



# C R I T I Q U E

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*ISSUE 8 : META-PHILOSOPHY*

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## EDITORIAL

A curious feature of 9 a.m. lectures is, besides causing an immense desire to sleep, one naturally questions the value and practice of philosophy. In other words, meta-philosophical pursuits. If at least one tenet of philosophy is "Be Critical", it seems inevitable philosophy questions itself. In this issue of Critique we bring you three papers on the this topic of meta-philosophy.

Nicholas Burbach explores the differences between Kierkegaard and Badiou's reading of St.Paul's Christian ethics and argues for their fundamental incompatibility. Niall Roe examines the proper subject matter of philosophy and the role of instinct in philosophical investigation through the works of C.S Pierce. An argument for philosophy to only be concerned with metaphysics and logic and to give instinct no weight in deciding truth is made. Chris Blake-Turner urges us to remember the importance of humility and context in comparing philosophical practices across cultures by presenting numerous examples of faulty exogenous explanations of Indian Syllogism.

In this issue we were fortunate enough to include an interview of Dr. Armin Schulz from LSE on the philosophy of biology and general philosophical practice. In addition announcements for the very first Durham Philosophical Society Conference and upcoming talks can be found near the back of Critique. We hope you enjoy this issue.

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*Jason B. Zhao*  
Editor

## Kierkegaard's Teleological Suspension Of The Ethical And The Break From Pauline Ethical Universalism

*Nicolas Burbach*

Alain Badiou analyses the writings of Paul and discerns an interplay of discourse which involves subscribing to an individuated subjective discourse of faith underpinning an equally subjective, yet universal, ethical discourse. Conversely, in *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard formulates the doctrine of the "Teleological Suspension of the Ethical". In this, God subjectifies ethical discourse within a subjective, individual discourse of faith. In this essay, I argue that the position of ethics presented in the teleological suspension of the ethical represents a fundamental shift from Pauline subjective ethical universalism to an individuated subjectivism, and thus a break

from Christianity as a whole.

Badiou argues that Paul presents Christianity as a rupturing of two dominant and antithetical "regimes of discourse". These discourses were the Greek, "cosmic" discourse, and the Jewish, "exceptional" discourse. The conflict between these discourses is over methods for interpreting the world. The Greek discourse was embodied in a totemic identification with the "wise man". This was a person in possession of wisdom: an internal state characterised by the apprehension of the nature of the world. In contrast, the Jewish discourse was comprised of a number of signs. Firstly, the Jewish people were signs of

God, signifying the transcendent. Secondly, they were miraculous, selected and delivered by God. Thirdly, they were an election, anointed as God's chosen people. These signs were revealed through the Jewish prophetic tradition, a prophet being a person who can interpret these signs. The discourse is "exceptional" because the transcendental reality referenced by these signs, and thus the knowledge of the world entailed by these signs, is inaccessible to those outside of that prophetic tradition, and it is this inaccessibility which characterises the Jewish identity.

For Paul, both of these discourses are inadequate for the expression of the Christ event. Firstly, the Jewish discourse is entirely dependent upon the existence of the Greek discourse in order to maintain its exceptionality. What is Greek is not Jewish, and what is Jewish is not Greek. Therefore, what is expressed in either cannot be framed in the other. Compounding this, they both base the key to salvation (or the actualising of their respective totemic identifications) within the world.

Transcending the dialectic would require the stepping into a realm of shared discourse. However, in order for this realm of discourse to be intelligible, it would have to be grounded in the world; the very arena of conflict. As such, there can be no transcending of the dialectic from within either as this would involve stepping beyond the bounds of their respective vocabularies. As such, the universal Christian message cannot be expressed in the language of either. The scope of each is too intrinsically limited.<sup>1</sup>

As a consequence, the Christian message must be framed within a new discourse. This is achieved through the character of the *apostle*. The apostle announces the resurrection of Christ as "pure event": no proof is needed, and none is given. The apostle, in his foolishness and absurdity, thus ruptures the Greek discourse by being the very opposite of the 'wise man'. Similarly, the Jewish discourse is ruptured through the presentation of the crucified Christ as

<sup>1</sup> Badiou, A. (2003). *St. Paul: the Foundation of Universalism*, translated by Ray Brassier. California: Stanford University Press. p.42

God: in this, God becomes a sign of weakness, not the almighty elector, deliverer, and creator of meaning of the Jewish tradition.<sup>2</sup> This new, universal third discourse is then underpinned by a fourth, unspoken one: that of “glorification”. This is the non-language of the miracle, the “unutterable utterances” (*arrhēta rhēmata*) experienced by the subject of a miracle – such as Christ’s appearance to Paul on the road to Damascus. It is the Lacanian Other, comprised of the power fulfilled in the weakness of Christ. It can never be addressed without lapsing back into the Jewish discourse of the sign, nor can it be used as ‘proof’ of Christian truth without lapsing back into the Greek discourse.<sup>3</sup> Christianity is thus composed of the paradoxical holding of two discourses: the public, universal third discourse, and the miraculous fourth, radically subjective through its inexpressibility in public language. The universal third discourse is thus ultimately subjective due to its foundations

2 *ibid.* p.44-46

3 *ibid.* p.51-53

in the fourth. Kierkegaard’s teleological suspension of the ethical also represents a shift in discourse. For Kierkegaard, the Abrahamic myth illustrates shift. He discerns two discourses in which Abraham’s actions can be assessed: the ethical, in the language of which Abraham was willing to murder Isaac; and the religious, in which he was willing to *sacrifice* him.<sup>4</sup> It is this shift in vocabulary that distinguishes the two, and he argues that it is in the discourse of the religious that Abraham’s actions should be evaluated.

For Kierkegaard, the ethical universalises, subordinating and erasing the individual in the face of divine authority.<sup>5</sup> The duty of the ethical is thus duty to God.<sup>6</sup> However, in agreeing to sacrifice Isaac in complete contravention of what can be publically justified in the universal language of the ethical, Abraham adopts a new discourse: that of the religious.

4 Kierkegaard, S. (1985). *Fear and Trembling: Dialectical Lyric* by Johannes de Silentio, translated by Alastair Hannay. London: Penguin Books. p.60

5 *ibid.* p.83

6 *ibid.* p.96

This new discourse transcends the universal language of the ethical, and is thus radically individuated.<sup>7</sup> The result of this shift is the reframing of the ethical in the language of the religious: the universal is entirely subjectified by the individuated discourse of faith. When Abraham agreed to kill Isaac, it was because it was his ethical duty. However, this was inexpressibly so because this duty was mediated through the religious, transforming the meaning of the act from murder to sacrifice within the framework of an individuated ethical. This mediation is total: it cannot be expressed in the public language of the ethical, because this would subject the private language of the religious discourse to the public language of the ethical.<sup>8</sup>

It is this subjectification of the ethical which puts Kierkegaard at odds with Badiou’s reading of Paul. For Paul, the example of Christ is central to Christian universalism in terms of the rupturing of Greek discourse in the

7 *ibid.* p.84

8 *ibid.* p.82-85

pure event of the crucifixion, and the rupturing of Jewish discourse in the weakness of Christ implied through the event. As such, the weakness of Christ is central to Christian discourse. This embracing of weakness and humility extends to Christian ethics, causing Nietzsche to characterise the Christian faith as “sacrifice”, “self-mockery” and “self-mutilation”. Christian ethical discourse is an expression of the central tenets of the third (Christian) discourse. Thus, like for Kierkegaard, they are in effect analogous to each other.

However, for Paul, the universal third discourse is entirely distinct from the individuated fourth: the very paradox of Christianity lies in the simultaneous holding of God’s weakness (the third discourse) and His strength (the fourth discourse). Any mediation of the fourth through the third turns it into argument (wisdom) or prophetic signification. Conversely, the third is intrinsically universal, and thus cannot be individuated through the discourse of the miraculous.

The incompatibility of Kierkegaard's doctrine with Paul's Christianity lies in this disjunction. In the teleological suspension of the ethical, the universal ethical becomes entirely mediated through the individuated religious. Furthermore, this individuation of the universal represents a resolution of the paradox at the heart of Paul's Christianity: the dual holding of the universal third and individuated fourth discourses. Through total mediation via the fourth discourse, the third discourse becomes entirely individuated, and therefore a constituent of the fourth. There is thus only one discourse: an individuated synthesis born out of the initial individual/universal dialectic. For Badiou's Paul, the ethical remains distinct and thus ultimately universal, despite its subjective underpinnings in the individual. However for Kierkegaard it becomes a function of the individual. This entails an abandonment of the ethical universalism characterising Pauline Christianity.

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## A Peircian Conception of Philosophy

Niall Roe

This paper will be a brief look at philosophy as defined by C.S. Peirce. Peirce was a prolific writer and, though markedly methodological, was fluid enough to change his mind throughout his career. Because of this, it would be difficult to give any succinct overview on his metaphilosophy. We will instead focus only on *Philosophy and the Conduct of Life*, the inaugural paper of an 1898 lecture series on logic and proper reasoning.<sup>1</sup> In this aptly titled paper Peirce discusses philosophy as an intellectual pursuit and its relationship to how we live our day-to-day lives. To do so he sets out to define phi-

losophy in order to tell us how it ought to be practiced. The main message Peirce intends to convey is that philosophy ought to be practiced without paying any mind to its practical implications and without being influenced by sentiment or instinct. The present paper will look at how Peirce's system hangs together, with an initial focus on elucidating what Peirce thinks philosophy is and how it ought to be done.

There are two basic points we will look at from *Philosophy and the Conduct of Life*. The first is that philosophy is a theoretical science. The second is that instinct has no part to play in the advancement of theoretical sci-

<sup>1</sup> C.S. Peirce, 'Philosophy and the Conduct of Life' in *The Peirce Edition Project* (ed.) *The Essential Peirce: Volume I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992) p. 26-41



ence. We will conclude the paper by looking at how philosophy can influence instinct even though the theoretical and the practical are to be sharply divided.

To see why philosophy is to be treated as a theoretical science we will look at how Peirce orders sciences. For Peirce, the more abstract the subject matter of a science the more fundamental position it is entitled to in the hierarchy.<sup>2</sup> The resulting structure is one that starts with mathematics and moves through philosophy into the physical and psychical sciences, which are further divided by the same criteria. Mathematics is completely separate from empirical fact and deals only with the manipulation of hypotheses, while philosophy, for Peirce, is defined by five features: Philosophy is (1) the search for real truth which (2) draws on experience for premises; it (3) concerns itself with both real and potential existence while (4) working with universal phenomena (rather than special facts—things like particular observa-

2 Ibid. 35

tions) so that (5) its conclusions may be considered necessary.<sup>3</sup> As such, philosophy is concerned with experience only insofar as it is common to everyone, and is considered more abstract than other science by studying potentiality. Peirce believes that if ethics means to define the aim of life it is neither universal nor abstract enough to be considered philosophy.<sup>4</sup> It is rather an applied science, like law, aesthetics, or, embarrassingly, blacksmithing.<sup>5</sup> Instead we ought to think of ethical questions as practical questions to be answered primarily by our instincts.

Having limited philosophy to the mentioned characteristics, Peirce determines that its subjects are logic and metaphysics, the former studying general laws and types of thinking, and the latter being.<sup>6</sup> These are theoretic-

3 Ibid. 35

4 Ibid. 36; Peirce later includes Esthetics, which he considers to be the study of what is admirable in itself, and Practics, the study of the conformity of action to an ideal, into the 'normative sciences' alongside logic. (A Syllabus of Certain Topics of Logic, The Basis of Pragmatism in the Normative Sciences)

5 Ibid. 37

6 Ibid. 36,

cal, as logic is grounded in mathematics and metaphysics ought to be grounded in logic. This is because, while the premises of metaphysics arise out of experience, their truth cannot be determined from experience.<sup>7</sup> And since the truth of these claims cannot be verified in experience, it seems as though, unless it is determined based on purely logical grounds, it is determined by the metaphysician's instinct leading him to decide that one line of reasoning is better than another. This, Peirce says, is no better than "adopt[ing] conclusions directly because [you] are impressed that they are true". The subject matter of philosophy, then, is limited to formal logic, a theory for the attainment of truth from premises, and metaphysics, determining the most general features of what is real by way of formal logic and general experience.<sup>8</sup> This makes the exercise of philoso-

7 Ibid. 31; Peirce puts it nicely in saying that a metaphysician inquiring about a life after death cannot hope to be certain that his inference is true until he is 'out of the metaphysical business'.

8 Ibid. 31; Formal logic is not just a method for moving through metaphysical problems, but has a more fundamental role in helping experience furnish it with concepts.

phy theoretical even though its initial grounding is empirical; it deals with abstractions from this grounding.

Having briefly established philosophy as a theoretical science, we now turn to why such sciences ought to be severed from the practical and the sentimental. The main point is one that Peirce illuminated over twenty years earlier in *The Fixation of Belief*: that the best way to reach the truth, and so the method for attaining knowledge, is to move through reason from experience.<sup>9</sup> This movement is hindered if the aim of a theoretical science is seen to be anything other than the truth. This is to say that if we only pursue science as we think it will prove beneficial we will be delaying the march to truth. This is not to say that scientific discoveries are not made while looking for utility or that discovering the truth would not be in any way useful, rather it is to say that if we only study things in propor-

9 C.S. Peirce, 'On the Fixation of Belief' in N.Houser, C.Kloesel (eds.) *The Essential Peirce: Volume 1* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992) p. 110-124

tion to how immediately practical they seem we will be cutting ourselves off from a broader range of inquiry.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, science only concerns itself with premises as they are used to establish a conclusion. As soon as there is a reason for doubting a premise it can be thrown out and replaced with one that better fits the facts. However, it does not seem as though beliefs grounded on sentiment are likely to receive the same treatment. If you hold a belief because you like to, it will receive special treatment when evidence suggests it ought to be removed. This slows the process of the scientific method, and, since sentiments can be capricious, can also lead it astray. This is not to say that intuitions are to be completely thrown out the window; instead they should be treated merely as suggestions whose value is decided upon by reason alone.<sup>11</sup> Now we turn to the other side of the coin. We have just talked about the place for instinct in scientific pursuits; we will now turn to the place of

reason in practical pursuits.

When making practical decisions reason is the slave of the passions. We should think this for two reasons. The first is that we often think ourselves more reasonable than we are—we tend to give reason too big of a place in our day-to-day lives. We often believe ourselves to be acting on the basis of some sort of deduction when really we have just found some sort of syllogism that seems to fit with the way we choose to act.<sup>12</sup> This is evidenced by asking ethical questions. Our disinclination to praise those who sleep with their children or murder their friends is not based on the fact that these people fail to provide their logical influences—we react to and assess such actions instinctually. The second and main point, that reason seems not to influence practical decisions, is made clear by the same example. If those who murder or engage in incestuous relationships *do* provide their syllogisms we do not change our feelings. Instead we move along

the lines of the first point: we ascribe reason as being the driving force behind their actions and then say that their reasoning was faulty, all the while acting from instinct.

So far we have swept quickly over the following ideas: that philosophy is a theoretical science concerned with metaphysics and logic; theoretical sciences ought to be moved by reason alone; practical or ethical decisions are made through instinct. We will now turn briefly to the positive side of the relationship between philosophy and instinct. Peirce tells us that sciences tend to become more abstract as they develop: ancient medicine has developed into physiology, we have moved from the steam engine to thermodynamics.<sup>13</sup> This movement to abstraction is a movement towards the pure and, so far as it follows the scientific method, the true: the discovery of which seems so much more important than the answers to practical questions. However, Peirce also stresses that instinct,

“the substance of the soul [of which] cognition is only its surface”, cannot be influenced except by what passes through this surface.<sup>14</sup> This means to say that sentiment is inclined to develop along similar lines to cognition and be partial to its developments.

As science progresses it lends what it has learned to the everyday values. As such, philosophy is not concerned with the conduct of life; to be so would be a hindrance to its necessarily reasonable development. It also cannot include ethics. However, the conduct of life, ethical and otherwise, is allowed to grow through the development of philosophy and the sciences surrounding it. Such is Peirce’s conclusion.

<sup>10</sup> *Philosophy and the Conduct of Life*, 34

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 32

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 32

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 39

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 31,41

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## There is Fire on the Hill: The Ramifications of Trying to Understand the 'Indian Syllogism'

*Chris Blake-Turner*

Comparing the philosophical practices of different cultures and societies is of real value, but it must be done with care.<sup>1</sup> A case study that will shed light both on the value to be gained and the care to be taken is the 'Indian syllogism', a five-step form of inference used by many philosophical schools in Indian and Indian-influenced areas, which aims at deriving a true conclusion from true premises (Schayer, 1933: 103).<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the syllogism<sup>3</sup> has a long

history of being misinterpreted by European commentators.<sup>4</sup> After outlining the syllogism, along with an endogenous explanation,<sup>5</sup> that is, one given in the inference's own tradition, I will give two instances of exogenous attempts to understand it, and suggest that they fail. Efforts to understand the syllogism give rise to three important metaphysical considerations: (i) we should not assume that other philosophical practices reduce to our own; (ii) we should take seriously the way a tradition interprets its own practice, and the context in which it takes place; (iii) we should remember that our own philosophical

1 I am concerned here with comparing different philosophical practices to one's own, but similar points can be made with respect to comparing two unfamiliar practices.

2 I will use the term 'Indian syllogism' since it is prevalent in the literature, but, as will become clear from what follows, it is not intended to imply a link to an Aristotelian syllogism.

3 'Syllogism' unqualified henceforth refers to the Indian syllogism.

4 For a survey, see Ganeri (2001a).

5 For reasons of scope, this essay focuses on the syllogism in a Nyāya context.



practices are the products of a variety of contingent historical and socio-cultural factors, and be mindful of inbuilt and unjustified prejudices.<sup>6</sup>

### The syllogism and an endogenous explanation

The stock example of the syllogism infers fire on a hill from the presence of smoke (Matilal, 1990: 2-5)<sup>7</sup>:

- (1) Thesis (*pratijñā*): There is fire on the hill.
- (2) Reason (*hetu*): Because of smoke.
- (3) Exemplification (*udāharana*): Wherever there is smoke, there is fire, as in the kitchen.<sup>8</sup>
- (4) Application (*upanaya*): Like in the kitchen, the hill has smoke.
- (5) Conclusion (*nigamana*): There is fire on the hill.

6 This is not to endorse a radical relativism: we can still aim at The Truth, but only from a particular standpoint.

7 Cf. *Tarka-Samgraha* V.9 (henceforth 'TS' followed by 'chapter.verse:[pages of commentary]'; see Annarnbhatta (1994) for bibliographical details).

8 For reasons of scope, only positive example instances (*sapakṣas*) are considered here, but see further Matilal (1998: 188-193).

The endogenous explanation of the inference is roughly as follows: the thesis establishes what is to be determined (*sādhya* – fire) and the subject (*pakṣa* – hill), or the place where the *sādhya* is located; the reason establishes the mark (*linga* – smoke); the exemplification establishes a universal relation of pervasion (*vyāpti*) between the *sādhya* and the *linga* and gives an example; the application establishes the presence of the *linga* in the *pakṣa*; and the conclusion shows what has been determined (TS V.9-14:95-104).<sup>9</sup> Thus, the presence of fire on the hill can be inferred from the presence of smoke, because fire pervades smoke, where 'X pervades Y' means that there are no instances of Y without X, though there may be instances of X without Y (Siderits, 2007: 96). It is worth noting that this is a coherent and sophisticated account of how the syllogism operates, and it can be augmented by a thorough analysis of what counts as a legitimate *linga* (Matilal, 1998: 188-196).

9 For a more technical analysis, see the Matilal's (1998: 209-214) "property-location" interpretation.

Given this, any attempt to understand the syllogism according to a radically different 'deep structure' needs to be seriously philosophically motivated.

### Aristotelian syllogism: a (bad) exogenous explanation

Early exogenous attempts to understand the syllogism identified it as an inelegant (at best) form of an Aristotelian syllogism (Müller, 1853; Randle, 1924). On this view, what the syllogism *should* say is:

- (6) All that smokes is fiery.
- (7) The mountain smokes.
- (8) *Therefore*, the mountain is fiery.<sup>10</sup>

If the Indian syllogism is reduced to an Aristotelian one, it seems that *upanaya* (application) and *nigamana* (conclusion) are both redundant, and the specific example in *udāharana* (exemplification),<sup>11</sup> 'as in the kitchen', is superfluous (Randle,

10 Cf. *All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal.*

11 I use 'example' for the specific instance, and 'exemplification' or *udāharana* to refer to the entire third step of the syllogism.

1924). The redundancy and superfluity claims are unfounded in each case. First, the five-membered Indian syllogism is embedded in the context of *vāda*, a practical dialogue between interlocutors (Ganeri, 2003: 34; Matilal, 1971: 127). Thus the syllogism is not for the benefit of its asserter, but for the person who hears (or reads) it, whom we shall call the 'recipient' of the inference (TS V.6-8). Consequently, despite being tokens of the same sentence type, *pratijñā* and *nigamana* have very different epistemic statuses for the recipient. . On hearing the *pratijñā*, the recipient might have no justification to believe its truth, but by the time she hears the *nigamana* she has been given a chain of reasoning to support it. Similarly, this essay begins and ends with the sentence "Comparing the philosophical practices of different cultures and societies is of real value, but it must be done with care", but (it is hoped) the latter instance is not simply redundant and to be done away with: by the time the reader has got there, the claim will not have

been merely stated, but also *supported*.

Second, *upanaya* is also not redundant. Up to the point of application it is established that there is fire on the hill and, with the aid of the example, that fire pervades smoke. To complete the inference it remains to be shown that this *vyāpti* occurs in the *pakṣa*, and this is exactly what *upanaya* does: since there is smoke on the hill, the hill is a place where the *vyāpti* obtains. It might be objected that the same effect could be achieved much more efficiently by including the *pakṣa* in the *hetu*, which would become something like:

(2\*) Because of smoke *on the hill*.  
*Upanaya* could then be left out altogether. But, even if this were so, it does not follow that it is redundant, since that would require being able to remove it from the inference without changing any of the other steps.

Third, the example is not superfluous since it both justifies the universal relation of *vyāpti*

between *sādhya* and *linga* (TS V.9: 97), and provides the inference with perceptual grounding. Nyāya solves the familiar problem of how universal principles can be derived from specific instances by the “perception of the generic attributes of fire and smoke” (TS V.7: 94). On its own, ‘Wherever there is smoke, there is fire’ is an unjustified generalisation, but the perception of *vyāpti* between two universals, or “generic attributes”, in the example legitimises the move from the particular to the general. Furthermore, in the Nyāya system, perception is “a foundation for rationality” (Ganeri, 2001b: 19), and so it must serve as a basis for the other means of knowledge (*pramānas*), including inference (*anumāna*). The example helps to meet this requirement of perceptual grounding. Consider the instance when the recipient of the inference cannot perceive the *linga* (smoke), *sādhya* (fire) or *pakṣa* (hill): how can her inferential knowledge that there is fire on the hill be grounded in perception? While her knowledge of the presence of the *linga*

or *sādhya* in the *pakṣa* will have to depend on second-hand perceptual reports, her knowledge of *vyāpti* will, if the inference is adequate, be grounded on her own past perceptual experience. This is because, as Matilal (1998: 186) points out, the example must be acceptable to both interlocutors, and so the recipient herself must have perceived *vyāpti* obtaining between smoke and fire in the kitchen.<sup>12</sup>

### Predicate logic: another (better but still bad) exogenous explanation

Clearly the way to understand the Indian syllogism is not as an Aristotelian one. With the advent of predicate logic, it became possible to see if the syllogism could be explained in first-order terms (Schayer, 1932-1933: 94; Ganeri, 2001a: 16):

(9) Fa [a is fiery]

(10) Sa [a is smoky]

(11)  $\forall x(Sx \rightarrow Fx)$  [For any x, if x is smoky, then x is fiery]

12 This assumes that the recipient will not accept an example that she herself does not know to be grounded in experience.

(12) Sa  $\rightarrow$  Fa [In particular, if a is smoky, then a is fiery]

(13) Hence, Fa [Therefore, a is fiery]

Schayer (*ibid.*) recognises the pitfalls of trying to squeeze the Indian syllogism into the Aristotelian mode, and he does well to avoid many of them: he retains all five steps, and (13)’s inclusion can be defended as outlined above. There are still problems, however, perhaps the most serious of which is disappearance of the specific example from (11). It was argued above that the example plays the key role of grounding the universal relation of *vyāpti* in perception. To omit the example is to ignore this crucial aspect of Nyāya philosophy. Doing this runs the risk of taking the syllogism “not as a sophisticated attempt to solve its own problems, but as an impoverished attempt to solve ours” (*ibid.*: 17-18).

### Conclusion and ramifications

The Indian syllogism is a form of inference which addresses

important metaphysical, epistemological, and logical issues in the Nyāya system. Early attempts to understand it as a sloppy Aristotelian syllogism not only illegitimately ignore key structural aspects of the inference, but also fail to appreciate many of the aforementioned issues, such as the need for perceptual grounding. Later attempts to explain it in terms of predicate logic do better justice to the syllogism's structure, but in the omission of the specific example, still fail to appreciate the broader context of the inference.

I think there are three important meta-philosophical lessons to be learned from the above. First, we should not assume that other philosophical practices *must* have direct analogues with, or reduce to, our own. This is not to say that direct comparisons should not be attempted, just that they should not be *insisted upon* by illegitimate forcing practices into moulds that they do not fit. Second, serious attention should be paid to what is said about a practice in its own tradition.

Failure to do so can result in overlooking key issues that the practice is meant to address, and thereby radically misunderstanding the practice. Last, as well as the inherent worth of studying different philosophical practices, comparative philosophy is of real value in highlighting potential prejudices and 'blind spots' in one's own tradition: just as the Indian syllogism is used in a specific context, under specific constraints, and to deal with specific issues, so *all* philosophical enterprises are products and parts of certain historical and socio-cultural circumstances. These circumstances need not thwart philosophical enquiry, but they do need to be kept in mind, and not simply taken for granted. Lowe (2002: 47) has suggested that the reason his 'adverbial' solution of the problem of qualitative change in an object over time was previously overlooked might be that adverbs have no place in modern predicate logic; perhaps it would have been harder for such a blind spot to occur if modern predicate logic was more seriously thought as the cultur-

ally bound practice that it is, with the limitations that it brings.

The meta-philosophical ramifications of trying to understand the Indian syllogism support the first claim of this essay. Comparing the philosophical practices of different cultures and societies is of real value, but it must be done with care.

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## Interview With Armin Schulz (LSE)

*Dr. Schulz recently gave a talk to the Durham University Philosophical Society on how the philosophy of science presents us with a model of explaining the mental evolutionary development of an organism. Much thanks to Dr. Schulz for both the talk and interview and thanks to Jorel Chan for the questions.*

Q: 'Lets start this interview by telling us a bit about yourself and your current research interests.'

A: I am currently a lecturer in the philosophy department at the LSE. I came to London after finishing my PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (working primarily with Elliott Sober and Dan Hausman), though I also spent considerable time at Rutgers University (working primarily with Stephen Stich). My main areas of research are philosophy of biology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of social science – in fact, in my research, I look to combine all three. I am interested in assessing the manner in

which and the extent to which considerations from evolutionary biology can be used to advance questions in psychology, social science, and philosophy – and the reverse. So, for example, I am assessing if and how evolutionary biology can tell us more about how human minds (and those of other animals) are structured – e.g. how we (and other animals) make decisions, and whether the mind consists of many separate components ('modules'). Equally, I am interested in seeing if tools from social science and psychology can tell us more about how to study evolutionary biological phenomena – e.g. if it is useful to analyse evolution by natural selection as akin to rational de-

cision making under risk.

Q: 'In the talk you outlined how the development of belief-desire mind over a reflex-drive based mind can be explained in evolutionary theory through efficiency, especially efficiency of memory through benefits of rule-following. What do you think are some of the ramifications or applications of this model?'

A: I think there are two sorts of ramifications that it is useful to highlight. First and most obviously, my account says something about how and why different kinds of cognitive architectures have evolved, and what their functions might be. It thus has implications for other investigations in psychology, social science, and biology. For example: if I am right, then we would expect the errors of desire-driven organisms to differ in kind from those of drive-driven ones (e.g. the former would involve completely new actions, rather than familiar actions produced in the wrong circumstances). Also, if I am right, we would expect desires to

evolve only in some circumstances (when the organism needs to do lots of different actions which however stem from a relatively simple principle), and not in others. This is interesting to keep in mind when doing other studies in this area. The second important ramification is in artificial intelligence research and robotics. In particular, my account suggests that different processing systems might be appropriate for different robots that need to operate semi-autonomously in different circumstances. In particular, those that need to do many different things, all of which are quite straightforward applications of a given principle, might be more efficient if built according to the desire-based model, others might be better built on the drive-based model.

Q: 'What do you think is the relation between science and philosophy?'

A: I am not sure that there is only one such relation. I think there are lots of things that can be and are considered philosophy; some

of these have more, and some less, to do with science. However, I do think that there are areas of philosophy that are so closely related to science that it is hard to tell where one begins and the other ends. For example, there are numerous questions at the heart of evolutionary biology, cognitive science, and social science that are deeply philosophical (e.g. concerning the assumptions underlying key methods used in these sciences, the way inferences from given data are made, the interpretation that is to be given to different theories and findings, and the way different theories and findings relate to each other), and it is not at all clear – or particularly interesting – to determine whether answering them is doing science or philosophy. It is this last area of philosophy that I am most interested in.

Q: 'To more general questions, what spiked your interest in this research area? How did you arrive at your theory? How would you generally investigate a philosophical problem?'

A: I am not sure I have fixed method for finding or answering problems. It is more a matter of trial and error: you read about some problem, try out a solution, see where it works and where not, get feedback from others about it, change it around a bit, and so on. Through this process, you might also see problems that have not been noticed – or not been noticed as clearly as they should be – before.

Q: 'Related to the above question, what advice do you have for students wishing to solve philosophical problems?'

A: I do not think I have much general advice to give here either. In line with the above, I would say: try to read widely, talk to others, use existing work on a topic, and focus on solving interesting problems rather than on 'doing philosophy the right way'.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Conference*

We are pleased to announce the first Durham University Philosophical Society Conference will be held on June 12th 2013. The one day conference will feature papers from undergraduates and postgraduates from Durham and key note speaker Professor Katherine Hawley from the University of St. Andrews.

We will be accepting papers for submission from undergraduates and postgraduates with a presentation time of around 20 minutes plus discussion on all topics in philosophy. Full details and call for papers to be announced in late January 2013.

We hope that the conference will prove to be a stimulating, relaxed and sociable occasion with some of the best philosophy that Durham has to offer. Keep an eye out for more information coming soon. Any questions please email us at [phil.soc.@dur.ac.uk](mailto:phil.soc.@dur.ac.uk).

### *PhilosCoffee*

The first PhilosCoffee of Epiphany term will be held on 23rd of January and bi-weekly thereafter. PhilosCoffee are held at 5pm in Esquires Cafe.

For further information or if you simply want to contribute to *Critique*, any Philosophy Society talks and events, please visit our website ([www.dur.ac.uk/phil.soc](http://www.dur.ac.uk/phil.soc)), see our facebook page, or contact us at [phil.soc@durham.ac.uk](mailto:phil.soc@durham.ac.uk)

## Schedule of Upcoming Talks

### Epiphany Term :

Edward Hussey (Oxford) Ancient Greek Philosophy-----Jan 24th (Thurs)

Jonathan Wolff (UCL) Political Philosophy & Bio-Ethics--Jan 30th (Wed)

John Broome (Oxford) Environmental Philosophy-----Feb 7th (Thurs)

Peter Lamarque (York) Philosophy of Literature -----Feb 21st (Thurs)

David Papineau (KCL) Philosophy of Mind & Philosophy of Science--  
Feb 28th (Thurs)

### Easter Term:

Veronique Munoz-Darde (UCL) Ethics, Political Philosophy--  
Apr 25th (Thurs)

Talks usually begin at 7.30pm, are followed by a Q & A session and a trip to the pub. For full details on times and locations see our Facebook page.

# CRITIQUE

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