordance with the left-wing practice of politicization and expressing the singular health of being in agreement with the will to synthesis; and second, self-defend oneself from such deep opponents by making references to issues that they are likely to ignore (e.g., *caipirinha* and *Bossa Nova*), while describing them by means of a clinical-political vocabulary somehow similar, but less dogmatically loaded than Nietzsche's and Carnap's. The vocabulary that I have in mind and endorse is illustrated by the claim that: like macro-right-wingers, those who adopt right-wing allegedly apolitical approaches to disputes make the actualization of a utopian new context or even some sort of change toward such a context very hard, while excessively disrespecting the will to synthesis in a way that, from the perspective of the kind of health I pursue, seems to ultimately "sickly" require philosophical treatment.

Throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to imperfectly justify this last claim while pointing toward such a treatment: a distinct way of dealing with disputes. My Deleuze also does so while emphasizing that such a procedure does not express a "subtle" violence, but, rather, is a procedure of self-defense regarding those who express the properly dogmatic or the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence, that is, those who champion right-wing allegedly apolitical approaches to disputes while more or less implicitly suggesting that everybody is to do philosophy like they do, say, by respecting the narrow conditions for personhood they suggest; whatever they take to be intuitive; whatever they call "ordinary language"; whatever they take to be able to maximize theoretical virtues or even sharing the pre-modernist aesthetic values (e.g., elegance or

simplicity) they presuppose, etc.⁴⁵⁸ Let me also underline that the self-defense procedure I attribute to Deleuze acknowledges that even one's deep opponents whose practices one wishes to change are still legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are concerned; legitimate rational peers who, ultimately, indicate that the very claims one defends are not undeniable metaphysical claims, but merely deniable metaphysical claims.

It is not my goal to challenge that Deleuze himself may have, indeed, succeed to be or to become the artist of micro-wars by championing a left-wing political (Christ-yet-Caesar driven) practice of politicization in a modernist way. The very fact that, albeit the resistance of analytic philosophers, Deleuze has been one of the most read, translated and respected philosophers of the second half of 20th century attests to this. What is much more disputable, though, is that contemporary philosophers, such as myself, are to follow Deleuze in pursuing the left-wing approach to micro-wars in a modernist way. As (11) indicates, this is not how I think. What I would like to claim, instead, is that a metamodernist way (as opposed to a modernist one) of prudently pursuing the left-wing practice of politicization is to be drawn out of Deleuze's works.

Notice that the term "metamodernism" is not as popular as "post-modernism" and "post-modern". The latter two terms have been applied in all kinds of senses, including derogatory senses that champions of the obscurity objection have often used to refer, among others, to Nietzsche and French philosophers influenced by him, such as Deleuze

⁴⁵⁸ Note that one of the reasons Quine gives for rejecting abstract objects is they offend "the aesthetic sense of us who have a taste for desert landscapes". Also consider that Williamson supports the "aesthetic evaluation of theories (elegance, simplicity, ...)", while emphasizing that: "of course, it is notoriously hard to explain why aesthetic criteria are a good methodological guide, but it would be dangerously naïve to abandon them for that reason". See Willard Van Orman Quine, "On what there is", *The Review of Metaphysics* Vol. 2. No. 5, Sep., 1948: pp. 23; and Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, pp. 285 and 289. For a detailed take on the role of aesthetic values when a choice between contrasting metaphysical views is at stake, see Jiri Benovsky, *Meta-metaphysics: On Metaphysical Equivalence, Primitiveness, and Theory Choice*, Switzerland, Springer International, 2016.

himself. Also notice that I have not used the terms “post-modernism” and “post-modern”. Hence, I take that the burden of spelling out what these terms mean falls on the shoulders of those who have done so, not on mine. I also underline that it is not the case that the term “metamodernism” has never been used; Mas’ud Zavarzadeh may have been the first to do so.⁴⁵⁹ This dissertation is not particularly influenced by him or by any other author who has used the term “metamodernism”. By a metamodernist way of pursuing the left-wing approach to disputes, it is to be understood one that arises out, is foreclosed and turns the modernistic way against itself. This can be done by practicing a philosophy characterized by three metamodernist features closely related but distinct from the modernist ones.

The first metamodernist feature is: instead of presupposing the modernist features, to become historically aware that they have become widely shared and ultimately normative ones among French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche. What I mean is that philosophers of this tradition are somehow expected to adopt an alternative use of language, impersonate at least one of the others of the white man and praise and point toward a utopian new context, such as one in which such others would be recognized as members of a really universal community as opposed to threats to actual majorities. Analogously, contemporary poets are likewise expected to write poems that have features quite similar to the modernist features, that is, Baudelaire and all the other modernist poets named above are part of a, perhaps, even “oppressive” aesthetical tradition now.

It follows that contemporary philosophers whose uses of language are similar to those adopted by the members of the French Nietzschean tradition do not exactly rely on alternative uses of language. Rather, in resorting to the aforementioned upfront rhetorical

⁴⁵⁹ Mas’ud Zavarzadeh, “The Apocalyptic Fact and the Eclipse of Fiction in Recent American Prose Narratives”, in *Journal of American Studies*: Vol. 9, No. 1, April, 1975: p.69-83.

devices, their uses of language are somehow standard ones regarding this tradition. Moreover, to impersonate in one's writings a schizophrenic or any other of the white man is no longer to impersonate an other with regard to this tradition. The reason is that philosophers, such as Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze himself, have already constantly done so. For a similar reason, it is also no longer new to praise and point toward the aforementioned utopian new context, that is, Deleuze and other French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche have also often done so for almost one hundred years or so.

It follows that, though those who adopt a modernist way of pursuing the left-wing approach to disputes might still be able to shock or embarrass the ones who are not familiar with the French Nietzschean tradition, they are not likely to do so with those who are aware of it. Analogously, poems by all the aforementioned poets might still shock or embarrass readers who are unaware that since the 19th century, throughout 20th century and up to our time, poets have relied on alternative uses of language, impersonate their others as well as praise and point toward a utopian new context. Indeed, as indicated above, to proceed in such a way became a, perhaps, even aesthetically "oppressive", norm among poets.

Analogously, it is not exaggerated to claim that to practice a philosophy that has the three modernist features is also a, perhaps, "oppressive" norm among philosophers influenced by Nietzsche, albeit such procedure may still shock or embarrass right-wing philosophers who are, say, practically only familiar with the writings of contemporary analytic philosophers. Indeed, perhaps, it might be quite easy to shock or embarrass these philosophers. The same can be stated about the Southern, the Parisian right-winger, the ones who have recently protested in Brazil against the "Queer Museum" exposition focused

on queer art or, more broadly, anyone who has more or less ignored the modernist poetry and art that has been published and exposed for more than one hundred years.

The second metamodernist feature is to indicate that —given that the modernist assumptions are widely shared within the continental tradition, especially that of French philosophers influenced by Nietzsche —the ones who currently presuppose them face the risk of proceeding as inverted right-wingers. Inverted right-wingers are the ones who, passively, feel that those who ignore or disrespect the modernist norm that one is to do a philosophy that has the modernist features are a threat, if not to their lives, at least to their particular identity of being champions of the modernist way of pursuing the left-wing approach. In order to protect this particular identity of theirs or even their lives, inverted right-wingers, actively, act under the influence of this feeling, say, by endorsing and not showing much empathy toward those who disrespect the stated modernist norm and/or the norms of political correctness. The latter are gradually becoming dominant all over the world. According to such norms, one is to be as tolerant as possible in not shocking or embarrassing anyone, especially the others of the white man. Given these norms, as indicated above, it is extremely unlikely to find passages by contemporary analytic philosophers that follow Quine in suggesting that Mexicans are dangerous. To put it more explicitly, yesterday's "jokes" became today's "offensive remarks". Accordingly, contemporary analytic seem to be gradually becoming champions of political correctness.

Note that these norms of political correctness may be used against Deleuze's writings themselves. Consider a passage quoted in this chapter's very first paragraph: Deleuze's way of metaphorically describing his "immaculate conception" as an action of

“taking an author from behind and giving him a child”.⁴⁶⁰ Inverted right-wingers who entitle themselves to take any reference to sex as being shocking may be inclined to claim that this passage offends those who have actually being raped. On my part, my reading is that, instead of being a metaphor for a violent rape, this passage is a metaphor for an act of love; an act of love that a lover takes regarding someone the lover cares deeply in seeking to procreate with so that the reader’s own DNA and that of the author are conjoined into a new being. I emphasize that Deleuze only applies his immaculate conception method to authors who influenced him; not to his deep opponents, such as Immanuel Kant.⁴⁶¹

I also speculate that basic historical observation attests that a transition is taking place in the West. What characterizes this transition is that it is becoming more recurrent to observe others of the white man living in ways that, for several centuries, appeared to be the exclusive right of concrete white men. Consider, for instance, someone who is a descent of Muslim Arabs but has lived one’s whole life in Paris; someone who speaks French with no accent, has attended French public universities and has a successful career, say, as a lawyer or a physician. Also consider a black-skinned female who has studied in elitist and quite expensive American institutions and works at a job that pays more than two hundred thousand dollars a year. Regardless of right-wing efforts, I take that it is empirically considerably evident that cases such as these are becoming more recurrent.

What also characterizes the aforementioned transition is the fact that the abstract object mentioned in (MCC 3) is gradually starting to no longer deserve to be called the

⁴⁶⁰ Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp.6.

⁴⁶¹ As Deleuze states, his “book on Kant’s different”. This is because, instead of using his immaculate conception method, Deleuze “did it as a book about an enemy that tries to show how his system works”. Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic”, pp.6. Also see Gilles Deleuze, *Kant’s Critical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, London, Athlone Press, 1984.

white-man-in-itself. This is because concrete white men are starting to no longer be the ones who less explicitly fail to satisfy Western norms presupposed by all kinds of majorities; the end of slavery and of the Jim Crow laws; the fact that women have the right to vote in most countries and that homosexuality is no longer usually described as a mental disorder and/or a crime; the fact that husbands who beat their wives are today more often denounced than in the past and that a lot of women in the West are financially independent from their fathers or husbands; the election of Barack Obama in the States, the #MeToo movement, all kinds of affirmative actions and the fact that universities have often organized inclusiveness conferences and talks about xenophobia, classism, racism, sexual harassment and transphobia are just a few signs of this. Another sign, as the Charlottesville-conflict indicates, is that concrete white-skinned males appear to think that such norms of political correctness make it hard for them to act or use language, as they have done.

Perhaps, then, the abstract object mentioned in (MCC 3) will soon need to be renamed, say, the lamb-in-itself. By this, I understand an entity that, like the white-man-in-itself, behaves, uses language and even feels how each and every person is supposed to behave, use language and feel in accordance with all kinds of Western majorities. Distinct from the white-man-in-itself, the lamb-in-itself does so by being as tolerant as possible in not shocking or embarrassing anyone, especially the others of the white man who have constantly suffered with practices of oppression throughout the history of the West. Those who more explicitly disrespect such norms of political correctness, then, may be called the others of the lamb-in-itself. Moreover, note that these others may be either males or females; white-skinned or black-skinned; heterosexuals or non-heterosexuals; Europeans or non-Europeans; North Americans or non-North Americans; etc.

Now let me emphasize that, distinct from macro-right-wingers, I embrace the transition from the standard of the white-man-in-itself to that of the lamb-in-itself. To put it in upfront terms, I do prefer to live in a community in which Quine's remarks about Mexicans are taken to be offensive ones as opposed to irrelevant points or even "jokes". I also prefer to live in communities in which xenophobic, classist, racist, sexist and/or transphobic behavior is oppressed, not praised, say, as a sign of masculinity. Yet, I also underline that new oppressions seem to be brought about by this new standard of the lamb-in-itself, such as that of censoring modernist poetry or art in general, under the basis that they violate the new rules of political correctness in being too offensive, especially to the others of the white man.⁴⁶² My point is that inverted right-wingers are, to put it metaphorically, the "slaves" of this lamb-in-itself; they are conservatives as opposed to libertarians or egalitarians. They are not libertarians because they do not seek to be in accordance with what is singular about themselves or others. They are also not egalitarians because they do not seem to seek to defend the interests of a really universal community, but merely those of gradually increasing majorities that respect the new rules of political correctness.⁴⁶³ Another way to state this is by claiming that inverted right-wingers are quite intolerant or considerably close-minded regarding their others who violate these new rules.

The third metamodernist feature is that of paradoxically still satisfying or at least aiming to satisfy the modernist norm that one is to do a philosophy that has the three modernist features. This is what this dissertation has aimed to do. To begin with, this is to

⁴⁶² Note that under the basis that Balthus's 1938 painting, "Therese Dreaming", praises pedophilia, thousands of people signed, in 2017, a petition for the removal of this painting from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. The museum, however, did not remove the painting.

⁴⁶³ To put in Žižek's terms, inverted right-wingers appear to wish for a "society immobilized by the concern for not hurting the other, no matter how cruel and superstitious this other is and in which individuals are engaged in regular rituals of 'witnessing' their victimization". See Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, New York, Picador, 2008, pp. 130.

state that I have pursued a prudent left-wing approach to disputes in a metamodernist way insofar as I have relied on a use of language that is or at least aims to be alternative regarding the ones endorsed by the two traditions within which this dissertation is more likely to be inserted: the analytic and the continental one. The use of language adopted here is alternative regarding those of the analytic tradition because neo-Pyrrhonists and continental German and French philosophers have been mentioned and discussed, metaphors have been used and no supposedly “clear” formal language was adopted.

I also do not speak in the name of an “ordinary language”. Indeed, this chapter aimed to problematize accordance with such a language as a criterion to deal with disputes in the first place. So, I reply to the possible objection that my use of language is not an “ordinary” one by not granting that to adopt a use that is supposed to be an “ordinary” one is a value in the first place. The reason is that others are those who, to begin with, do not agree with whatever one takes to be an ordinary use of language. Hence, the language I wish to speak is one that is more open to such others, even though I am aware that, as stated in 3.2, my use of language is still quite an elitist one itself insofar as it is naïve to believe that those who have not gone to College will be able to follow it. Note, though, that the same can be stated about the uses of language of all philosophers mentioned here. This includes the use of language of analytic philosophers who are only willing to discuss among themselves and dare to speak in the name of an ordinary language as if their technical terms were appealing to an “ordinary man”, to put in Kripke’s terms.⁴⁶⁴ I emphasize, once again, that even when it comes to an apparently ordinary word, such as

⁴⁶⁴ Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, pp. 41.

“person”, analytic philosophers have not agreed on what counts as an ordinary use, as indicated in 4.3. The same seems to be the case about any core philosophical term.

The use of language adopted here is also alternative regarding those of the continental tradition, especially, those of the French tradition of philosophers influenced by Nietzsche, such as Deleuze himself. The reason is that I have not used the stated upfront rhetorical devices, but actually criticized their over-libertarian character in 3.2 I have also explicitly defined all technical terms used here in hopefully making it less likely for the obscurity objection to be raised against me. Hence, “my monstrous Deleuze” speaks in terms of (MCC 1) to (MCC 13); not (D-1) through (D-13). Indeed, the latter statements, I grant analytic philosophers, make it very easy for one to make the obscurity objection.

Furthermore, an impersonation of an other regarding both the analytic and the continental tradition has also been pursued throughout this dissertation. This other is someone whose aim is to articulate a philosophy that resists being qualified either as analytic (in resisting the supposedly apolitical, but actually right-wing approach of Quine, Kripke and Fine), or as continental (in resisting any contemporary modernistic way of pursuing the left-wing approach to disputes). More directly, this is to state that this other is “too continental to be analytic”; it is also “too analytic to be continental” and in the end aims to be neither analytic nor continental. A metaphor that illustrates the trans-non-binary character played here is that of someone whose face is a deformed superposition of Carnap’s face and Nietzsche’s, a monstrous Deleuze who is likewise an ultimate other of the lamb-in-itself; “Friedrich Carnap”, “Rudolf Nietzsche”, “Gilles A. G. Moreira”,

“Felipe G. A. Deleuze” or even “F.G.A.M.” (to put in the terms of several of my poems) are some of the names that this conceptual character could have been given.⁴⁶⁵

This dissertation also praised and pointed toward a utopian new context, that is, one in which it would no longer be “shocking” or “embarrassing” to mention Nietzsche and Deleuze in analytic circles or analytic philosophers, such as Carnap, in continental contexts. This is a context in which the analytic-continental gap would no longer matter. Moreover, the very others of the lamb-in-itself would be taken as members of a really universal conflictual community as opposed to threats to a majority. In fact, this new context would be one in which all persons would be in perfect accordance with the will to synthesis, say, in managing to do what may be ultimately impossible: to perfectly satisfy their individualistic and communitarian tendencies in ultimately ceasing to feel that there is a contrast between the two. This new context, then, would be one in which communities would allow oneself to express one’s singularity, and singularities would be expressed by means of the community, not oppressed by them. Indeed, the very distinction between a will to power and a will to order would no longer make sense. Accordingly, this dissertation has aimed to be a libertarian Nietzschean one insofar as it has attempted to express a singularity that resists association with the analytic and the continental tradition. This dissertation has also aimed to be an egalitarian Carnapian one in attempting to bring about a really universal community whose rules would seek to protect the interests of all as opposed to those of majorities, such as the gradually increasing majority of those who take the rules of political correctness for granted and get easily offended. What follows, then, is

⁴⁶⁵ Felipe G. A. Moreira, *Por uma estética do constrangimento*, Rio de Janeiro, ed. Oito e Meio, 2013.

(12); the claim that this very dissertation illustrates how one can pursue a left-wing political practice of politicization in a metamodernist way as opposed to a modernist way.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁶ To use Carnap's expression, I have also "openly" adopted "the form of art, of poetry" in seeking to react to modernist poetry by means of a metamodernist poetry of my own. What characterizes the metamodernist poetry are features considerably similar to those I attribute to the left-wing metamodernist prudent approach to micro-wars championed here. Consider, for instance, my own Felipe G. A. Moreira, *Por uma estética do constrangimento*. I have also written a series of columns in the literary journal, *Subversa*, in aiming to spell out the pertinence of metamodernist poetry. As of March 3rd of 2019, these columns were available at: <http://www.revistasubversa.com/category/metamodernismo/>. See EML 80.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Restatement of the Claims of the System of Disputes

What I have done over the last six chapters was to rely on imperfect justificatory resources that back up the following twelve claims of the system of disputes:

- (1) It seems that:
 - (1-i) Among the others, some are legitimate rational peers insofar as disputes are at stake.
 - (1-ii) No person has settled a dispute once and for all, that is, in a way that others could not rationally unsettle.
 - (1-iii) (1-i) and (1-ii) are extremely important points insofar as those who fail to acknowledge them react in a quite unpersuasive manner to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.
- (2) One is to adopt a conflictual craft, that is, a synthesis between the skeptic craft and the dogmatic craft that serves to articulate the system of disputes.
- (3) Friedrich Nietzsche and Rudolf Carnap champion contrasting reactions to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes. While doing so, they both endorse, but interpret differently an overcoming metametaphysics characterized by three metametaphysical normative claims:
 - (3-i) An overcoming of metaphysics is to be performed.
 - (3-ii) This overcoming is to be performed by adopting a method of linguistic analysis that is suspicious of the metaphysical use of language and interprets such use through a different use of language that aims to avoid metaphysics.
 - (3-iii) This overcoming is to contribute to the political task of resisting “diseased” metaphysical practices and promoting “healthy” non-metaphysical ones.
- (4) The contrast between Nietzsche’s libertarian and Carnap’s egalitarian reaction is to be considered, not only by the few scholars who are interested in both of these philosophers’ works, but by a far larger group of philosophers that includes: those who have addressed the continental-analytic gap; those who are

concerned with the development of the history of 20th and 21st century philosophy; and/or those who are interested in the works of the likes of Foucault, Derrida, Lewis and/or van Inwagen

- (5) One is to do a synthesis of Nietzsche's libertarian and Carnap's egalitarian reaction to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes.
- (6) There is no undeniable metaphysical claim, but a properly dogmatic "subtle" violence.
- (7) Disputes are micro-political conflicts analogous to macro-political conflicts, that is, they are micro-wars.
- (8) There has been a right-wing allegedly apolitical approach to disputes that, perhaps, avoids the properly dogmatic "subtle" violence, but still expresses the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence.
- (9) The properly dogmatic and the pseudo non-dogmatic "subtle" violence are to be avoided.
- (10) A left-wing political practice of politicization that deals with micro-wars by avoiding the properly dogmatic and the pseudo-non-dogmatic "subtle" violence is to be pursued as an alternative to the right-wing allegedly apolitical approach.
- (11) The left-wing political practice of politicization is to be prudently pursued in a metamodernist way as opposed to a modernist way.
- (12) This very dissertation illustrates how one can do so.

Now I will use the rest of this conclusion to make a case for one more claim, to reply to two opponents of mine and to indicate how I plan to continue my research from now on.

7.2 The Incommensurable Greatness of Disputes

The claim I have in mind is the thirteenth and last claim of the system of disputes:

- (13) Disputes have an incommensurable greatness.

I claim that disputes have a greatness, as indicated in 1.5, in the sense that, since immemorial times, persons have deeply cared about disputes in being strongly emotionally compelled to spend a considerable amount of their lives' times in addressing disputes. Indeed, nothing indicates that persons will cease to do so in the future. Hence, I tend to agree with Immanuel Kant when he, in his 1783 *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, observes: "that the human mind would someday entirely give up metaphysical investigations is just as little expected, as that we would someday gladly stop all breathing so as never to take in impure air".⁴⁶⁷ As also stated in 1.5, the greatness I consider is of an incommensurable kind. This incommensurability occurs because no common unit of measurement to quantify over this greatness seems obtainable; it seems impossible to measure persons' overall "amount" of emotions and/or time spent in dealing with disputes.

All the philosophers mentioned in this dissertation attest to (13). More precisely, a quite basic observation of these philosophers' writings indicates that all of them have deeply cared about disputes in being strongly emotionally compelled to spend a considerable amount of the time of their lives in addressing disputes. So, (13) is the least controversial claim of the system of disputes. Surprisingly, though, this claim has been very rarely defended. What contemporary analytic philosophers have often done, instead, has been to engage themselves on what may be called the inflationist-deflationist dispute.

This is the dispute on whether disputes are important, or, to put in my terms, have a greatness, insofar as they are analogous to the disagreements of the empirical scientists and/or mathematicians. Willard Van Orman Quine, David Lewis, Theodore Sider and Timothy Williamson have pointed to this direction, whereas the likes of Eli Hirsch and

⁴⁶⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics: With Selection from the Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Gary Hatfield, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004: (4:367).

Amie Thomasson have indicated otherwise.⁴⁶⁸ For the latter, what is the case is that disputes (or at least some of them, such as the one on whether ordinary objects, like tables and chairs, exist) are merely verbal quarrels. Such quarrels would have occurred due to philosophers' inability to apply the very rules of ordinary languages, such as English. Disputes, then, could be "easily" solved, that is, all philosophers would have to do to solve them would be to apply the rules of English correctly. Yet, over the last more than 2000 years of history of metaphysics, philosophers would have not realized this simple solution.

I emphasize that it is not my aim to address the views of Hirsch or Thomasson in detail.⁴⁶⁹ What I provide, to paraphrase Hirsch, is merely a "short rebuttal": that the fact that deflationists' views have not been unanimously accepted not even by the quite narrow community of philosophers they care to mention in their writings —that is, basically, the community of those who share the particular identities these philosophers have in common with Quine, Saul Kripke and Kit Fine and that were discussed in 5.2 —is, arguably, sufficient reason for the claim that the very way they apply the expression "ordinary language" or "English" is not at all "ordinary" and, consequently, is ultimately another overly imperfect justificatory resource unable to establish an "easy" solution.⁴⁷⁰

As indicated in 1.1 and 5.2, I suspend judgement on whether disputes are analogous to the disagreements of empirical scientists and/or mathematicians. Thus, I also suspend judgement on the inflationist-deflationist dispute. Yet, it is worth to mention that those

⁴⁶⁸ Willard Van Orman Quine, *Word and Object*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1960; David Lewis, *Philosophical Papers: Volume I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983; *On the Plurality of Worlds*, MA, Blackwell, 1986; Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, MA, Blackwell, 2007; Theodore Sider, *Writing the Book of the World*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance and Realism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; and Amie L. Thomasson, *Ontology Made Easy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.

⁴⁶⁹ I addressed Hirsch's view in detail in Felipe G. A. Moreira, "An Apology of Carnap", *Manuscripto* (Unicamp), Vol 37, Número 2, 2014: pp.261-289.

⁴⁷⁰ Eli Hirsch, *Quantifier Variance*, pp. 42.

engaged in this dispute seem to sometimes rely on a quite problematic presupposition that, as indicated in 2.1, Carnap and other logical positivists constantly suggested. I call it the overly scientific-driven presupposition according to which the very criterion to assess the greatness or the lack of greatness of disputes is whether they are analogous to the disagreements of empirical scientists, mathematicians and/or logicians. I reject this presupposition. I do so under the basis that this is another sign of Carnap's overly egalitarian stance already criticized in 3.2. As also indicated in 2.1, Carnap presupposes that consensus is more valuable than dissensus. So, given that scientists, mathematicians and logicians would have reached more consensus than metaphysicians, Carnap suggests that the former's disagreements would be more valuable than the disputes of the latter. On my part, I claim that Carnap's view here seems, once again, quite "naïve". To rely once more on a conflictual-use of intuitive-talk, his view strikes me as being "counter-intuitive".

Consider the macro-political conflicts addressed above, that is, the Charlottesville-conflict and the immigration-conflict. What basic observation shows is that the macro-right-wingers and macro-left-wingers involved in these conflicts have reached no consensus. Indeed, consider several other macro-political conflicts, such as: whether there is to be a state of Israel; whether the USA is to continue to intervene in the Middle-East; whether the UK is to leave the European Union; whether Brazil's former president, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, is to be released from jail; etc. Basic observation attests that no consensus has been reached on such matters. This factor, though, has not been taken as a reason for claiming that macro-political conflicts are unimportant. What seems quite evident is that the opposite is the case; that these conflicts also have an incommensurable greatness of their own, regardless of persons' inability to reach an agreement on them.

My view is that the same is the case with micro-political conflicts, that is, disputes; these micro-wars have an incommensurable greatness due to the very fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in them, regardless of their inability to convince their others or to simply cease to care about their opponents' views, as Friedrich Nietzsche sometimes proposes (see 2.1). In fact, I am inclined to think that, as indicated in 4.3, the power to engage oneself in such disputes may even be a broad condition for personhood. This is to state that all persons have been more or less irresistibly drawn toward disputes and that, consequently, perhaps, it is not too exaggerated to even claim that to reject their greatness is almost to reject the greatness of person's lives themselves.

Let me underline, then, that I am quite aware that this very dissertation will be unable to convince all of my opponents. Accordingly, to put it metaphorically and to paraphrase Albert Camus, all that I take myself to be able to do is "to imagine myself as a happy Sisyphus".⁴⁷¹ This is someone who, in relying on all sorts of imperfect justificatory resources, pursues a singular health of one's own. What I mean is that this person is a conflictual crafter who, while proposing a criterion to deal with disputes (e.g., accordance with the left-wing political practice of politicization), pushes a rock up a hill and endorses several claims, such as (1) to (13), regardless of others who will likely push this rock down the hill once again. Now, before I let these others start to do so, I would like to make some final remarks in addressing two of these others, while further underlying that my likely inability to convince them does not problematize (13), that, indeed, the fact that I, myself, seek to act in agreement with the will to synthesis in feeling irresistibly inclined to seek consensus as well as to provoke dissensus with opponents is further evidence of (13).

⁴⁷¹ "One must imagine Sisyphus happy", Camus states in concluding in his essay. See Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus: And Other Essays*, New York, First Vintage International Edition, 1991; pp. 123.

7.3 Last Replies to Two Others of Mine

The first other I have in mind is the hardcore skeptic mentioned in 1.3. This is someone who, given that skeptics cannot explicitly defend claims, limits oneself to insinuate that to have a barely justified or ultimately arbitrary stance is just as rationally appealing as having a justified and non-arbitrary stance; someone who insinuates that to attempt and fail to be an “*isentão*” is just as rationally appealing as to not do so. Hence, a hardcore skeptic would insinuate that the right-wing approach to disputes is just as appealing as the left-wing one defended here; that to express the properly dogmatic or the pseudo-non-dogmatic “subtle” violence is just as pertinent as attempting to avoid doing so. Now imagine that this hardcore skeptic is also a quite influential philosopher; one who has published extensively in all sorts of respected journals, is the chair of a distinguished department, the editor of a respected journal and/or works in an important academic press.

Imagine that this skeptic is confronted with a practical dispute. The dispute is to accept into a graduate program, publish a paper or a book, invite to give a talk and/or hire as a faculty member either one of two candidates. The first candidate is someone who, like me, addresses and supports (1) through (13), while articulating the left-wing political practice of politicization. The second candidate is someone who takes oneself to be politically neutral, while more or less unconsciously championing the right-wing political practice of depoliticization, say, in dealing with issues micro-right-wingers have focused on, such as the analytic-synthetic distinction. Imagine that, in relying on the skeptic craft and seeking to achieve tranquility, this skeptic suspends judgment on (1) through (13). The hardcore skeptic also suspends judgement on any claims defended by the micro-right-winger. Indeed, this skeptic feels that the reasons for benefiting either one of the two

candidates are equally rationally persuasive; that both philosophers have articulated equally valuable works. Nevertheless, similar to the skeptics addressed in 1.3., this skeptic still needs to act, that is, the skeptic needs to: decide which candidate is to be accepted into the graduate program, published, invited to give a talk, and/or hired as a faculty member; attempt to find funding to accept into the graduate program, publish, invite to give a talk and/or hire both candidates; indefinitely postpone any decision; simply refuse to decide; decide to leave the decision to someone else, say, another faculty member; etc.

Accordingly, in having a barely justified or even arbitrary stance, imagine that the hardcore skeptic fails to be a “*isentão*” by ultimately acting in a micro-politically engaged way. More importantly, consider that this way benefits either the micro-left-winger *or* the micro-right-winger, say, under the basis that the former *or* the latter ultimately has a more “relevant” work that runs more in alliance with the philosophical purposes of the skeptic’s department, journal and/or publishing company. Note that this hardcore skeptic insinuates that there is nothing wrong about this attitude; that it seems that to aim and, however, to ultimately fail to be a “*isentão*” is just as rationally persuasive as to not do so. On my part, for the time being, my last reply to this hardcore skeptic is of a dual sort.

On the one hand, if the hardcore skeptic, practically speaking, ultimately benefits the micro-left-wing candidate, I do not think that the dispute on the differences between his skeptic’s position and my own are worth pursuing. What I mean is that this skeptic is such a minor opponent of mine that I am willing to treat him as an ally for all practical matters and, indeed, there is not much more that a conflictual crafter can wish for from an opponent insofar as disputes are at stake. On the other hand, if the hardcore skeptic, practically speaking, ultimately benefits the micro-right-wing candidate, my only reply is

to repeat all the points made over the last two chapters. This is to state that, for all practical purposes, it is hard to see why this hardcore skeptic's stance would be significantly distinct from those of micro-right-wingers, whose views I have problematized in seeking to pressure them to change their practices and who are likely to reply harshly to me.

What I mean is that I expect micro-right-wingers to proceed as they have always done by: making it hard for me to continue to spend time in dealing with disputes from a left-wing perspective in practically benefiting those who, like themselves, champion allegedly apolitical, but actually micro-right-wing approaches to disputes; rejecting that they are micro-right-wingers and insisting that they are micro-politically neutral; mocking the terms (e.g., "metamodernism") that I have adopted just like they have done with terms adopted by German or French philosophers who, nonetheless, they often do not mention in their writings; using the "subtle" violence of denying that they have used "subtle" violence just like macro-right-wingers have denied that they have used violence; claiming that, in identifying and criticizing this "subtle" violence of theirs, I am actually the one who is being violent just like macro-right-wingers have argued that black-skinned people who have criticized racist practices are actually racists or that women who have problematized sexist practices are the ones who are actually sexists; suggesting that I have misapplied the rules of ordinary language, regardless of the fact that analytic philosophers have never agreed on what exactly are the rules of such language in the first place; speaking in the name of simplistic notions of "science" and/or "scientific" standards while suggesting that I have violated such standards; insisting (usually, while raising their voices in seeking to intimidate) that their claims are undeniable metaphysical ones insofar as they, indeed, run in accordance with a intuition of theirs; etc. What I mean is that I am aware of traditional

right-wing moves; they all strike me as overly imperfect justificatory resources that, ultimately, are unable to establish persuasive claims. In other words, micro-right-wingers may convince one another, but they do not convince me; hopefully, others, especially those who are more inclined toward left-wing approaches to macro-conflicts, are also unconvinced by micro-right-wingers and will join me in showing resistance to them.

The second other of mine I would like to address, then, is the one who may be called the hardcore right-winger. This is a philosopher who agrees that one's practices are micro-right-wing ones but insists that this is not a negative aspect. The reason, the hardcore right-winger believes, is that, indeed, macro-right approaches to macro-conflicts, such as those of the Southern and the Parisian right-winger, are better than those of macro-left-wingers. Indeed, the macro-right-winger takes that Donald Trump has been a better president than Barack Obama; that Jair Bolsonaro is also very likely to be a better president than Lula, etc. Now note that most contemporary analytic philosophers working on metaphysics are similar to Saul Kripke and Kit Fine.⁴⁷² This is so insofar as they have exclusively addressed disputes, without mentioning their views on macro-political conflicts. Hence, I do not wish to identify the hardcore right-winger's view to that of any contemporary analytic philosopher working on metaphysics. Perhaps, one could do so with Quine's view, but, given that he refrains from dealing with macro-political conflicts in detail, this move would also be a problematic one. Yet, I think that the view of the hardcore right-winger is to be addressed. Indeed, I am inclined to believe that it is more coherent to be an upfront hardcore right-winger than to take oneself to be micro-politically neutral, while, nonetheless, spending a significant amount of the time of one's life in benefiting micro-right wingers.

⁴⁷² Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*; and Kit Fine "Essence and Modality", in *Philosophical Perspectives* Vol. 8: 1994: pp.1-16.

Notice that the hardcore right-winger is, so to speak, the deepest of my deep opponents. Hence, this person poses the hardest challenge to my view. This takes place because, while embracing problematic starting points of one's own, the hardcore right-winger simply rejects mine, such as my reasons for endorsing (5); for taking that one is to attempt to maximize one's individualistic as well as communitarian tendencies in being in accordance with the will to synthesis; for being strongly inclined to believe that to privilege empathy over self-defense is "healthier" (if not "ethically" superior) than to do otherwise; that there simply is something "sick" about conservatives who overprivileged self-defense in detriment of empathy; etc. Accordingly, I do not think that I can actually convince the hardcore right-winger. We simply embrace radically distinct problematic starting points and, hence, cannot really "refute" one another. All we can do is to struggle with each other.

Analogously, I tend to think that the same is the case with Jesus and Julius Caesar; the Southern left-winger and the Southern right-winger; the Parisian left-winger and the Parisian right-winger; Obama and Trump; Lula and Bolsonaro; etc. What these people have done has been to struggle with one another while seeking to convince their respective opponents to drop their practices, regardless of their likely impossibility of doing so in a way that would permanently settle the issue. While recognizing the hardcore right-winger as a legitimate rational peer of mine, what I have done here in a micro-level is the same.

7.4 Hegel and Toward an Object-Level Metaphysics

Throughout this dissertation, I have used the conflictual craft to back up (1) through (13). These claims are all metametaphysical ones. Moreover, this dissertation has focused on the micro-politics of metaphysics. Accordingly, I have been neutral on object-level claims, such as those that God, human and physicalist-driven philosophers have constantly

discussed: respectively, there is evil, there is a thing-in-itself or there is consciousness. In following Carnap and (in my reading proposed in 2.4) Nietzsche, I have likewise been neutral on whether any kind of realism, such as those of God-driven philosophers and physicalist ones, trumps any kind of idealism of the likes proposed by human-driven philosophers. Currently, though, I am not sure that neutralism is the most persuasive position, especially vis-à-vis a view that promotes a synthesis of realism and idealism.

The synthesis I have in mind is one that, to begin with, would bring to light the problematic starting points (already briefly discussed in 3.3) of realist and idealist views, instead of presupposing them. Furthermore, this synthesis would problematize realism by means of idealism and vice-versa so that the shortcomings of these views would be avoided. Finally, this synthesis would aim to maintain the positive aspects of realistic as well as of idealistic views in, perhaps, backing up a human-yet-physicalist-driven approach of the sort tentatively suggested by Nietzsche and, sometimes, Carnap, as indicated in 2.2 and 2.4. I tend to think that the works of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, especially his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, indicate how this synthesis can be done insofar as Hegel points toward a deviant (neither exactly realistic nor exactly idealist) concept of God.⁴⁷³ This concept is that *God is the identity between identity and non-identity*. Note that this concept deserves to be called a deviant one because it does not imply what, arguably, in Hegel's view was implied by practically all other concepts of God distinct from his: that God is some sort of "alien" natural force or self-conscious agent that commands persons to perform certain practices, regardless of whether they freely will do to so.

⁴⁷³ Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: Vol 1, 2 and 3*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

In the future, then, I may address Hegel's works much more carefully than I have done here, say, in translating his apparently paradoxical statements, such as *God is the identity between identity and non-identity*, into claims that are less likely to allow the obscurity objection to arise. In doing so, I likewise may investigate whether my conflictual craft also serves to expand the metametaphysical system of disputes into a much more ambitious system. To put it metaphorically, this more ambitious system I have in mind would be a much less humble home and, perhaps, even a "monumental" one built with object-level metaphysical claims bricks. More precisely, here is what I consider doing.

I think about addressing a practical question distinct from the one focused on here, that is, how is one to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, persons have been engaged in disputes? The distinct practical question I have in mind runs as follows: how is one to react to the fact that, likewise since immemorial times, some persons have embraced the claim, "I must perform a practice because a God commands me to do so"? Henceforth, I will refer to this claim as (G). (G) deserves to be called a barely responsible claim because this claim suggests that the reason one must perform a practice does not lie in the fact that one freely wills to do so, but, rather, in the fact that an "alien" natural force or self-conscious agent imposes itself upon the agent in commanding the agent to do so. Also note that those who have embraced this barely responsible claim fall into at least three groups.

First, the groups of political leaders, such as George W. Bush, Brazil's current president, Jair Messias Bolsonaro, and Islamic terrorists of the likes of Osama bin Laden. Second, the groups of all kinds of ordinary believers, such as Buddhists, Hinduists, Jews, Christians, Muslims, etc. Third, (G) has also been endorsed by these religions' scriptural figures. By this, I understand a person whose existence beyond such texts is considerably

challengeable, given that in such texts, the person is described as having done extremely remarkable deeds that ordinary people are unable to perform. For instance, the patriarchs of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions, such as Abraham, are scriptural figures.

Physicalist-driven philosophers and human ones have constantly presupposed a dismissivist response or explicitly championed an eliminativist one to the stated distinct practical question, that is, how is one to react to the fact that, since immemorial times, some persons have embraced (G)? The dismissivist response is that one is to ignore those who endorse (G) and/or make any appeal to any concept of God, regardless of political leaders' use of (G); the fact that ordinary believers are the majority of the population and that such believers assume that scriptural figures existed. The eliminativist response may be attributed to David Hume, William K. Clifford, Nietzsche and, more recently, Daniel Dennett and Richard Dawkins.⁴⁷⁴ This response is that one is to quite explicitly pressure those who embrace (G) to stop doing so, say, by arguing that appeals to any concept of God are rationally unjustified unscientific superstitions, and/or even signs of disease.⁴⁷⁵

I have been satisfied with the dismissivist and the eliminativist response. I not sure, though, whether I still am. Thus, I may investigate whether a third response trumps the dismissivist and the eliminativist one. I call it the revisionist response: that one is to react

⁴⁷⁴ David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007; William K. Clifford, *The ethics of belief and other essays*, New York, Prometheus Books, 1999; Daniel Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon*, New York, Penguin Books, 2006; and Richard Dawkins, "Viruses of the Mind", in Bo Dahlbom (ed.), *Dennett and his Critics*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1993.

⁴⁷⁵ To attribute this response to Carnap is more problematic. In his *Autobiography*, he states the following: "at the present stage of development of our culture, many people still need religious mythological symbols and images. It seems to be wrong to try to deprive [believers] of the support they obtain from these ideas, let alone to ridicule them". On the other hand, Carnap also claims that "an entirely different matter is the question of theology, here understood as a system of doctrines in distinction to a system of valuation and prescriptions for life [...] I came in my philosophical development first to the insight that the main statements of traditional metaphysics are outside the realm of science and irrelevant for scientific knowledge, and later to the more radical conviction that they are devoid of any cognitive content. Since that time I have been convinced that the same holds for most of the statements of contemporary Christian theology". See IAB 7-8.

to the fact that, since immemorial times, some persons have embraced (G), by articulating a deviant concept of God. An inclination of mine is that, in problematizing the views of God-driven philosophers, Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* point to this direction in also promoting a deviant concept of responsible agent. Arguably, Hegel's concept is that a responsible agent is one that performs an action that is simultaneously (in a libertarian way) willed by what is singular about oneself and (in an egalitarian way) beneficial to a really universal community. This concept deserves to be called a deviant one because it does not imply what traditional notions of responsible agent seem to have implied: that a responsible agent is simply one who acts in accordance with one's own free will. I also tend to read that, for Hegel, to act as a responsible agent (in his sense) is to act in accordance with what God (also in Hegel's sense) commands one to do.

Note that interpreters of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, such as Jon Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson, have mainly focused on the exegetical task of proposing a persuasive reading of Hegel.⁴⁷⁶ However, such interpreters have not discussed whether Hegel's deviant concepts of God and responsible agent are persuasive ones for contemporary philosophers, such as those who embrace the dismissivist or the eliminativist response. This is to state that works that compare these two responses with Hegel's revisionist response are largely lacking. Hence, I may want to fill this gap in the future by pursuing three objectives. First, to articulate an interpretation of Hegel that spells out his alternative concepts of God and responsible agent in a way that may be lacking in Hegel's literature. Second, to address the advantages and the (arguably, dogmatic and colonial)

⁴⁷⁶ Peter C. Hodgson, *Hegel's Christian Theology: A Reading of the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religions*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005; and Jon Stewart, *Hegel's Interpretations of the Religions of the World: The Logic of the Gods*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018.

shortcomings of Hegel's revisionist response vis-à-vis the dismissivist and the eliminativist response as well as my Deleuze's left-wing approach to micro-wars. The third objective would be to articulate new deviant concepts of God as well as of responsible agent; that is, new concepts of my own that, perhaps, would be respectively closely connected with this dissertation's notions of "will to synthesis" and "artist of micro-wars"; new concepts that would likewise keep the advantages but avoid the shortcomings of Hegel's philosophy, such as its defense of a strong notion of philosophical progress briefly discussed and problematized throughout the fourth chapter as well as his, arguably, dogmatic and colonial reading of Pyrrho's reaction to his others: the aforementioned bare wise persons.

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