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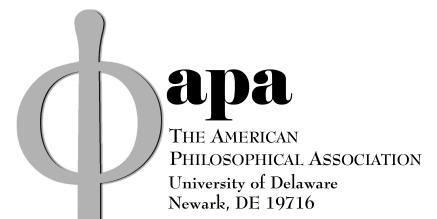
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FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

Eduardo García-Ramírez

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This issue of the *Newsletter* is dedicated to the American Association of Mexican Philosophers (AAMPh). The AAMPh was constituted in a meeting that became its first Annual Conference at MIT in 2008. Agustín Rayo envisioned this first meeting as an opportunity for Mexican philosophers working in the United States (many of whom were graduate students at that time) to know each other better and share their philosophical work. An important goal of AAMPh was, and still is, the creation of a philosophical community by means of philosophical work and social interaction. In its meetings the members who have not had the experience yet get acquainted with the practice of philosophy outside of the seminar room. Thus, part of the goal of this philosophical community is to improve the philosophical abilities of those Mexican philosophers working in the U.S.

A soccer game figured prominently in Rayo's organization of the first conference and, since then, became a staple of the AAMPh annual meeting. It turns out that the soccer game actually fostered more communication among the participants. The MIT meeting was such a success, and all attendants were so pleased with it, that a second meeting, organized by Sergio Gallegos at City College of New York, and a third one, organized by Carlos Montemayor at San Francisco State University, coalesced and expanded the organization. The third conference at SFSU had a simultaneous session at the Pacific APA and AAMPh has the goal of increasing its presence at regular meetings of the APA and other professional philosophical organizations.

The fourth annual conference will take place in Mexico City at the Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas of UNAM, an institution with which most members of AAMPh have a strong connection. Organized by the current president of AAMPh, Eduardo García-Ramírez, the conference will continue the tradition of allowing new AAMPh members to get to know other members better and share their current work. It will also be an opportunity to discuss issues concerning the future of the organization. AAMPh wants to increase its contact with other Latino philosophers and with philosophers in general. Eventually, AAMPh may become a forum for philosophers to discuss pressing issues in the profession and share their work in a more open fashion. AAMPh is particularly interested in interacting with underrepresented groups in philosophy and in articulating a better and more meaningful exchange of ideas between philosophy in Latin America and the English-speaking world.

This issue of the *Newsletter* includes four different essays, two from members of the AAMPh (Carlos Montemayor and

Eduardo García-Ramírez) and two from members of the Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas at UNAM (Miguel Ángel Fernández and Guillermo Hurtado), where AAMPh's fourth annual meeting will take place this spring. The papers by Montemayor and García-Ramírez are directly concerned with the practice of philosophy in Latin America and its relation with the broader International Arena. These papers give us an idea of what and how some Latin American philosophers think about their own profession. Fernández and Hurtado discuss traditional philosophical problems within the disciplines of epistemology and ontology. These papers in turn give us an idea of the philosophical work that gets done in Latin America.

Guillermo Hurtado offers an argumentative and methodological guide through the history of ontology as a philosophical discipline. Hurtado distinguishes among five different "paths" through which the discipline has been advanced: from the very coining of the Latin term in the seventeenth century, when ontology was thought to be the purest and most general philosophical discipline, all the way to the more contemporary view defended by Edmund Husserl according to which ontology is to be divided by regions of philosophical interest (e.g., persons, material objects, etc.). Hurtado shows how each one of these paths has led to different results without ever reaching the expected goal: to give an account of being. Hurtado accurately describes how each one of these five paths of ontology relate to each other and forcefully argues that ontology, as the central philosophical discipline it purports to be, will not reach its goal unless its paths are traveled in what can be seen as an interconnected voyage.

Miguel Fernández discusses a proposal by Crispin Wright according to which a necessary condition for having perceptual warrant for believing that p is that one has an antecedent *entitlement* to assume that one's perceptual systems operate reliably. Fernández argues that Wright's is a novel version of the old thought that epistemic warrant is subject to higher-order epistemic conditions. Fernández presents two different versions of Wright's central argument (the argument from subjective indistinguishability) and argues that both fail to establish the conclusion that Wright aims at. One interpretation, Fernández argues, leads to the second-order thesis that an antecedent entitlement to assume that one's perceptual systems operate reliably is a necessary condition for having perceptual warrant for believing that one has perceptual warrant for believing that p ; which is not the original first-order thesis that Wright argues for. The other interpretation is shown to reach the desired first-order conclusion, but at the cost of adjusting the original argument in such a way that its first premise loses plausibility. Fernández points out that the second-order and the first-order thesis that each interpretation respectively entail, correspond to two distinct cognitive roles that entitlements are required to play in two different theoretical projects that Wright pursues. Fernández argues that these roles can only be coherently integrated in a single epistemological outlook if the analogue

of the KK-principle for warrant is assumed. He argues that Wright needs such distinctively internalist tenet, yet offers no argument for it.

Carlos Montemayor considers two distinct yet closely related metaphilosophical problems: a methodological debate on how philosophical inquiry should be carried out and a practical one, which has permeated the philosophical tradition in Latin America, of whether the practice of philosophy should aim at being universal or regional. Montemayor describes the lack of an accepted methodology, even in general terms, within philosophy. Montemayor illustrates this by appealing to the current debate involving what is now known as “empirical philosophy.” He argues that this new trend in contemporary philosophy has shown that philosophical inquiry does not rest upon an accepted rigorous methodology, but that, contrary to its expectations, it has failed to provide an acceptable, philosophically (or even psychologically) relevant methodology. Montemayor ties this methodological debate with the metaphilosophical one about philosophical practice by showing how the former offers an important insight into the nature of philosophy: that it is not, by its own nature, a discipline that can be guided by single methodological norm. Following Jose Gaos’ ideas on the nature of philosophy, Montemayor recommends that the philosophical practice be concerned first and foremost with engaging the community from where it stems and finding what is philosophically universal within it.

In the last paper, Eduardo García-Ramírez addresses the so-called “problem of invisibility” within Latin American philosophy. García-Ramírez takes invisibility to be a common worry among Latin American philosophers. Following Carlos Pereda, García-Ramírez claims that Latin American philosophers seem to think they occupy “a non place” in Latin America in general, both in Spanish and Portuguese. There seems to be an agreement about the existence of this phenomenon, but it is far from clear what exactly causes it, and what should be done to solve it. In his paper García-Ramírez considers three different accounts of the phenomenon owed to Maite Ezcurdia, Guillermo Hurtado, and Carlos Pereda. García-Ramírez argues that Pereda’s account is preferable among these, but that it is still missing an important part of the mechanism that gives place to the phenomenon. On the former’s view, a proper account of the phenomenon requires that we take a look at the social and psychological mechanisms underlying the dynamics of group and individual identity.

FROM THE CO-EDITOR

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As the freshly minted co-editor of the *Newsletter*, I have the privilege of saying a few words about José Jorge Mendoza’s “The Political Philosophy of Unauthorized Immigration,” winner of the 2010 APA Prize in Latin American Thought. While not one of the essays under the purview of our guest editor, this essay is indicative of the sort of engagement inspired by the spirit and/or the letter of Latin American philosophy. In it, Mendoza considers the “immigration problem” and challenges the enforcement strategies currently deployed to address it. In place of these “failed” strategies, Mendoza recommends approaching the “immigration problem” not by considering it as an “enforcement problem,” but rather by thinking through what he calls an “ethico-political perspective,” one inspired by Enrique Dussel’s

groundbreaking work in liberation philosophy. This perspective relies on two Dusselian principles, the “solidarity principle” and the “critical legitimacy or democracy principle”: the first “rests on the premise that in order to understand or pinpoint the failure of a system or institution we need to first locate its victims, those who suffer the brunt of its exclusion and oppression,” and the second “goes beyond formal equality to include respect for the alterity of the excluded and oppressed.” Mendoza concludes by emphasizing that the “immigration problem” is “an ethico-political problem and not an enforcement problem,” which means that it “is a problem whose solution is not found in developing better and more efficient deterrents or establishing more and harsher restrictions, but by discovering and addressing the root of human exploitation and alienation that gives rise to the problem of unauthorized immigration in the first place.” Considering the current state of public and academic debate on this issue, this is truly a timely meditation.

ARTICLES

The Political Philosophy of Unauthorized Immigration

José Jorge Mendoza
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Introduction

With the United States still in the stranglehold of the latest economic crisis, it is not surprising that unauthorized immigrants, the most vulnerable and exploited members of society, are again the scapegoats for economic woes. In the last few years, this scapegoating has manifested itself in various ways, from the passage of legislation such as the Sensenbrenner bill of 2005 (which passed the House, but failed in the Senate) to the recent passing and signing of SB1070 in the state of Arizona. Respectively, these bills seek to criminalize the humanitarian act of feeding, clothing, or giving shelter to unauthorized immigrants.¹ At the same time they would force police officers to take up border enforcement duties, asking them to stop and interrogate anyone who fits the profile of an unauthorized immigrant, regardless of the fact that in doing so they would be hindered in performing their sworn duty to protect and serve their communities.²

The type of legislation exemplified above is part of a larger strategy that has been dubbed “enforcement through attrition” by the Center for Immigration Studies, an anti-immigrant think tank. This enforcement strategy seeks to address the “immigration problem” through harsh domestic policies designed to reduce the number of unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S. by making their existence in this country as miserable as possible.³ This strategy is different but complementary to what Wayne Cornelius has called the “concentrated border enforcement strategy.”⁴ This second strategy focuses on the enforcement of the physical border, which for the last two decades has meant militarizing the U.S.-Mexico border. This has been the strategy of choice despite two important points. First, rather than decreasing the number of unauthorized immigrants, increased border enforcement has instead increased the number of deaths of those attempting to cross the border through unsanctioned channels.⁵ Second, “concentrated border enforcement strategy” ignores the fact that a large percentage, possibly as high as 50 percent, of those

currently unauthorized in the U.S. originally crossed the border through legal means and then overstayed their visas.⁵

These two strategies both understand the issue of immigration as a problem of pest control. This is made clear when we look at the stated goals of these two strategies. The first strategy seeks the removal or fumigation of the current pest, in this case the deportation or coerced removal of unauthorized immigrants already in the country. The second strategy seeks a strong deterrent against future infestations, in this case to discourage potential unauthorized immigrants from coming to the U.S. in the future. In short, these strategies understand the “immigration problem” to be at bottom a problem of failed enforcement. In my view this is a grave misunderstanding of the “immigration problem.”

In this essay I therefore argue that the enforcement strategies mentioned above are failures, not because the policies they have generated have failed to properly execute the strategies, but are failures in the sense that they misapprehend or misrepresent the “immigration problem” from the very start. In place of these strategies I will present a case for approaching the “immigration problem” from an ethico-political perspective. To make this case and to properly outline what such an approach would entail, two things are required. First, what is needed is a sketch of the current immigration debate within political philosophy. This sketch will highlight the strengths (e.g., its challenge to “concentrated border enforcement strategies”) and shortcomings (e.g., its relative silence to “enforcement through attrition” strategies) of the current debate. Second, a way to address these shortcomings will also be necessary. Here I propose that we can address these shortcomings by drawing heavily on the work of Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel. By doing so, I will show that in order to adequately solve the “immigration problem,” we need to begin by approaching it as an ethico-political problem and not simply as an enforcement problem.

The Immigration Debate Within Contemporary Political Philosophy

In contemporary political philosophy, the question about immigration has been broadly addressed within two strains: liberalism and conservatism. The liberal strain, in both its classical⁷ and social justice⁸ forms, is typically concerned with the values of liberty and equality. Therefore, with regard to the immigration debate, the liberal position has tended to give preference to an individual’s right to freedom of movement over and against the state’s sovereign authority to control its own borders. The reasoning has been either that immigration does not present a circumstance where the state can infringe on an individual’s liberty, as has been the stance of classical liberalism,⁹ or that restricting immigration places too great a barrier on attaining universal equality, as has been the stance of social justice liberalism.¹⁰

By contrast, the conservative strain, in both its communitarian¹¹ and nationalist¹² forms, is concerned more with issues of civic engagement (i.e., being a good citizen) and the security and self-determination of a community. For this reason, this strain has tended to give preference to a community’s right to freedom of association (i.e., the ability to exclude non-members) over the individual’s right to freedom of movement. The reasoning has been that either an authentic sense of citizenship requires a bounded community, as has been the communitarian stance,¹³ or that freedom of association is central to a community’s ability to remain secure and self-determined, which has been the nationalist stance.¹⁴

It is out of this tension that David Miller, in his 2008 article “Immigrants, Nations, and Citizenship,” articulates what he takes to be the central question of the immigration debate:

“How far is it reasonable to expect immigrants to adapt to existing conditions in the host society, and how far must citizens in the host society bend to accommodate ‘the strangers in our midst?’”¹⁵ In other words, what are the limits to an individual’s freedom while in an alien community and, by the same token, what duties does a community have to a stranger (i.e., non-member)?

This is an interesting question for political philosophers to consider because, while it is similar in form to questions that arise from the longstanding debate that pits the individual against the collective, it comes with an added twist. While in its traditional form questions about the “individual versus collective” all revolve around trying to determine the priority of one over the other—does individual liberty (e.g., basic rights) take precedence over possible threats to the collective community (i.e., security and self-determination) or vice versa—they usually begin with the presumption that the individual is a member of the collective and therefore can expect certain liberties or duties to follow as an outcome. The case of immigration is different because the individual in this case is not and might never qualify for membership in the collective. Without the assumption of membership, it cannot be assumed that either the individual or the collective has, or will have, any rights or duties that the other is bound to respect. Therefore, in an attempt to address the issue of immigration, most contemporary political philosophers have attempted some revision of the traditional “individual versus collective” debate.

In the article mentioned above, Miller attempts to provide such a revision by arguing that the issue of immigration should be approached “by thinking of the relationship between the immigrant group and the citizens of the receiving state as quasi-contractual.”¹⁶ In other words, Miller proposes a return to contract theory, except that this time the contract is between non-members and members. In this way “each side claims certain rights against the other, and acknowledges certain obligations in turn.”¹⁷ This converts the issue of immigration, which initially made a poor fit within the framework of modern political philosophy, into something that is more palatable to the tradition. Following John Rawls, Miller believes that the issue of immigration is at bottom an issue of fairness such that “it searches for norms of fairness to set the terms on which immigrant groups and host societies interact *without regard to the particular circumstances* of any individual immigrant or category of immigrants.”¹⁸

While a commitment to fairness is an excellent starting point, Miller’s solution assumes, as all contract theory does, that the parties involved are in some sense equal before entering the contract and are therefore in a position to make demands on each other.¹⁹ While this might be the case with an abstract understanding of immigration, this is not the case with unauthorized immigrants who, while not necessarily or exclusively refugees, are nonetheless heavily pressured to move (e.g., are economically displaced by neo-liberal policies, actively sought by American employers, and encouraged to believe that the U.S. has the most opportunities for them and their families) and so greatly disadvantaged with respect to the potential “host” society that they are not in any meaningful sense an equal party to this new contract. This concern falls outside of Miller’s scope because, as the quote above makes clear, in his attempt at fairness he abstracts the particular circumstances from the “immigration problem.” By so doing, Miller’s solution makes a poor fit for the issue of unauthorized immigration because addressing this more particular issue, which I argue is at the core of the “immigration problem,” requires that some of the particularities of the circumstances be taken into account.

One approach to the “immigration problem” that attempts to take some of its particular circumstances into account is presented by Thomas Pogge in his article “Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty.” In that article Pogge argues that first-world countries bear certain responsibilities for the condition of third-world countries and therefore owe certain duties to them. These duties are, contrary to the Rawlsian understanding of duties, best thought of as negative and not positive duties. In other words, as Kim Diaz makes clear in her article “U.S. Border Wall: A Poggean Analysis of Illegal Immigration,” Pogge’s position does not advocate for first-world charity, but is demanding that first-world countries not cause third-world countries any more harm.²⁰

As a way to address what I have been calling the particular circumstances of the “immigration problem,” in this case gross amounts of global inequality for which the first-world benefits from and is at least partially responsible for, Pogge proposes the idea of vertically dispersing sovereign authority. This means that instead of understanding sovereignty as being concentrated and indivisibly situated at one highest level, as Thomas Hobbes argued, Pogge proposes a notion of sovereignty that is dispersed throughout various levels, both above and below the nation-state. This dispersal of power, he argues, should be de-centralized such that “persons should be citizens of, and govern themselves through, a number of political units of various sizes, without any one political unit being dominant and thus occupying the traditional role of state.”²¹

By advancing a notion of dispersed sovereignty, Pogge also feels he is responding to a central claim about distributive justice: that distributive justice necessarily presupposes a fixed bounded community where “the authority to fix membership, to admit and exclude, is at least part of an indivisible core of sovereignty.”²² Nationalists and communitarians alike, such as Miller and specifically Michael Walzer,²³ hold to this idea and therefore would disagree with Pogge’s view because they feel that a dispersal of sovereignty would lead to the disintegration of communities and thereby the community’s ability to engage in acts of distributive justice. Pogge’s response to this fear is to argue that the cohesiveness of a community “is actually better served by a division of the authority to admit and exclude than by the conventional concentration of this authority at the level of the state.”²⁴ In other words, if we concede that communities exist at levels both above (e.g., the Latin American community) and below the nation-state (e.g., Barrio Logan), then concentrating sovereign authority at the level of the nation-state, and with it the power to include and exclude people (i.e., control national borders), can potentially undermine the cohesiveness of communities that exist both above and below the nation-state.

At this point I wish to summarize what has been said, not so much to take sides, but to take stock of where this debate has left us with respect to the two strategies mentioned in the introduction. The first thing to say is that now any viable political philosophy that deals with the issue of immigration must be able to address concerns of liberty and equality in both a local and globalized context, and in a manner that we recognize as fair (as opposed to arbitrary or ad hoc). Secondly, it must appreciate the importance of community in a world that is everyday becoming more mobile and therefore also more individualized than ever before, while at the same time it must challenge us to think differently about traditional notions of sovereignty. This is the strength of the current debate as it stands and I do not wish to minimize this by any means, but it is clear that this debate also remains bogged down on the question of whether *an individual’s right to move trumps the sovereign right of a community to control its own borders or vice versa?*

This stringent focus reduces the possible positions one can take within the immigration debate to whether one favors a strong or weak, rigid or dispersed version of border enforcement. Yet, as I alluded to in the introduction, border enforcement is at most only half of the immigration story. This again is because a “concentrated border enforcement strategy” is but one of two strategies currently being deployed. Furthermore, even if we take this to be the principle strategy, it also happens to be the case that close to half of those currently unauthorized in the U.S. actually entered the country through legal means.

What this debate within philosophy lacks is a serious engagement with a second question: *What can be done to and what recourses, if any, should be available to those who are already inside a country, but do not have the proper authorization to be in said country?* This second question is related to the first, but ultimately they are very different questions. The first focuses on immigration in general, while the second focuses on unauthorized immigration in particular. Political philosophy has to some degree addressed the first question, but it has been relatively silent with regard to this second. What this means is that while philosophy has at least put into question strategies like the “concentrated border enforcement strategy,” it has remained silent on strategies like “enforcement through attrition.” This is not to say that community activists do not challenge this strategy, but that a challenge to this strategy remains relatively unarticulated by philosophers. What I do in the following section is provide a framework for such a challenge by drawing on the work of Enrique Dussel.

Enrique Dussel: The Underside of the Immigration Debate

While Enrique Dussel does not directly address the issue of immigration, I find his work relevant to the second question of unauthorized immigration because his work centers on and constantly returns to the material grievances of those who are the most excluded and oppressed in any given society. This commitment to the most excluded and oppressed forms the heart of his critical material principle (i.e., the principle of solidarity), which he summarizes in the following way: “We must produce and reproduce the lives of the oppressed and excluded, the victims, discovering the causes of their negativity and adequately transforming institutions to suit them, which will as a result improve the life of the community as a whole.”²⁵ This principle for Dussel rests on the premise that in order to understand or pinpoint the failure of a system or institution, we need to first locate its victims, those who suffer the brunt of its exclusion and oppression. When we locate this group, Dussel argues that we need to address the failure from their perspective (i.e., from the perspective of those who suffer from them) and not from the perspective of privilege (i.e., from the perspective of those who benefit from them).

The natural question that arises when adopting such an approach is to ask what does it mean to begin from the perspective of society’s most excluded and oppressed? For Dussel, this is not some appeal to standpoint theory, where the claim would be that only unauthorized immigrants have the true perspective on the issue of immigration. Instead, a Dusselian account requires an understanding of the various causes that have given rise to the current situation such that the unauthorized immigrants are seen for what they are, victims of a system, and not as they are in fantasy (i.e., what Dussel would call a fetish), as those that victimize the system. In other words, what a Dusselian account provides to the immigration debate is an account from the underside of the immigration debate. That is an account of liberation. An account that is in direct opposition to the more standard accounts, which support

“concentrated border enforcement” and “enforcement through attrition” strategies, where unauthorized immigrants are cast in the role of lawbreakers par excellence (i.e., “Illegals”) and their suffering is excused as being of their own making. A Dusselian analysis would rightly condemn these more standard accounts as accounts of domination.

A Dusselian account is therefore not as concerned with maintaining law and order, if it comes only at the expense of justice for the excluded and oppressed. Instead, this account is first concerned with transforming the current system of injustice by empowering those who are currently the most victimized and therefore the most disempowered. This requires understanding an important distinction between what Dussel calls political *trans-formation* and political reform. By political reform Dussel means any action that only acts as if it provides change, but that leaves the system fundamentally intact. *Trans-formation*, on the other hand, begins from and within social justice movements (which are different and opposed to conservative reactionary movements²⁶). This is because social justice movements for Dussel represent an activation of already preexisting social networks (e.g., family, friends, neighbors, etc.) that has the potential (i.e., *hyper-potentia*) of transcending civil society and producing a crisis of legitimacy at the political level.²⁷

For Dussel the *hyper-potentia* of social justice movements comes not just from their opposition to the status quo, but from the kernel of a new political order that they carry within. As Dussel writes, “through mutual information, dialogue, translation of proposals, shared militant praxis, these movements slowly and progressively constitute an *analogical hegemon*.”²⁸ In other words, beyond serving a counter-hegemonic purpose social justice movements, in respecting and representing the alterity of the oppressed and excluded, also serve an “analectical” purpose. For Dussel analectical implies a novel or utopic moment that comes from outside the system, as opposed to dialectical criticism, which is merely an internal critique and is devoid of a utopic moment (e.g., the immanent critique of the Frankfurt school). This understanding of social justice movements and the political role that they play applies directly to the Immigrant Rights Movement, especially within the United States, where the movement has held various marches, demonstrations, aggressively lobbied Congress and the Senate, and has brought together whole communities in support of immigrant rights. Beyond just voicing their opinion, this movement has also given birth to all-volunteer water station projects and “search and rescue” teams that service the mountainous and desert areas between Mexico and the United States, where hundreds of migrants die each year attempting to cross the border. The movement has also established projects that build decent homes for immigrant farm workers and provide help with translation of documents, tax services, ESL and computer classes, and endless other services.

Going beyond civil society, the movement has also had a substantial impact at the political realm, where it has and will continue to defeat unjust legislation, such as the Sensenbrenner Bill in 2005, the current SB1070 law in Arizona, and future attempts to revoke birth right citizenship. More than just reacting to politics, this movement has also played a politically progressive role, like helping to draft and promote forward-thinking legislation such as the Dream Act.²⁹ The Dream Act seeks to fix the status of unauthorized immigrants who came here as children and have proved their worth as members of the community and demonstrate the potential to be even greater contributors, but currently have no avenue open to them to fix their status. This Act is in direct response to the two strategies mentioned above, “enforcement through attrition” and “concentrated border enforcement,” and it forms part

of a counter-strategy that we can refer to as “empowerment through solidarity.” This is because many, if not most, of those who compose the Immigrant Rights Movement—the marchers, demonstrators, and those who volunteer their time and energy protecting and helping unauthorized immigrants—are not themselves unauthorized or even immigrants. They are in solidarity with unauthorized immigrants because they respect their humanity and see them as vital members and contributors to their community, not as pests that need to be fumigated and kept out.

This more active and expanded understanding of political participation underlies Dussel’s second principle, the critical legitimacy or democracy principle (i.e., his principle of equality), which goes beyond formal equality to include respect for the alterity of the excluded and oppressed. Dussel summarizes this principle by saying that:

We must achieve a *critical consensus*—first *through the real and symmetrical participation of the oppressed and excluded*—of the victims of the political system, because they are the most affected by the institutional decisions that were made in the past! [...] The excluded should not be merely *included* in the old system—as this would be to introduce the Other into the Same—but rather ought to participate as equals in a new *institutional moment*.³⁰

In other words, the mere inclusion of those currently excluded is not enough to transform the current system because a corrupt system with new parts still only generates corrupt results. To be more concrete, while some sort of amnesty program for those who are currently unauthorized might be a good first step in transforming the current system, the conditions that first gave rise to unauthorized immigration will not end without further systemic changes that address issues of global exploitation and alienation.

This leads us to Dussel’s third and final principle, the feasibility principle (i.e., his principle of liberty), which for him serves as a gauge for assessing how much change is possible and necessary for any social justice movement to obtain without trampling or neglecting the prior commitments to solidarity and respect for alterity. Dussel summarizes this principle by saying: “We must do the maximum *possible*—thereby appearing reformist to the anarchist and suicidal to the conservative—and having as criterion of possibility in institutional creation (transformation) the liberation of the victims of the current system, the *people!*”³¹ It is at this level that today, if we are serious about addressing the “immigration problem” in a humanitarian way, we should demand not just amnesty for unauthorized immigrants, but also forgiveness of the unjust debt that burdens third-world countries and restricts the autonomy of their citizens, especially their poor. In first-world countries workers need to start standing in solidarity for fair wages and decent working and living conditions for all, including and especially for unauthorized immigrants. Feminist movements must also begin to look into the issue of unauthorized immigration, especially since this is an issue that at least over the last few decades and for various reasons has disproportionately and more adversely affected women than men. While these few remarks might seem insufficient to some and far too radical to others, they are the minimum needed in order to begin to adequately address the “immigration problem.”

Conclusion

With this general overview of Dussel’s political philosophy and its application to the “immigration problem” in mind, I would like to conclude by summarizing what I think some of the strengths are of pursuing such an approach. First, Dussel’s political

framework is able to incorporate in its political principles three key values of political liberalism—solidarity, equality, and liberty. Second, Dussel's *trans-formative* philosophy does not begin by assuming that all participants are or can be made abstractly equal. Instead Dussel begins from the position of those who are currently the most oppressed and excluded, and thereby accounts for the reality of unauthorized immigration better than traditional contract theory can. Lastly, Dussel's framework offers an interesting perspective on the traditional question that pits the "individual versus collective" (which brings us back to the first question, *Does an individual's right to move trump the sovereign right of a community to control its own borders?*). Dussel, following the communitarian tradition, believes that any notion of radical individuality or having an unencumbered self³² is a myth. Yet Dussel also recognizes that communities are in constant flux, especially with the rise of "globalization," so the question for Dussel is not whether a community should, but *how it will* incorporate others who have not traditionally been a part, or at least not a recognized part, of the community. Under Dussel's framework, community cohesion is possible not by protecting the homogeneity of the community, as this view tends towards harsh enforcement policies, but only through the constant *trans-formation* of the community into a new community that looks to the victims of its actions as the gauge for accessing its success or failure. So far, political philosophy has missed what a Dusselian account of immigration reminds us of: that the "immigration problem" is at bottom an ethico-political problem and not an enforcement problem, as it is currently presented. It is a problem whose solution is not found in developing better and more efficient deterrents or establishing more and harsher restrictions, but by discovering and addressing the root of human exploitation and alienation that gives rise to the problem of unauthorized immigration in the first place.

Endnotes

1. See "H.R. 4437--109th Congress: Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005." GovTrack.us (database of federal legislation). 2005. Nov 16, 2009. Section 202, amending 274 and Section 205. <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/xpd?bill=h109-4437>
2. See State of Arizona Senate, Forty-ninth Legislature, Second Regular Session 2010. Senate Bill 1070. Article 8 section B. <http://www.azleg.gov/legtext/49leg/2r/bills/sb1070s.pdf>
3. Jessica Vaughan. "Attrition Through Enforcement: A Cost-Effective Strategy to Shrink the Illegal Population," Center for Immigration Studies, April 2006. <http://www.cis.org/Enforcement-IllegalPopulation>
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7. As an example see John Locke, *Second Treaties of Government*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1980).
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10. As an example see Thomas W. Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty," *Ethics* 103, no. 1 (1992): 48-75.
11. As an example see Michael J. Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent: America In Search of a Public Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).
12. As an example see Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995).
13. As an example see Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).
14. As an example see David Miller, "Immigrants, Nations, and Citizenship," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 16, no. 4 (2008): 371-90.
15. *Ibid.*, 371.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, 373 [emphasis added].
19. Thomas Hobbes, for example, argues that in the state of nature everyone is equal in that everyone is entitled to everything and anyone can potentially kill anybody else. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1994), 76. Rousseau also argues that we are all equal in the state of nature, although not in the same way as Hobbes, and that civilization is what gives rise to "unnatural" inequalities. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, trans. Franklin Philip, ed. Patrick Coleman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
20. Kim Diaz, "U.S. Border Wall: A Poggean Analysis of Illegal Immigration," *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 17, no. 1 (2010): 1-12.
21. Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty," p. 58.
22. *Ibid.*, 60.
23. See Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*.
24. Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty," p. 61.
25. Enrique Dussel, *Twenty Theses On Politics*, trans. George Ciccariello-Maher (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 86.
26. By "conservative reactionary movements" I have in mind nativist movements (e.g., the Tea Party and Minutemen Project within the United States) that attack immigrants because they see them as a threat to the "nation." According to these accounts the "victims" are not those who are exterior to the system, as Dussel argues, but are interior and therefore these movements seek a return to the "good old days" as any real progressive change to the current status quo would only threaten their privilege.
27. Enrique Dussel, *Twenty Theses On Politics*, p. 76.
28. *Ibid.*, 72.
29. The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act is a piece legislation that was introduced in March 2009 and if passed would provide unauthorized students who graduate from U.S. high schools, are in good moral standing, arrived in the U.S. as minors, and have been in the country continuously for at least five years the opportunity to obtain conditional permanent residency and thereby qualify for college in-state tuition and earn a path towards citizenship. For more information or to support this important piece of legislation please see <http://dreamact.info/>.
30. *Ibid.*, 89.
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32. See Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*.

Engagement and Universality in Latin American Philosophy

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1. Tensions between the regional and the universal: philosophy in Latin America

In his recent book, *The Owl and the Serpent*,¹ Guillermo Hurtado reminds us that philosophy in Mexico (and I would like to generalize this to Latin America) has been guided by two opposite forces: one towards universality and the other towards regionalism. I will not analyze Hurtado's proposals here. Rather, I would like to take this claim concerning universality and regionalism as the starting point of this essay. I believe that, indeed, the tension between these opposites has guided the efforts of many Latin American philosophers, some opting for universality, others leaning towards regionalism.

Like Hurtado, I believe that something needs to change about this situation if progress is to be made. However, I will not locate the problem that needs to be addressed within the confines of Latin America, but rather would like to address this problem as one that affects our profession as a whole. In doing so, I will present the problem under a different guise. Following José Gaos, I will pose the problem as a question concerning the nature of philosophy: What is it and why is it incapable of following the steps of the rigorous sciences? And how does this problem concerning philosophical methodology relate to the issue concerning universality and regionalism?

I will characterize the tendency towards universality, on the one hand, as the need that philosophers have to present their results with rigor and objectivity. On the other hand, the tendency towards regionalism will be presented as the need that philosophers have to engage with their communities, beyond their academic endeavors. Although these tendencies are not necessarily antagonistic, the tension I want to capture—and compare with the tension between universalism or scientism and regionalism—is that between being acknowledged by *peers* (ultra-specialized peers, to be more precise), based on the alleged rigor of one's own work, and being acknowledged by the *public* by not being irrelevant beyond a reduced (and ultra-specialized) community of peers.

It is odd to think of peers as the standard for universality. But, unfortunately, this seems to be exactly the situation in philosophy and it is the source of much dissatisfaction, now and in the past. Let me clarify this point, which can be easily misunderstood. Compare philosophy with mathematics or physics. Of course, the opinions of peers matter in these disciplines, but *results* matter a lot more than opinions, no matter how powerful the peers that put them forward might be. Actually, progress in both disciplines resulted from intense struggles and debates that *finished* with a proof or an experiment. By its very nature, philosophy is incapable of producing such results. Thus, very well informed opinions tend to be the sole standard for universality, whatever that might mean.

But let me try to clarify this further since, if misunderstood, what I am about to say might sound as either heresy or ignorance. Let us take the case of an exciting and very recent development in philosophy: experimental philosophy. Most philosophers with naturalistic inclinations will say that this is a good thing for philosophy. However, “burning the armchair” is not a new thing. Rather, it is a recurrent methodological issue. As Gaos says (more about this below) one can find in Kant's work a very systematic questioning of philosophical methodology

(and, of course, one can find such criticisms concerning methodology in many other philosophers after Kant). But why does such questioning keep recurring, without philosophers being capable of learning any lessons?

Answering this question is what motivates much of what experimental philosophers are doing. Their criticism is not merely left in the abstract, as yet another philosophical conundrum. These philosophers invite their peers to take action and change the way in which they do philosophy. Actually, it is more than an invitation; it is a *demand* to back up one's own claims about intuitions (and the way people think in general) with facts and experimental evidence, as is customary in the sciences.

I am very sympathetic to what experimental philosophers are doing and I think their efforts should be encouraged. But I worry about the scope of their results, and this makes me think that their experimental findings cannot produce the thorough criticism that Kant and many others after him envisioned. First, since the scope of their experiments concerns what other *philosophers* say (e.g., what intuitions they claim to be important for a particular thought experiment, which theory they think best suits what the folk thinks, etc.), their findings are not going to break the barrier that needs to be broken in order to make philosophy relevant beyond the philosophical community, which puts experimental philosophers in the dilemma of either staying within the confines of what philosophers say or abandoning those confines. If they abandon the philosophical confines, wouldn't they be doing experimental *psychology* with philosophical implications? Either way, there is a risk of becoming irrelevant (with respect to either philosophy or psychology).

And second, since these experiments cannot touch the core of the main philosophical issues (e.g., the nature of consciousness, the problem of free will, the distinction between good and evil, etc.) one may even suspect that these findings are at best peripheral with respect to the problems of philosophy. Is there an *experiment* that could settle these issues? And even if such an experiment were feasible, wouldn't it be an experiment that falls squarely within what psychologists deal with (the nature of the human mind), which would have enormous philosophical implications, but would still be a finding that a psychology lab would report nonetheless?

Actually, one may go even further and challenge the motivation for experimental philosophy by arguing that it is not different from Quine's proposal for naturalizing epistemology (which could be extended to philosophy as a whole). I say this because the methodology employed by experimental philosophers is based on experimental psychology and this seems to suggest that what they are doing is just a *chapter of experimental psychology* (words that Quine used to characterize the new, naturalized epistemology). However, the problem is that experimental philosophy seems to be a chapter of psychology with a very narrow scope.

For instance, the findings of psychology (some of which have been extremely influential in other areas, like economics—for example, the development of behavioral economics) are clearly not circumscribed to what psychologists, or any specific group of academics, say. But experimental philosophers focus exclusively on what other philosophers say. So it may well be that experimental philosophy is the result of a naturalistic revision of philosophical methodology like the one envisioned by Quine. However, I believe that Quine would have been quite concerned about the scope of the findings in experimental philosophy—which Quine would have probably considered as a rather inconsequential and minuscule “chapter of psychology.”

In any case, one can support the efforts of experimental philosophers while acknowledging some of the limitations of experimental philosophy. With respect to the topic of this essay, which is the nature of philosophy as a discipline that aims at scientific rigor in spite of its incapacity to produce scientific results, the limitations of experimental philosophy are quite substantial, based on the reasons I just gave. In sum, the main limitation of the philosophical research that currently gets labeled as “experimental philosophy” is that it cannot provide the thorough critique that Kant envisioned. In other words, the revision of philosophical methodology envisioned by Kant cannot be an adoption of the methodology used in experimental psychology. Philosophy, because of the nature of its problems, needs a different kind of methodological revolution.

2. Why should philosophers worry about methodology?

But why worry about this thorough critique? Because, as Kant saw, it is an urgent issue for philosophers to answer the question: What is it exactly that you do? To answer this question, one must have clear methodological assumptions and aim at producing some type of *result*: a result that matters to people, something that has some relevance beyond what other philosophers in your area of specialization think. These should be results that, as it were, speak for themselves and not “castles in the air” or other ethereal contraptions that only the enlightened care about. Moreover, as a rigorous discipline, philosophical views must not depend on specificities such as culture, ideology, or subjective biases; but how can philosophers guarantee this without clear methodological standards?

With respect to producing results, let me clarify one point. There are many unresolved issues in science, and the fact that a psychology or physics lab cannot find solutions to these problems, in spite of all their efforts, does not render their laborious research meaningless. On the contrary, science is a collaborative effort to determine which paths lead nowhere and which are promising. Thus, finding out that a specific route leads nowhere is a crucial result. It is this kind of result that philosophy seems unable to produce. The problem with philosophy is that paths seem to lead everywhere.

Now, this does not mean that there is no such thing as progress in philosophical debates. No one can responsibly present a philosophical view about the human mind or the nature of space and time in absolute ignorance of what has happened in psychology and physics. Our debates are therefore more constrained and careful than, say, a few hundred years ago. But what kind of progress is this? It is progress that comes from elsewhere. As far as philosophical views are concerned, paths lead everywhere (and maybe they *should*, to keep the dialectic going). But then, no results seem forthcoming.

It could be objected that real philosophical progress always comes from within. Take for instance Gettier’s paper, which transformed epistemology, or Kripke’s causal-historical account of reference. Well, even these symbols of achievement and progress in our profession are subject to methodological challenges that threaten their status as evidence of progress. The very origin of experimental philosophy can be found in challenges to the intuitions that were behind these famous philosophical “findings.” The main challenge is a strictly methodological one: philosophers claim that their ideas reveal something universal about the human mind, for instance, with respect to knowledge or reference, but why do they say such things? What methods or standards are they using to make claims about *every* human being, their *own* intuitions? Isn’t this *very* bad methodology?

OK, you know the rest of the story. Experimental philosophers found significant discrepancies concerning these allegedly universal intuitions through experiments. Actually, there were many sources of discrepancies, mostly cultural and socio-economical. We are in the midst of a debate as to what to make of experimental philosophy—is it relevant or not and if it is relevant, how will it change the profession? But the point I want to make is that something experimental philosophers are certainly doing is that they are reminding their peers of the painful truth that philosophy lacks a systematic methodology.

To repeat something I said previously, which is very relevant here: as a rigorous discipline, philosophical views *must not* depend on specificities such as culture, ideology, or subjective biases. So, if some of the *best achievements* of the profession are based on contingencies that relate to culture, ideology, or subjective biases, then that is a really bad thing for the profession. In any other discipline that claims to produce achievements with universal validity, findings demonstrating the parochial nature of such results would cause distress and commotion. So if philosophical views are supposed to be universal or non-parochial, then philosophers should be very worried about what experimental philosophers are finding.

The other point I want to make is that the accusation made by experimental philosophers is that the alleged progress achieved after Gettier or Kripke is just an illusion of progress: the result of bad methodology, based on intuitions that just privileged middle class westerners have. Notice that a very unhelpful thing to say about this is that one should ignore these findings because *historically* philosophers inspired most of the ideas that are now scientific, informed the methodology of the sciences with their rigorous thought, and that, therefore, philosophers now must be doing a similar thing. This is simply not true.

It seems that what happened historically is that there was no rigorous methodology to do physics, psychology, or biology and so scientists were philosophers because they could not do any better. This sounds horrible but, well, that is what happened. As soon as philosophers-scientists with more experimental inclinations got sick and tired of endless debates they got busy experimenting and testing, and then we got the sciences. It is not like there was a bunch of philosophers telling them what to do.

That is exactly what the first experimenters got tired of, some philosophers speaking from the armchair, deciding how things work. So even as a historical remark, to say that philosophers created the sciences gets things exactly backwards. It is true that the first scientists were philosophers (and remember that that’s because they could not be anything else). But it is also true that science (in particular the scientific method) was a *reaction* to endless philosophical debate.

So, if the scientific method was a reaction to bad methodology (endless armchair debate), then philosophers should really worry about their methodology. First, they should agree on what methodology they are using and then they should justify such methodology. As things stand now it seems that philosophers will not even reach a consensus regarding what methodology they use, let alone what methodology they *should* use. I was critical about experimental philosophy in the previous section but this is exactly why I applaud the efforts of experimental philosophers. Philosophers should be thankful for experimental philosophy and its vigorous questioning of philosophical methodology, even if experimental philosophy ends up having no other merit.

3. Critiques come and go

As briefly mentioned, the topic of the universality of philosophy became particularly problematic after Kant, who wanted to give philosophy a firm foundation, continuous with the sciences. Gaos sees in the developments that followed Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* a series of repeating patterns and tendencies, all of which go back to the tension between the universal and the local, regional or historical. In a presentation he gave, with the title "Philosophy or Philosophies?"² Gaos says that Kant's criticism regarding the lack of a consensus with respect to a rigorous philosophical methodology and principles that could put metaphysics on a safe and secure path, like science, is actually a criticism that applies to philosophy as a whole.

"How to do philosophy?" or "how to tackle a philosophical question?" are not easily answerable questions and many factions claim that their methods are best suited to do the job. Philosophers are as divided now as when Kant wrote his *Critique*, some claiming that science should have a very central place in philosophy, others acknowledging the importance of science, but arguing that it has substantial limitations, while others just remain silent about the issue and are deeply skeptical about the role of science in philosophy. Does this mean that there are many philosophies? Who knows—or worse, who cares?

The *issues* seem to be the same: there is certainly a continuous set of worries that can be traced back to at least Ancient Greece and even before that, to the first human expressions of spirituality. Many of those questions became the questions of physics; others became the worries of biology or psychology. It is difficult to tell how many questions remain purely philosophical. As mentioned, consciousness, free will, the distinction between good and evil, and maybe a few more are definitely on the list. But even with respect to these issues, one may have suspicions.

Certainly, there is disagreement as to how to tackle these questions within the philosophical community. Whether or not this leads to different philosophies or a single philosophy seems inconsequential. One can call it a single philosophical community with many different approaches (something that Gaos says is a virtue of philosophy that he then relates to the open debate that should exist in democratic societies)³ or different communities with little in common. It is inconsequential what one says about this because results are nowhere to be found, so how these factions call each other seems to be a verbal dispute.

Thus, I think the unity or disunity of the philosophical community is not an important issue at all. The real problem is that regardless of whether there is one community or many, no consensus as to what is the right methodology to do philosophy seems forthcoming. Yes, all agree that careful argumentation is crucial, but which discipline *disagrees* with this very basic principle? One may suppose that philosophical argumentation is the most careful of all, but why? What is the standard for "carefulness" here? Consensus about this issue, which is deeply related to the question of methodology and the production of relevant results, seems impossible because it seems to be open to endless debate. So Kant's criticism, extended to philosophy as a whole, as Gaos proposes, shows that the tension between the universal and the regional, the scientific and the local or cultural is truly a pressing issue for philosophy. This is something that, as mentioned, experimental philosophers are, thankfully, constantly reminding their peers about.

Is there one way of doing philosophy or are there subcultures? Again, this seems inconsequential. The question is, can philosophers agree about what their methodology *should be* once and for all? If they cannot agree, as the last few

centuries suggest, then what? It is with respect to this issue that I think Latin American philosophy has a few insights to offer. I say "a few insights" because I am not going to claim that one can find solutions to these issues that affect philosophy as a discipline, problems which may very well be unsolvable. So insights may be all one can get: pointers towards a better and more productive way of doing philosophy.

Critiques come and go. There was Kant's, which should have been addressed back then in a much more energetic way, maybe. Or maybe not; maybe it was necessary to see that Kant's criticism is still as pressing as when he first presented it: that it is not an easy criticism to address and that it has permeated the way in which philosophy gets done since at least Kant's time. Time passed, the divide between analytic and continental opened a gap that starts to recede, but not quite yet and not really. There was Quine's naturalism, with all its consequences in contemporary philosophy and there is the more recent, albeit less thorough, critique that comes from experimental philosophy. What's next? Who knows?

Critiques may come and go. But philosophy as a discipline remains, or should remain, relevant and if it cannot establish a safe and secure path, like the sciences, it should at least establish some goals. One goal should definitely be to improve the discipline, make it better somehow. Maybe philosophers will not be able to reach a consensus with respect to what is the best methodology for philosophy. But that does not mean they should forget about the whole thing. Philosophy matters to people, or should matter to people. Even without a consensus on methodology, the discipline can improve by becoming more relevant to the person walking down the street. But how should this be done? Here is where one needs insights, rather than solutions to philosophical conundrums.

4. The importance of engagement and understanding

There is a well-known connection between philosophy in Latin America and pragmatism.⁴ Engagement has always been on the agenda of philosophers in Latin America and this is why the tension between the universal and the local/cultural is particularly conspicuous in Latin American philosophy. The brutal realities of violence, political oppression, poverty, mistreatment of indigenous people, and other social and cultural problems that many Latin American countries share with other post-colonial countries make philosophers in these countries lean heavily in favor of the tendency to engage with one's community, in many cases to the detriment of the tendency towards the universal. The appeal of the universal is much less powerful than the need to engage for Latin American philosophers: the need to provide philosophical views that mean something to people beyond academia, and in some cases, even the need to take action based upon these views. This is a clear connection with pragmatism.

However, Latin American philosophers understand that ignoring the tendency towards the universal is a bad thing to do. Philosophy cannot be what it is without this tendency. Yes, it is important for philosophy to be relevant and mean something to historically contextualized people, with real problems to solve. But philosophy becomes relevant to people because it *points towards what is universal* in their concrete and contextualized realities. Truth, beauty, and goodness are values that every society pursues.

This is why Leopoldo Zea, for example, emphasized that it is not by focusing on originality, understood in terms of *regionalism* that opposes external dominant forces, that Latin American philosophers will be able to produce *philosophy*, without qualifications. As he eloquently points out, Leibniz did not "copy" French philosophy when he based some of his ideas

on the work of Descartes.⁵ Philosophy has no boundaries and philosophers do not base their opinions on the nationalities of other philosophers. Thus, understanding originality as regionalism would be a gigantic mistake.

But, obviously, there is the tension with which I started the paper. I argued that this tension affects philosophy as a whole. However, I also said that it is particularly conspicuous in Latin America and because of this, some insights may be found in Latin American philosophy regarding how to deal with this tension. I believe that the issue of imitation, discussed by Zea, is one in which insights can be found.

A case of a regionally focused philosopher who produced highly engaged philosophy that is nonetheless inspired by universal concerns is José Carlos Mariátegui. The influence that his work has had in different social movements across Latin America is well documented and such impact is not directly relevant with respect to the topic of this essay, so I shall not comment on it. What is relevant about his work is how it has been accepted as one of the finest examples of original Marxist theory in America. Is this the kind of theorist that Latin American philosophers should emulate?

Well, obviously, yes, what kind of question is that? Mariátegui's work is influential in both the academic and socio-political worlds. Isn't that what philosophers should try to do? Yes, but Marxism or any other theory that applies mainly to political philosophy is not equivalent with philosophy as a whole. Political philosophers are crucial for philosophy to become engaged with problems that directly affect people around the world, but that is only one aspect of how philosophy should become more engaged.

Marxism, and political philosophy in general, has an obvious appeal for philosophers who seek engagement. Philosophy should seek engagement, but it should also seek universality, as Zea emphasized, and this includes all the universal values that philosophers care about. Truth is one of these values, if not *the* central value that connects all philosophical works. But it is the core value of *science* as well. So what makes the philosophical interest in truth special, maybe its lack of methodology?

Before addressing this issue, I shall clarify two points regarding engagement. It is not like only political philosophers can become actively engaged with social causes. Bertrand Russell's work is very influential in philosophy of language, but he wrote many texts on political and social issues, which is, according to the Nobel Prize committee, one of the reasons why he received the Nobel Prize in literature (Russell is one of four philosophers who have won the Nobel Prize in literature; the other three are Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Henri Bergson). Russell was a very politically active intellectual, who even spent time in jail for his ideals. He is also a philosopher we should all try to emulate because of the originality of his work in the area he specialized in, as well as his active engagement with the issues of his time.

But again, what is so special about philosophers? Albert Einstein was also very active politically and wrote many political essays (one actually with Russell). Noam Chomsky's academic work is highly influential in linguistics, philosophy, and cognitive science but, like Russell, Chomsky has written several political essays and is a highly politically engaged academic. All academics should emulate these examples, but I think that because of the specific way in which philosophers are interested in *truth*, they are particularly obliged to engage, which brings me to the issue of what makes the philosophical interest in truth special.

What makes the philosophical interest in truth special? The key to answer this question is the distinction between knowledge (what one may call circumscribed, specialized, or

even technical knowledge) and understanding—a distinction that, unfortunately, has not received enough attention in contemporary epistemology. Let me give an example to illustrate this distinction. The example concerns Latin American philosophers who, like Zea, have emphasized that philosophy should always seek to find the universal without compromising one's own cultural context and authenticity. This sounds awkward, but one can see what these philosophers mean by focusing on their warning not to *merely imitate* popular or dominant philosophies.

This warning is twofold. In post-colonial countries, the warning first of all means that one should not reproduce systems of thought that were prevalent during times of oppression and led, directly or indirectly, to the justification of such oppression. But the warning also means that when one emulates dominant philosophical methodologies or approaches, one should truly *understand* these ways of doing philosophy, and not merely emulate them.

Finding this balance among originality, authenticity, and rigor is a challenge that any philosopher is confronted with. But because of obvious reasons, this is particularly challenging for philosophers in post-colonial countries. The worry for these philosophers, as expressed by Zea, is that they should cope with their specific socio-political reality, know all the relevant philosophical views, and try to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how these specific views and their socio-political context *fit together* into a coherent picture.

The goal of providing a comprehensive picture of reality is what makes the interest in truth a deeply *philosophical* one. In philosophy, truth is not pursued for a specific purpose or agenda; neither is it pursued within a particular frame of principles, but for its own sake, and in the most comprehensive way possible. It is in this respect that knowledge differs from understanding. Other examples help illustrate this difference. Fermat probably knew that his theorem was true up to a certain point, but he did not understand the implications and complexity of his conjecture. A student of mathematics or physics may reproduce a proof and always know the right result without understanding the implications of such a proof.

One may know what the axiom of the parallels is and yet not understand its importance to determine the congruence of geometrical figures. With respect to a very hot issue in physics, physicists may know how to calculate and manipulate the quantum world, and yet not understand the underlying structure that they manipulate and calculate. Finally, what I think is the clearest example of this tricky distinction, one may know everything there is to know about another person's upbringing, culture, or socio-economic situation and yet not fully understand that person's outlook of her culture and socio-economic situation.

A complete and coherent picture of what it *all* means has always been the ultimate philosophical goal. If it is achievable, this goal shall keep the philosophical flame alive until it is reached. And even if it is not achievable, it still justifies philosophy as one of the most worthwhile intellectual activities because a *better* picture can be provided—one that *increases the level of understanding of a phenomenon*, etc. Actually, the second scenario might be a better and more realistic one, in which the overall picture constantly improves itself, based on philosophical insights. Paraphrasing Wilfrid Sellars, philosophers are interested in *understanding* how things, in the broadest possible sense of the term, hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term. This is certainly a very important intellectual goal, with significant socio-political repercussions. Now the question is *how* can philosophy pursue it?

5. How?

One way of easing the tension between the universal and the parochial is to focus on what is universal in one's community. One can actually find the tendency towards the universal in any culture. What we share as humans (and not just as Latinos, Americans, etc.) is expressed in artistic and intellectual creations. It is also expressed in the achievements of the global fight against oppression, discrimination, and socio-economic injustice. Philosophers may start engaging their communities by enhancing the understanding of the universal values that motivate these artistic, intellectual, and socio-economic achievements.

One may think that philosophers have been doing this all along, when they do ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, and political philosophy. But the gap that exists between the public and professional philosophers indicates that this is not the case. Moreover, even if things were different and philosophers were addressing these topics in a way that their communities could find enlightening and engaging, this is not all of what philosophy is, or should be, about. As mentioned, there is the core value that philosophy shares with science: truth. Here, one may understand the distinction between the universal and the parochial as being deeply related to the distinction between the objective and the dogmatic.

There are no formulas to solve this problem concerning engagement. I think the best thing philosophers can do is to recover the enthusiasm that one finds in the writings of the American pragmatists. There are many moving and very well written instances of such enthusiasm. But I want to quote a passage from William James that reveals a sense of urgency that should always be associated with the enthusiasm to engage:

Believing in philosophy myself devoutly, and believing also that a kind of new dawn is breaking upon us philosophers, I feel impelled, *per fas aut nefas*, to try to impart to you some news of the situation. Philosophy is at once the most sublime and the most trivial of human pursuits. It works in the minutest crannies and it opens the widest vistas. It "bakes no bread," as has been said, but it can inspire our souls with courage; and repugnant as its manners, its doubting and challenging, its quibbling and dialectics, often are to common people, no one of us can get along without the far-fleeting beams of light it sends over the world's perspectives. These illuminations at least, and the contrast-effects of darkness and mystery that accompany them, give to what it says an interest that is much more than professional. (James 1991, 6)

One can find this enthusiasm about engagement in the writings of Latin American philosophers as well, who constantly struggle to make their philosophical views relevant to their communities at large. This enthusiasm to engage is not so present in current academic philosophy and this is a situation that should change. This is one of the insights current philosophers can take from their Latin American peers. But I shall clarify that the situation is not ideal in Latin America. It is true that many Latin American philosophers worry about engagement. Unfortunately, no substantial result has been achieved. All philosophers should appreciate this worry about engagement, but they should work together to finally produce substantial results and improvements that could bridge the gap between academic philosophy and the public.

The eloquent words of James speak to what I said about the distinction between knowledge and understanding. Sometimes knowing whether a set of propositions is true is a lot less important than understanding that there is a broader

vista that one has not acknowledged before. It is this kind of acknowledgement that truly connects philosophy with the realities of human beings across the world.

A second insight philosophers can take from Latin American philosophers is that one should never ignore issues concerning methodology, particularly its impact in drawing the distinction between the universal and the parochial. Again, the situation is far from optimal in Latin America, but it is important that it has remained a constant worry, which is something that the whole profession should emulate because of the reasons given above.

But what recommendations could be produced by these insights? Why am I calling them insights if they can be reduced to two feelings concerning uncertainty: enthusiasm and anxiety? Actually, if one agrees with Quine, these "insights" are merely an expression of frustration and desperation to preserve a fruitless way of inquiry: an *unjustified optimism* for the universal nature of philosophy and a *legitimate anxiety* concerning the irrelevance of philosophical inquiry. After all, why are philosophers uniquely endowed with the power to understand how things hang together in the broadest sense of the term?

Even if one wants to be optimistic about the future of philosophy, it seems that philosophers are just bystanders in the quest for truth. Philosophers are informed interlocutors, who at best may provide a few clever remarks that could potentially help open new lines of research in the sciences. But they cannot do a lot more than that and it is ultimately the task of the sciences to secure a meaningful quest for the truth. So the insights one can find in the optimism and anxiety of Latin American philosophers seem inconsequential. What really matters is that philosophy lacks a rigorous methodology.

One can certainly take this stance towards philosophy, but I think it is a very unproductive one. First, because as the interaction among logicians, mathematicians, and philosophers of mathematics shows (or cognitive scientists and philosophers of mind; physicists and philosophers of physics, etc.) philosophy is not a luxury that scientists indulge in during their spare time. Rather, philosophical debates *emerge* from their normal scientific activities and they have to philosophize because their quest for the truth demands it.

And second, such a stance is unproductive because it ignores the universal character of the philosophical quest for the truth, discussed above. The specialized scientific disciplines (many of which are further specialized into sub-disciplines that have little in common) need to eventually step back and ask whether the *whole* scientific enterprise is leading somewhere. Philosophy is required to tackle such a question because no specific ultra-specialized methodology can handle it. It is, to repeat a point I made before, something that relates to the distinction between knowing what happens at the sub-discipline level and understanding what it means in a broader picture. So the skeptical stance that a radical version of naturalism would favor is both unrealistic (scientists need to do some philosophy as part of their quest for the truth) and impoverished (it ignores the dimension of understanding). So it seems that the insights one can find in the writings of Latin American philosophers (which are also found in the writings of the pragmatists) are not inconsequential.

I would like to conclude with a few words about how Gaos' claim that fostering many views and different methodological strategies is a virtue, rather than a sin, of philosophy relates to Habermas' notion of communicative rationality. The quest for the truth (or any other universal value: the beautiful or the just) has an element of instrumental rationality, in which goals need to be achieved by the best means possible. As Michael Friedman

points out, this notion of instrumental rationality correlates with Rudolf Carnap's notion of internal questions.⁶ On the other hand, when there is a crisis of meaning and, to use a phrase from Thomas Kuhn, paradigm shifts are called for, instrumental rationality falls short. One needs communicative rationality to deal with what Carnap called external questions.

The importance of communicative rationality in science, highlighted by Friedman, is crucial to see why Gaos' remark is also applicable to the scientific quest for truth. Gaos says that the openness of philosophy, its rational pondering and deliberating of options, is crucial for democracy. This is in line with Habermas' notion of communicative rationality. But if Friedman is right, then there is more to Gaos' remark. It concerns not only the need for engagement with one's community in order to achieve democratic values, but also a quest for what is universal in one's community by informing the sciences when they confront crises of meaning. So maybe the philosophical task, as Gaos suggested, is not hopeless, even if it lacks a methodology that would put it on a secure path.

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Endnotes

1. My translation.
2. See *Discurso de Filosofía* (p. 91). My translation.
3. For more on how this idea of Gaos relates to Jurgen Habermas' notion of communicative action (and what Michael Friedman takes to be the unique role of philosophy in the quest for truth), see section 4.
4. For example, there was an *International Conference on Pragmatism and the Hispanic/Latino World* in February of 2010 at Texas A&M devoted to this issue.
5. See *La Filosofía Americana Como Filosofía Sin Más*.
6. See *Dynamics of Reason*, particularly part I, section 3.

On the Invisibility Problem of Latin American Philosophy*

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1. Invisibility

There is a widespread view among Latin American philosophers according to which Latin American philosophy is invisible. A few years ago, when I was trying to decide among the offers I had as a prospective student, one of the graduate students at one of the hosting departments in the U.S. asked me: "So, if you don't come here, where else would you go? To nowhere Mexico?" Other Latin American friends had a similar experience: "Do you really prefer to go back home? Is there anything to do in Argentina?" Since then it seemed clear to me that, for the rest of the (tiny) philosophical world, Latin America did not exist. Latin American philosophy is invisible to pretty much the rest of the western tradition.

But this "external" invisibility is not the only form of invisibility that Latin American philosophy suffers from. There also seems to be some form of internal invisibility. Latin American philosophers do in fact work on and publish the results of a great number of research projects in all areas of the discipline. But this work is rarely read, discussed, criticized, or studied even by the departmental colleagues of the author, let alone by other Latin American philosophers from different latitudes. Most of the time philosophy seminars in Latin America are devoted to the work of authors from different groups. Whether they are classical works (e.g., Heidegger, Gadamer, Bergson, Foucault, Quine) or more recent developments (e.g., MacFarlane, Recanati, Cappelen, Schroeder, Gibbard) is irrelevant. As a matter of fact there are very few (if any) seminars, articles, or reviews devoted to the work of some or other Latin American philosopher. It seems clear that for the (even tinier) Latin American philosophical world, Latin America does not exist. Latin American philosophy is, paradoxically, invisible to Latin American philosophy itself.

This, of course, is not a comfortable situation to be in. It is certainly worth thinking of if only to get rid of it. There are, of course, several different causes contributing to this situation: economic, political, and perhaps even cultural reasons will certainly be behind this. One would hope that these are not the only ones and that some of the rest might be within the reach of Latin American philosophers. The hope of many of us is, thus, that an important source of this invisibility is caused by a set of bad, yet traditional, academic habits. If we can identify them, the hope goes, we might get rid of them and, with that, decrease our invisibility. What is causing this invisibility? What should Latin American philosophers do about it?

2. Originality and presence

There are, as I said, at least two forms of invisibility for Latin American philosophy. It is invisible externally, to other philosophical groups, and internally to Latin American philosophers as well. Ezcurdia (2004) offers what appears to be the most intuitive account of the phenomenon. We are invisible, both here and there, because we are not present, our work does not appear in the international arena. Having international appearance will give us local presence, thus solving both the external and internal forms of invisibility. What is the reasoning behind this?

Originality is, certainly, a way of gaining presence. Thus, it is natural to think that a lack of originality can explain a given lack of presence. Ezcurdia starts by distinguishing between what she takes to be four different kinds of originality in philosophy: interpretative, argumentative, problem-making, and problem-solving. There is interpretative originality when one finds new ways of understanding the work of historic philosophical figures such as Descartes or Kant. One achieves argumentative originality when one discovers new arguments (or counter-arguments) that help develop a given debate. Very closely associated with argumentative originality is what Ezcurdia calls "problem-making" originality. When one, like Gettier, discovers important problems in what appeared to be acceptable accounts, one can achieve problem-making originality. Similar claims are made about problem-solving originality.

These distinctions are helpful for our purposes because, Ezcurdia claims, even though there is a lot of original work within Latin American philosophy, most of it is misplaced. On her view most of what we know as Latin American philosophy, both in print and in the classroom, is concerned with the philosophical interpretation of historical figures. This kind of originality is not, on her view, the most philosophical one or the one that draws most attention. If one looks at what goes on in the international philosophical arena one will find that most of

the attention is given to philosophical problems rather than to the interpretation of big historic figures.

The reasoning from here is straightforward. If philosophical attention is mostly directed toward philosophical problems, then focusing on arguing for, developing, or even solving philosophical problems will most probably bring out the kind of philosophical originality required to be present at (i.e., draw the attention from) the international arena. This would, Ezcurdia hypothesizes, give us the kind of “external” attention required to get rid of the equally external form of invisibility. She seems to assume, as well, that the internal form of invisibility is a function of the external one such that, once Latin American philosophers become active players in the international arena, their work will also become relevant in the local Latin American realm.

This account of the invisibility problem has several advantages: it offers a clear diagnosis and, most importantly, a simple and straightforward recipe for solving the problem at hand. I am afraid, however, that the diagnosis might be historically incorrect and, thus, the recipe might be fruitless.

It is at least controversial to claim that most of the philosophically original work done in the Latin American tradition is dedicated to the interpretation of historic figures. The work of José Gaos, Carlos Vaz Ferreira, and more recently Luis Villoro, Leopoldo Zea, Mario Bunge, Enrique Dussel, Carlos Pereda, and a growing number of young Latin American philosophers shows that there is a very considerable amount of original argumentative philosophical work in Latin America. In fact, this tradition dates quite a while back (see Dussel, Mendieta, and Bohórquez 2009). It seems controversial to claim that most of Latin American philosophy is focused on the interpretation of historic figures.

It is, thus, doubtful that by merely focusing on producing a more problem-based original work in philosophy we will be able to solve the invisibility problem. Such goals have already been achieved. There is a lot of original, problem-based, philosophical work in the Latin American tradition. Yet, it has not been enough to avoid the invisibility Latin American philosophy suffers from.

Yet, Ezcurdia seems right to point that the internal invisibility is a function of the external one. It seems natural to think that Latin American philosophy will become more visible to Latin American philosophers if it is visible to all philosophers. But even if we grant this we have to ask why. Why is it that Latin American philosophy will become visible to Latin American philosophers in virtue of being visible to the international community? The answer is simple: because Latin American philosophy is keener on attending to the international arena than to the Latin American context.

Ezcurdia’s point about originality and presence rests upon what appears to be a bad habit—what Pereda 1998 calls “the proceedings of arrogant reasoning”—among Latin American philosophers: the branching fever and the novelty fanaticism. I will describe these in detail when I present Pereda’s 2004 own diagnosis of the invisibility problem. By now it should be enough with a brief description.

“Branching fever” refers to the bad habit of dedicating one’s work to establishing branches of some or other theory or project (e.g., anomalous monism or ordinary language philosophy). More often than not, these are theories or projects that for some or other reason gained a tantalizing glare in the international arena.

“Novelty fanaticism” refers to the bad habit of dedicating one’s work to following whatever appears to be in vogue in the international arena. It goes beyond merely following certain discussions or being well informed about recent developments

in one’s discipline. The novelty fanatic is unable to critically judge the value of a given theory and follows it merely because of its novelty or fame.

Like Pereda 2004, I think both of these bad reasoning habits are common within Latin American philosophy. I also think they help us understand why internal visibility (or invisibility) is a function of the external one. Latin American philosophy has the bad habit of looking for some other group’s work to follow, repeat, defend, or discuss. This is, already, a bad thing to do.

Briefly put, even though there is enough originality, most Latin American philosophy is haunted by the two proceedings of arrogant reasoning: internal visibility is a function of the external partly because Latin American philosophy is not used to thinking on its own. And it is not because it cannot do so, but because not doing so is the easiest path to follow. If we want to get rid of this problem we must be clear on what is really causing it. Ezcurdia’s 2004 proposal is correct but at a basic level. She is partly right: Latin American philosophy will become more visible to Latin American philosophers if it is more visible to the international community. But aiming at international visibility as a recipe will not solve the problem. If anything, it will turn it into a more acute problem by nourishing the bad academic habits of branching fever and novelty fanaticism. Attending a philosopher’s work merely because it is internationally renowned, and not because it is simply good or interesting, is a mistaken way to proceed; it does not matter whether the philosopher in question is Latin American or not.

3. Metaphilosophy and community

Hurtado 2004 offers a different picture of the invisibility problem. On his view, the problem is owed to two opposing and well intended, yet pernicious, projects within Latin American philosophy: i.e., the modernizing and the authenticity projects. These traditions have made opposing claims on what Latin American philosophy should be, both failing to create a dialogue among Latin American philosophers. Hurtado argues, convincingly I think, that in order to solve the invisibility problem, Latin Americans are to aim at creating a philosophical community based on the creation of a dialogue that may include different generations of Latin American philosophers.

As I said, I agree with Hurtado’s proposed solution. But I think that, as it stands, it is dangerously detailed, in a way that may give place, once more, to the bad academic habits that permeate Latin American philosophy. To see this let me first describe Hurtado’s accurate historical analysis.

According to Hurtado it is not until the end of the nineteenth century that the influence of positivism, together with its well-known modernizing aims, imposed a cleavage between a long standing scholastic tradition in Latin American philosophy and the new philosophy of the moment. An important metaphilosophical question arose: What should we do *qua* philosophers? How should we, Latin American philosophers, do our job?

Two different and incompatible answers were given. These, in turn, became two different and incompatible metaphilosophical projects that thrived in the twentieth century. On the one hand, the modernizing project demanded that Latin American philosophers be properly trained, rigorous, and, most importantly, up to date on what was going on in the European tradition. While Latin Americans were still immersed in scholastic approaches, Europe had already been through the workings of illustration, romanticism, and idealism. This was, on the view of the modernizing metaphilosophy, unacceptable.

On the other hand, the authenticity project demanded that Latin American philosophers be true to their context and origins. Rigor and professionalism aside, Latin American

philosophers should aim at producing a “truly” Latin American philosophy, concerned with whatever the problems of Latin America were: e.g., poverty, colonialism, freedom, social justice, etc. Following this line of thought, Latin American philosophy had to be *about* Latin America; most importantly, it had an important role to play in the defense and exercise of liberty. Thus, on this view, anything that involved traditional European debates (e.g., phenomenology, intentionality, etc.) would not be considered authentic. The authenticity metaphilosophy urged Latin Americans to fully embrace their context and not to step outside.

It should be clear why, as Hurtado 2004 argues, both these metaphilosophical projects are mistaken, although they are both well intended. They both aim at giving Latin American philosophy the visibility it lacks. They both, however, failed. On Hurtado’s view this failure is owed to the fact that none of these metaphilosophical projects can achieve what is needed: a Latin American philosophical community united by a substantial philosophical dialogue.

To achieve this dialogical goal, Hurtado offers a fairly detailed proposal that intends to cover all from philosophy seminars up to research projects and academic reunions. Latin American philosophy needs to create a philosophical tradition, which in turn requires a community and a common dialogue. More specifically, Hurtado claims, we need to keep the good-making features of both the modernizing and the authenticity metaphilosophical projects: a rigorous, well-informed, professional philosophical community that is nevertheless in touch with its local situation and committed to the defense and exercise of the liberty Latin America seems to lack.

I agree with Hurtado’s proposal. If we are to solve the invisibility problem, Latin American philosophy must first have a philosophical community. Creating a community, a tradition, and a dialogue seems not only correct but also an obligation. The proposal is in general terms good; but the devil is in the details.

To see why there is reason to worry it will be useful, once more, to go back to Pereda’s 2004 diagnosis. According to him, there is a third unfortunate academic habit fairly widespread within Latin American philosophy, what he calls “nationalist enthusiasm.” This bad habit has appeared very naturally as a reaction to the other two (i.e., branching fever and novelty fanaticism). In order to free ourselves from the colonial standards of doing whatever the metropolis (Europe or the U.S.) does, it has been natural to think we should focus on our “true” identity, on our “local” problems, our own “national” philosophy—and reflect upon such “interesting” things as the phenomenology of Mexicanity (see Portilla 1966).

It is not difficult to see how these bad reasoning habits are related to the polarized metaphilosophical projects described by Hurtado. The modernizing project, on the one hand, seems to recommend both a branching fever—to be modern one must repeat and hopefully establish what is done in the philosophical metropolis—and a novelty fanaticism—one must be updated on whatever the newest philosophical trend is in the metropolis. The authenticity project, on the other hand, very clearly, and sometimes even explicitly, urges Latin American philosophers to be nationalists, to be “authentic” to their “origins”—whatever that might mean.

It is uncontroversial that one should avoid falling into any of these bad reasoning habits. Neither the modernizing metaphilosophy nor its partner in vice, the authenticity project, is acceptable. There are, of course, good and bad ideas behind each project. I agree with Hurtado that one should try to keep the rigor and professionalism behind the modernizing project, but I think the idea that we should also keep the localism that

underlies the authenticity project can be easily misinterpreted and, thus, misused. What is worth keeping from the authenticity metaphilosophy is its insistence that Latin American philosophy liberates itself from simply following the ideas produced in the philosophical metropolis of the moment. But this by no means entails that it *should*, in turn, be “true” to its context or, as Hurtado puts it, “congruent with its reality.”

The idea of being congruent with one’s reality can be either trivial or pernicious. On the one hand, there is a thin sense in which it is acceptable: the sense in which one cannot help but be congruent with one’s reality. Philosophy, like any other human institution, takes place within a given society, with its own conditions and its own problems. No matter what a philosopher does, she will always do it from within such constitutive limitations. In that sense, she can be said to be congruent with her reality. This is, of course, a trivial sense that gives very little, if any, guidance.

On the other hand, there is a robust sense in which being “congruent” with one’s own reality is not acceptable: the sense in which philosophical theorizing *should* be concerned with the immediate social, political, and economic context surrounding each philosopher. It is certainly acceptable to decide to work on any particular social, political, or economic context. What seems unacceptable is the normative thought behind this idea. There is no reason why one *should* be (in a robust sense) congruent with one’s reality when philosophizing. No reason, that is, aside from those constituting the nationalist enthusiasm that originally characterized the authenticity metaphilosophy. Anyone may very well decide to become a philosopher of Latin America (as opposed to a Latinamerican philosopher), and take Latin America’s contextual situation as the starting point of her reflections. But to think that to do so is a *must* is to turn philosophy into ideology and critical reflection into a form of localist (or nationalist) fanaticism. There is no reason to think that philosophers, let alone Latin American philosophers, *should* be devoted with one or other topic. Here I agree with Pereda 2004 and Rossi 1998. “The glory of philosophy is precisely the fact that it has no topic, it interferes everywhere” (Rossi 1998, 199-200).

I do not believe that Hurtado advocates this view. His views on what should be done are general enough to avoid this problem. My point is merely that, unless one gives an even more detailed proposal, the idea of a Latin American philosophical community can, once more, be misleading. As we will see in the following section, Pereda 2004 offers a more specific proposal, fully consistent with what Hurtado argues for.

4. The proceedings of arrogant reasoning

Throughout different works, Carlos Pereda (see Pereda 1993, 1998, and 2004) has identified several different mechanisms or proceedings of arrogant reasoning that permeate, at least, Latin American philosophy. Three of them seem worth noting: branching fever, novelty fanaticism, and nationalist enthusiasm. I have briefly described each one of them in previous sections. According to Pereda 2004, Latin American philosophy faces the problem of invisibility, at least partly, in virtue of these bad habits that give substance to what Pereda 1998 calls “arrogant reasoning.”

These bad habits are a residue of Latin America’s colonialism. A philosopher falls prey of the branching fever whenever she spends all of her philosophical efforts repeating the formulas of a given theory that once looked so extraordinary (e.g., functionalism, descriptivism, referentialism, etc.). The goal is, then, to establish branches of this or that theory here and there in Latin America.

Closely related with the branching fever is the novelty fanaticism. A philosopher who is so tantalized by a theory as to dedicate her work to repeating it may easily continue being tantalized by any new theory that becomes the new trend. It is certainly desirable to be well informed about the development of one's discipline, but this can easily turn into an obsessed quest for novelties where what matters is not acquiring knowledge but merely "being up to date."

Both the branching fever and the novelties fanaticism are outward looking habits. They nourish what Hurtado 2004 describes as the modernizing metaphilosophy in Latin America that recommends that one improve philosophically by becoming more European or more American or more whatever the metropolis happens to be. The theoretical branches to be established and the novelties to be found are always those of the international arena, where Latin America is invisible. The nationalist enthusiasm is a natural, inward-looking, reaction to this attitude. A philosopher falls prey to the nationalist enthusiasm when she comes to believe the only way she can liberate herself from the outward-looking colonial habits is to redirect her attention inwards to what "truly" constitutes her "Latin American identity." In doing so, a healthy exercise of autonomy turns into an obsessed nationalism that praises whatever counts as "Latin American" above anything else.

On this view the invisibility problem is—excluding possible social, economic, and political factors—caused by the existence of these three bad colonial habits among Latin American philosophers. If we can get rid of them we will, at least, get rid of the internal causes of the invisibility problem.

Together with this diagnosis, Pereda offers a therapy: to follow four lessons Latin Americans have learned from Latin America's famous (and quite visible) essay tradition: (i) freshness; (ii) particularity; (iii) publicity; and (iv) interrogation. The freshness condition requires that one direct one's efforts to a given problem from an unknown or unfamiliar perspective. The particularity condition requires that one be well informed about particular instances of the problem in question. The publicity constraint requires that one be able to address the relevant issues in a way that is accessible to the general public and not just to a reduced group of specialists. Finally, the interrogation constraint demands one to aim at influencing the beliefs, desires, or actions of others. One must aim at convincing others.

All four of these are conditions common to most well-known Latin American essayists, including Octavio Paz, Ruben Darío, José Martí, Jorge Luis Borges, and many others. Pereda's hope is that by following these four recipes Latin American philosophy may acquire some visibility. But he appears to be skeptical.

With respect to the question of whether [following this recipe] will bring our invisibility to an end, there is a cautious answer: not necessarily. However, we will at least eliminate some of the internal causes of such invisibility. Maybe, in our leisure time, we will slowly begin to acquire the habit of glancing through the articles and books of our colleagues [...] and, with time, if the gods allow it, we will initiate very thorough and illuminating debates among us. (Pereda 2004, 73)¹

Of the three accounts of the phenomena that I have presented here, Pereda's seems to be the most accurate and well balanced. It explains not only what causes that sad feeling of invisibility associated with Latin American philosophy, but also how those causes—those bad reasoning habits—feed into each other. It explains how the novelties fanaticism naturally

stems from the branching fever and also how the nationalist enthusiasm is an expected reaction. I think, however, that Pereda's account is incomplete. It does not tell us why or how we got into this conundrum in the first place. What pushed Latin American philosophy into an obsessed branching fever and an equally unconstrained novelties fanaticism? Why is it that, as Pereda himself acknowledges, we might still be invisible even if we get rid of such bad habits? And finally, why would Latin American philosophers keep feeling invisible even when their colleagues read and discuss their ideas? The answer to these questions will, I believe, tell us what exactly is responsible for the invisibility, which is, to a great extent, a widespread phenomenology within Latin American philosophy.

5. Poor self-image and authority figures

The social psychologist William Swann (1981; see also Swann 1983 and 1999) developed useful tools for understanding the dynamics of self and group identities. On his account, individuals (as well as groups) have a self-verifying drive that leads them to look for information that confirms the representations (beliefs, desires, feelings) they have of them. This influences behavior: individuals (and groups) will do things in order to convince others that such representations are accurate. This drive appears to work independently of whether the self-image is positive or negative. It is commonly accepted that this drive works together with a self-enhancement motivation that partly causes individuals (and groups) to behave in ways that improve their self-image. Self-enhancement is believed to be important for self-esteem.

Self-verification and self-enhancement are two important motivations determining individual and group behavior. They share a common goal when the self-image is positive: both mechanisms will motivate the individual (or group) to behave in ways that confirm a positive self-image. But they can also be in tension with each other when the self-image is negative. In such cases self-verification will motivate the individual or group to behave in ways that confirm a negative self-image—and quite possibly a low self-esteem. This opposes the self-enhancement motivation aiming at creating a positive self-image. In this conflict the self-verification drive may prevail over the self-enhancement one when the individual (or group) is certain of the substantially negative self-image it has. When such imbalance is in place, the evidence suggests, the self-verification drive may cause individuals (and perhaps also groups) to be attracted to individuals (and groups) that mistreat them or undermine their self-worth in one way or another (see Swann, Chang-Schneider, and McClarty 2007).

Thus, having a negative or poor self-image is more than just undesirable; it can be very difficult to change, depending on how negative the self-image is, given that there is an independent drive for self-verification. A poor self-image can be caused, in the case of individuals, by a cluster of negative criticism collected through development. Children, in particular, are vulnerable to accepting negative judgments when they come from what they take to be authority figures. This, I believe, has a parallel social mechanism: groups that take other groups as authority figures—and thus, behave in a child-like manner—may form a poor self-image as a result of collected negative judgments coming from the "authority." These judgments made by other groups will also probably be influenced by the self-verifying behavior of such groups.

Let me now go back to the invisibility problem. I have argued that Pereda 2004 offers what appears to be a well-balanced and accurate diagnosis: Latin American philosophy owes its invisibility (at least partly) to bad colonial habits of reasoning and academic behavior. Once we get rid of them, with a fresh, well-informed, accessible, and interrogative attitude towards

our discipline, we might get our colleagues to read and discuss our work. But, Pereda suspects, we will not necessarily get rid of the invisibility. This prompted several questions. How did Latin American philosophy get into those bad habits in the first place? Why would Latin American philosophy still be invisible even if Latin American philosophers find it important?

I believe the social-psychological tools I just described can help us answer these questions. Consider the following as a hypothetical account yet to be confirmed by a rigorous empirical research. Suppose, to begin with, that Latin American philosophy has, in this psychological sense, a “child-like” attitude perhaps owed to colonial mistreatment (see Galeano 1971). An important part of this “child-like” attitude and self-image is the fact that other groups—e.g., depending on the historical moment, Europe or the U.S.—are considered to be authorities. Suppose, further on, that this “child-like” self-image also happens to be rather poor. If so, then it should be expected that Latin American philosophy has a low self-esteem and a rather high view of what is considered to be the authority figure. As a result, both Latin American philosophy’s self-image and its image of others are distorted. It feels as if it were utterly unable to produce valuable philosophical work while the authority-group is light-years ahead.

If the brief description I gave of the self-verifying and self-enhancing mechanisms is correct, then we should also expect Latin American philosophy to behave in a way that justifies its poor self-image: e.g., considering itself unworthy of interesting original thoughts, limiting its work to the repetition of the one produced in the metropolis, or to merely being updated on what is done there. Furthermore, we should also expect the group to be attracted by whatever the authority figure does. It might even value such a group highly enough to consider imitating it, with the accompanying feeling of failure and frustration. If the self-image is poor enough, then we can expect this group to be involved in substantial forms of self-verification that will preclude it from changing its views about its philosophical worth.

Thus, if the “poor self-image” hypothesis is correct, we can explain a lot of different things: why Latin American philosophy feels it is invisible; why other philosophical communities also think that way; why this view has prevailed over several decades, thus becoming an undesirable tradition; why it considers the philosophical work done in the metropolis to be the standard of adequacy, thus striving to imitate, or at least follow it; and, last but not least, why Latin American philosophy would not consider the attention and admiration of Latin American philosophers to be enough for it to stop feeling invisible.

Finally, there is something else this hypothetical account can do that none of the other three can: explain the relation between the internal factors of the invisibility (i.e., the bad habits described by Pereda 2004) and the external ones (i.e., the economic and political differences between whatever the relevant philosophical metropolis might be and Latin America). It has been pointed out in social psychology that sometimes groups engage in forms of “upwards social comparisons” (see Collins 1996). That is, they compare themselves against a group that is considered to be superior. Such comparisons can have positive, self-enhancing, effects. But it can also be (and has been for Latin America) frustrating when the gap between the compared groups is simply too large. The social, political, and economic gap between the philosophical metropolis and Latin America may have proven to be too large for the latter to achieve some form of self-enhancement through the comparison. So far, the self-verification of an extremely negative self-image appears to have prevailed.

It goes without saying that, even if successful, this is still a partial account. I have not properly addressed the relevance of the social, economic, and political differences between Latin American philosophy and, say, that in the Anglo-Saxon world. The socio-economic gap, as I just said, is too large for it to be ignored as an important causal factor of this invisibility. Thus, one should also expect that a socio-economic boost in Latin America would also contribute to solving the problem.

6. Concluding remarks: Toward a better form of autonomy

I have presented the problem of invisibility as taking both internal and external forms. Latin American philosophy is invisible both in the international arena as well as in the local one. I presented three different diagnostics owed to Ezcurdia 2004, Hurtado 2004, and Pereda 2004, and argued that the latter is to be preferred as it offers a better supported and more balanced diagnosis based on the identification of bad colonial habits, together with a more detailed and less problematic proposal for solving the problem.

I also argued, however, that Pereda’s account is incomplete, for it leaves us wondering how we got into those bad habits in the first place and why Latin American visibility is not enough. We are left wondering why having a fresh, properly informed, accessible, and interrogative attitude is not enough to grant Latin American philosophy with the relevant form of visibility. In the previous section I offered an account based on the idea that Latin American philosophy has an extremely poor self-image, one that it has managed to sustain through time thanks to some of the mechanisms underlying the dynamics of social identity—i.e., self-verification and self-enhancement, among others. This account explains why Latin American philosophy got into the bad habits in the first place, why those habits have persisted, and, especially, why Latin American visibility is not enough for Latin American philosophers to feel visible.

If this account is correct then Latin American philosophy suffers from a severe case of poor self-image. It is not surprising, on this view, that a fresh, properly informed, generally accessible and interrogative attitude is not enough to grant Latin Americans with the kind of visibility they feel they need. If visibility, in this context, is a sign of autonomy, then the good habits described by Pereda are not enough to grant the kind of autonomy needed. Latin American philosophy needs to do more than just keep a fresh, well-informed, and interrogative attitude. It also needs to—following the “child” metaphor—“grow up” and stop considering the group in the relevant philosophical metropolis as the authority. It needs to start giving equal worth and praise to Latin American philosophy, a praise and worth that it surely deserves.

I started this discussion by referring to the non-place that Latin American philosophy appears to occupy. I have spent the last few pages explaining why Latin American philosophy takes itself to be so invisible. It remains to say something about the external side of this invisibility. If the psychological explanation I gave is correct then external invisibility should be, at least in part, a function of the internal one. It is invisible to other philosophical communities because it strives to verify the extremely poor self-image it happens to have. Latin American philosophy is at least partly responsible for the poor image other philosophical communities have of it. It comes as no surprise that members of other groups wonder if there is any such thing as, say, Mexican or Latin American philosophy.

So external invisibility is a function of the self-image Latin America has. Can we expect external *visibility* to be also a function of it? I think we can and should. On my view, this gives us the kind of “therapy” required. Following Pereda’s

advice, together with the realization that it is its own self-image in relation to other groups that needs a change, will solve the invisibility problem of Latin American philosophy. Having a fresh, properly informed, generally accessible, and interrogative attitude towards the discipline will get rid of the uncomfortable invisibility, provided we stop thinking it is some other group's authoritative approval that is needed.

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Endnotes

1. The translation is mine.

Paths of Ontology

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1. Preamble

When the term "ontology" began to be used (in its Latin form), around the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was intended to distinguish the higher part of metaphysics—*metaphysica generalis*—from other, less exalted parts. What was aimed at, among other things, was to enable ontology, once this distinction had been made, to parade the title of *philosophia prima* over other branches of metaphysics, perhaps closer to theology or the individual sciences. With the passing of the years, the word "ontology" has acquired other meanings;

nonetheless, it nearly always retains in them the aim of referring to the most general and abstract study of being.

My purpose in this essay is to offer a pocket guide to the paths that cross the vast territory of ontology. Large swathes of this territory have been abandoned for centuries; it seems, however, that some of them are beginning to be reworked. It is necessary, then, to repair the roads, interconnect them, and not to trust that any one of them alone will lead us to our final destination. For these tasks, the map or guide that I offer here may be of some use.

2. Pure ontology

Quine (1963) insisted that if the ontological question was "What is there?" the answer would simply be "Everything." For a defender of what I shall call *pure ontology*, ontology is not interested in an inventory of all the things that exist—even less so in what some theory postulates exist. If we take seriously that ontology is the study of *Being*, it cannot be concerned with any entity in particular, nor in the totality of entities, nor in their fundamental properties, nor in the diverse relations there may be between them, nor in their primal or final reason for being. But then, what *is* it concerned with?

For an ontological purist, the question about being cannot be so ordinary as the way in which Quine posited it, but when one tries to formulate it with the desired depth, one meets enormous difficulties. Heidegger (1996)—the greatest purist—stated that the ontological question would have to be the first, the broadest, the deepest. Let us suppose that the question takes the form: "What is being?" There are no words to answer this question. What can one say? That being is what nothingness is not? On the other hand, does not the question in some way imply the answer (i.e., *that which is*)? It could be thought that by restating it in the form "What does *to be* mean?" we might find a way out of the predicament. But to ask about the meaning of a word—even the word "being"—is not to pose an ontological question in the strict sense. And if one says that "to be" means this or that, would it not perhaps be necessary then to ask oneself about the meaning of the word "be" and so on *ad infinitum*? And would not the same happen with any other question we chose to make about being (e.g., "What is the meaning of being?")? According to Hartmann (1954), the meaning of being would itself have to possess being, and thus we would be presupposing, once again, the being of that which permits us to formulate the question about being. Nor is "Why is there something instead of nothing?" the ontological question, because even if we knew the answer we could still be in suspense as regards being. The answer, besides, could well be as enigmatic as the question itself. It could be that God made the world and did so just because he did. It would seem therefore that if the ontological purist insists that the question about being must have the maximum generality, the maximum abstraction, then the conceptual field for formulating the question would be so minute that there would be no room in it for either the question or the answer. It would, indeed, not be a conceptual area, but rather a point on which one cannot step. Pure ontology, seen thus, would be ineffable, it would be the most ambitious of the dreams of reason. And even if we allow that the ontological question can be formulated, the threat would still exist of the answer being too concise, too meagre. Perhaps the complete text of pure ontology, the answer to the ontological question, comes down to Parmenides' dictum that *being is and non-being is not*. Or perhaps the text would be just as brief but radically different; for example, the Hegelian formula: *being and non-being are the same*. How are we to choose? How to argue?

Ortega (1974) stated that we suffer from a *perplexity* at being and that this is what leads us to do ontology. This

perplexity in itself has no reason to be an object of study for ontology—I think that inquiry into the being of the entity that poses the question about being need not be a prolegomenon of ontology; nonetheless, I do believe that thinking about the perplexity of which Ortega spoke may help us to understand better the extraordinary project of a pure ontology. Ontological perplexity seems unformulable in any kind of question whatever. This does not mean that the perplexity is unfounded, but that it seems to go beyond the problems that we can express with a language like our own, made for speaking about entities but not about being. It would seem that in order to dissipate, or at least express the perplexity by means of language, the only recourse we are left with is poetry (or formal logic). Ontology understood in this way would no longer be a science, but would be more profound than any science. And here it is worth recalling the idea of the ontological mystery of which Marcel (1959) has spoken (the word “mystery” is pompous and has a musty religious smell, but I am afraid it is exact). There would be no ontological *problem*—no question; what there would be is a *mystery* and we would be told that one should not confuse one thing with the other. What poetry would achieve—if in truth it achieved anything—would not be to replace perplexity with comprehension—less still an explanation, but to exchange it for a sort of *illumination*.

3. Higher ontology

If ontology is not to be reduced to a brief aphorism, it needs to extend its field of study and its conceptual terrain. But how is one to achieve this without betraying the definition of ontology as the study of being as being: in other words, being and nothing more? The answer lies in something that Aristotle (1990) realized long ago: that the concept of being is expressed in several different ways, and (which comes to the same thing in the end) that the words *be* and *being* have more than one legitimate ontological meaning.

Taken as a noun, three types of meaning seem to be associated with the word “being”: a concrete thing or object (e.g., “Every being deserves respect”); an essence (e.g., “Flying is natural to the hawk’s very being”); and existence (e.g., “We’ll have to work hard to bring the project into being”). Likewise, there are three different meanings involved in the use of “to be” as a verb: as predication (e.g., “The tree *is* leafy”), as identity (e.g., “That man *is* President Roosevelt”), and as existence (e.g., “To be or not to be,” “Once upon a time there was a princess...”). The verb “to exist,” on the other hand, has a narrower range of meaning than “to be” and refers to what *is* in truth or reality (“ghosts don’t really exist”); or what “is there” (“the house I was born in still exists,” “dinosaurs have ceased to exist”).

These meanings of “being” provide the subject-matter of ontology, and we might say that they refer to the highest modalities of being. Ontology is here occupied not with being at its ultimate level of abstraction, but with the *entity*, the *essence*, with *predication*, *existence*, and *identity*. I shall refer to these concepts as *higher ontological concepts*. Unlike *pure ontology*—which describes circles in a very confined space like a dog chasing its tale—*higher ontology* has a wider conceptual field. Each of the words considered points to its particular ontological path. Some ontologies have tried to give pride of place to one or other of these above the rest. For centuries ontology was overwhelmingly occupied with essence. To the question about what a thing *is*, the answer, according to Aristotle (1990), consisted in offering the essence of the thing. Others would insist, like Suárez (1960), that there is no difference between the essence of a thing and its existence. Yet others, on the other hand, and for other reasons, have placed existence, in particular that of the human being, above essence. According to Gilson (1951), the act of existing cannot

be apprehended conceptually. For Quine (1963), the existential quantifier and the variable take in everything we need to know about existence. Substance has also been taken as the nucleus of ontology, for it has been said that the primary sense of “being” is that of substance. It could be said, to give another example, that the copula can be reduced to existence, that the sentence “Sylvester is an animal” is equivalent in ontological terms to “the animality of Sylvester exists.” Or it could be said that in some cases existence is a predicate and, therefore, implies a copula; for example, “Sabrina exists” is equivalent to “Sabrina is existent.” Or we could maintain with Hegel (1973) that predication is, in the final instance, identity—that the only absolutely true proposition has the form $A = A$. For some, such as Frege, predication is not at all a relation; for others, like Bergman (1992), it is a kind of nexus.

This is not the place to expound or even to list all the systems of higher ontology that have been offered throughout the history of philosophy. As a solitary example we will offer Castañeda’s *theory of guises* (1989). This theory does not concern itself with the ultimate concept of being, but with entity, essence, predication, identity, and existence. An important characteristic of this theory is that it maintains that there is not just one, but several types of predicative link: for example, one type of predication is involved in a statement like “Fabian is tall,” and another in the statement “the gold mountain is of gold.” According to Castañeda, the things we see and touch (and also those we neither see nor touch) are aggregates of what he calls *guises*, i.e., conglomerates or bundles of properties that fall within the scope of an operator which, so to speak, transforms the conglomerate into a concrete object. The *guises*, like the Leibnizian substances, lack raw material: they are made exclusively of properties. Castañeda’s theory also adopts the idea of Meinong (1981) that existence is a characteristic that an object may or may not have. There are existent objects, such as the King of Norway; and nonexistent objects like the golden mountain or the round square. Finally, the theory of *guises* also has something to tell us about identity and, in particular, some of the problems that we find in natural language regarding this peculiar relation.

Higher ontology can be further extended if we take into account, as well as the three senses of “being/to be” referred to above (which correspond to the Spanish verb *ser*), two other senses (corresponding to the Spanish verbs *estar* and *haber*) with an ontological dimension. *Estar* marks out existence or being in a particular place and/or time (e.g., “I shall only be here a couple of hours”), and limits the predication to a more or less stable, but contingent, situation (e.g., “The pear is ripe”). Connected with the verb *estar* is *estado* (and its English cognate *state*), which refers to a circumstance that remains unchanging, and *estancia* (a *stay*, or period of remaining; or alternatively, a place where one *stays*, i.e., a room), where ontological resonances are also present. Finally, the Spanish verb *haber*, apart from its uses to indicate existence (e.g., *Hay un Dios* = “There is a God”), has two other senses with ontological relevance: occurrence (as in *Hubo un incendio en el pueblo* = “There was a fire in the village”); or presence (as in *Hay alguien por aquí?* = “Is there anybody there?”). Closely related to *haber* are the words *habitar* (“to dwell, inhabit”) and *habitación* (“a habitation, a dwelling place or room”), also with ontological relevance. These are words that have been much studied by Spanish-speaking ontologists. Ortega (1974), Zubiri (1962), Ferrater Mora (1967), Basave (1982), and Peña (1992) have all written on *haber*. While Ortega (1962), Marías (1955), García Bacca (1963), and Xirau (1985) have each written on *estar*.

Regarding the verb *estar* one might say that it denotes a *mode* of existence of entities and thus does not enter the same

level as the higher ontological concepts (i.e., entity, essence, predication, and identity). This does not, however, prevent us from including *haber*, as an object of study in higher ontology, since this must deal with the ultimate characteristics of the extensions of higher ontological concepts. In this sense, *estar* would perform in higher ontology a similar role to that of *possibility* and *gradualness*. The same could be said of *haber* which, when it refers to occurrence or presence, indicates to us ultimate modalities of the existence of events or space-time entities. However, one important difference between *possibility* and *gradualness* on the one hand, and the Spanish verbs *estar* and *haber*, on the other, is that while the former concepts have been studied in a formal and technical manner (one thinks, for example, of the works by Lewis [1986] and Peña [1992], respectively), the two verbs have not received this kind of treatment—which, of course, is not to say that they have not been studied in depth. Another case that could be said to belong to higher ontology and that has received a formal treatment is the concept of *not*. Ontology, it would be said, ought to concern itself not only with the existent, but with the non-existent, not only with the condition of an object's possessing a property, but with that of its not having one. The path of what we could call *negative ontology* has had illustrious practitioners, but they have been few, and there is still a halo of mystery floating around the concept of *not*.

4. Transcendental ontology

As we have seen, higher ontology is not concerned with the ultimate concept of being, but with the higher ontological concepts; nonetheless, those who insist on defending the thesis that there is an univocal concept of being that is above the higher ontological concepts have affirmed that there is an oblique way in which ontology can say something more about this ultimate concept if we take into account the concepts that the Scholastics called *transcendental*.

The transcendental concepts are not synonyms of the concept of being, but are coextensive with this. For example, there is a use of the word “true” that enables us to say that everything that has being is true and that everything true has being. According to the Scholastics, the transcendental concepts are above the categories, that is to say the highest kinds. Everything that is, and being itself, possesses what is expressed by such concepts in a unique manner—in other words, they do not possess it in the way a dog possesses the properties of being an animal or of being docile. Thomas Aquinas (1979) holds that the transcendental concepts are five in number: *res*, *aliquid*, *unum*, *verum*, *y bonum*. Everything that exists is a thing, a something, a unity, something true, and something good.

Several contemporary philosophical schools have expelled truth and goodness from ontology. It will be said of truth that it is a semantic, not an ontological, concept. Of goodness that it belongs to the spheres of personal action or social organization and thus does not have the status of a genuine ontological concept. Of the remaining transcendentals mentioned by Aquinas little has been said in recent years.

Beyond the question of which concepts are to be regarded as transcendental, I believe that modern and contemporary ontology have been remiss in ignoring them. We cannot elucidate the higher ontological concepts without at least some of the transcendentals listed by St. Thomas. For example, it could be argued that the concept of entity cannot be clarified without those of *thing*, *something*, and *unity*. And it could also be said that the concepts of thing or unity refer back, in turn, to that of *entity*. I shall give another example, which I have dealt with elsewhere (Hurtado 1998): in analytic ontology an attempt has been made to clarify the concept of existence via the notion

of quantification; but in order to understand this notion fully it is necessary to do the same with that of variable: What is an *x*? It is not a name, but it can be substituted for a name. The letter *x*, so to speak, is the symbol of *something*, of *any something*. In formal logic too there are transcendentals.

Suárez (1960) reduced the transcendentals to three: *unum*, *verum*, and *bonum*. One reason for eliminating *res* and *aliquid* is the defense of the so-called “modal distinction.” A mode is distinguished from that which it modifies not in the way one thing is distinguished from another. The mode *is*, but it is not a thing apart from what it modifies; it is not a *res* and nor does it have *aliquity*. It does, however, possess unity, but not the unity of a thing, but of a mode; in other words, it has what we might call modal unity, which is—for want of a better way to put it—weaker than real unity, but perhaps greater than the unity that would have, let us say, a mere aggregate—for example, a pile of stones in a field (for more on this, see Hurtado 1999).

5. Categorical ontology

The concept of being is not, according to Aristotle (1990), a univocal concept, it is not a kind. *Being* is said in an analogous way of the categories, which are the ultimate kinds, i.e., the univocal concepts of highest rank (although we should remember that in the Aristotelian tradition, of all the categories, it is that of substance of which *being* is said with greatest appropriateness). Let us imagine that we wish to keep in an enormous warehouse everything that has some degree of being. Imagine too that we wish to have a classification of all these beings. There would be various levels of classification; for example, we could classify a dog in the corridor of the mammals, which would in turn be located in the section of animals, which would come into the area of living beings, etc. From this perspective, categories would be the ultimate concepts—i.e., those of highest rank—into which everything that is (or is not) falls.

The first theory of categories was offered by Aristotle in *De interpretatione* (1988). The list of categories given in this text is the following: substance (which in turn is divided into first and second substances), quantity, quality, relation, place, time, situation, state, action, and passion. The method used by Aristotle to determine the categories was linguistic; to be more precise, it classifies the types of questions that we might make about something. Other lists of categories can be offered if other criteria of choice are adopted. Aristotle himself gave other lists, and many more tables of categories have been drawn up throughout the history of philosophy. We might think, therefore, that any categorial classification that is proposed will be, to a certain extent, relative to the purposes with which it has been carried out. Could it be that in reality there are no ultimate categories? And if there are, how can we know them?

One of the ways in which the attempt has been made to answer these two questions is by recourse to so-called *formal ontology* (the term comes from Husserl, but the most common implementation has been Russellian). According to this, the types of symbols of logical language and their admitted combinations correspond to the types of things there are and their aggregates. In other words, logic would be the model of a theory of categories and complexes. This formal ontology assumes that the world has a logical structure that is the same as that of language (although this structure, as is taught by Russell's theory of descriptions (1973) is not the same as that of superficial grammar). Wittgenstein (1991) found in logic—as did others in poetry—a way of *showing* what cannot be *said*: the deepest features of being would be unveiled by symbolism. One problem with this project is that one can ascribe different logical structures to language according to the inferential interests involved in each case. The sentence “Bill loves Betty” can be

of the form “*p*” or the form “*Fx*” or the form “*Rxy*.” We can also ascribe different structures in accordance with the logical calculus we accept (e.g., the combinatory logic used by Peña [1987] offers us a quite different structure from that of standard logic). The question is thus: Which of all the formulations is clearest from the ontological point of view? Various empirical, pragmatic, or a priori criteria can be offered in response to this question. But how is one to choose between them? Another solution is to affirm that the ontological structure of the world does not have to be equivalent to the structure of language; but this brings us back to the original problem of how to know what the categorial structure of the world is—if such a thing actually exists.

It has been objected—above all in certain sectors of recent Anglo-Saxon philosophy—that ontology is no more than a theory of categories (see, for example, Grossman 1983). Those who hold this position discard, for a variety of reasons, not only the study of the ultimate concept of being, but also of those I have called the higher ontological concepts and of the transcendental concepts.

It seems to me that to limit ontology to the theory of categories is mistaken. If we are to understand the categories we need first of all to understand the higher ontological concepts; for example, the clarification of the distinction between the categories of object and property depends on the higher ontological concept of predication, i.e., of “to be” in its modality of copula. A categorial ontology that does not enjoy the support of a transcendental ontology and a higher ontology will be a mere taxonomy without metaphysical weight. It could be retorted that at times the direction of dependence is inverse; for example, the comprehension of the higher concept of identity depends on some instance of the clarification of the category of relation. But even if we concede that higher and transcendental ontologies cannot be formulated without a theory of categories, it does not follow that the latter is sufficient by itself or that it is more basic than they are.

6. Regional ontology

Beneath general categorial ontology we find what, since Husserl (1982), has been called *regional ontology*, which deals with the essences or the ontological principals of an ontological region. An ontology of persons, for instance, would be concerned with the region of reality occupied exclusively by these. The boundaries of the ontological regions can be traced in different ways. One of these is by means of a hierarchy of entities in accordance with their degrees of reality, abstraction, or perfection. Another way of determining the boundaries would be to stratify the world according to the types of ultimate laws that operate in each region: psychological, biological, physical, etc. One example, among others, of this task is the formal ontology of law effected by García Máynez (1953), which explicates the formal-ontological laws of the region of reality constituted by legally permitted and prohibited acts.

Ontology as it was understood by Quine (1963)—i.e., as the determination of the types of entities presupposed by the particular scientific theories—can also be seen as a kind of categorial-regional ontology, namely, of the region of reality dealt with by each theory. The position of Quine is close to that of Carnap (1950), which rejects traditional ontology on the basis of its distinction between internal and external questions in respect of a given theoretical framework. There is something in the Carnapian distinction and in its rejection of traditional ontology that brings to mind the Kantian distinction between phenomenon and noumenon and the Kantian rejection of the ontology of Wolff. The underlying notion is that it is not possible to speak of the world as it is in itself, but only of the world as we organize it from a specific conceptual framework. From

this one infers that every ontology has to be the ontology of a theory, and since there cannot be a theory that embraces everything—since the ultimate conceptual framework still accepted by Kant does not exist—the obvious conclusion is that every ontology has to be regional.

For a philosopher with purist inclinations, the regional ontologies will not be genuine ontologies; for one with austere tendencies, on the other hand, the only feasible ontologies are regional ones. How far can the “regionalization” of an ontology be taken? An example of a *micro*-regional ontology is Uranga’s *An Ontology of the Mexican* (1952). To the foreseeable objection that there cannot possibly be a ontology of the Mexican, Uranga contested: the study of being must set out, as Heidegger said, with the agent who poses the question about being, in other words, man; but man in the abstract does not exist, but rather different modalities of his existence, and one of these, given pride of place by its ontological transparency, is Mexicanness.

7. End

In this essay I have offered a map of the paths of ontology and have distinguished five branches of this network of ontological paths. The first and most ambitious is that of pure ontology. The problem with this path is that it leaves us with almost nothing to say. The paths of higher ontology are longer and broader; I think that if we were to work more on their interconnections, we might be able to come closer to an understanding of being in its highest degree of generality. On the other hand, the paths of transcendental ontology have been to a large extent forgotten and are due for bringing up to date; this, it seems to me, is one of the most urgent tasks before present-day ontology. The paths of categorial ontology are somewhat easier to follow and have been greatly extended in recent years, but as I have already stated, what has been done so far is only a beginning. The paths of regional ontology are perhaps the most accessible, but at times they remain far from the main paths. Lastly, I would like to insist that each of these paths is indispensable and that it is a mistake to restrict oneself to just one or a few of them. The destination of the ontological trajectory is not one at which one arrives by following a straight track, but a diffuse area which can only be covered by numerous paths.

Finally, I shall refer to a worry that comes to mind as I reach the end of this essay. I have given a sort of road map—it will be objected—but I have not taken steps along any of the paths. Are we not like those children who spend hours poring over maps without ever having travelled anywhere? And, in any case, are the paths of ontology anything other than abandoned and overgrown vestiges of the past?

There are no few who believe that ontology is a superseded pursuit, that it has been so at least since the mid-eighteenth century. For these philosophers, what was once a splendid mansion has long been abandoned; the collapse of the edifice, they say, was so complete that there was nothing left standing, and nothing worth salvaging from the rubble; ontology, in other words, belongs to an archaic phase of humanity and to go back over it would be to sin out of ignorance, nostalgia, or extravagance.

Alternatively, we might think of a system of railway communications, laid out by a bold entrepreneurial spirit: more modern means of communication have led to the tracks falling into disuse. Many have insisted on abandoning the station building because they believe the tracks lead nowhere—the jungle of history, they would say, has swallowed them up; but not all of us have abandoned it, because we are not in fact convinced that the tracks lead nowhere. At the same time, I cannot help nurturing the suspicion that those who invite us to abandon ontology forever have themselves never strayed very far from its paths.

The metaphor brings to mind a story by Arreola (1952), which tells of a man waiting for a train; he does not know when the train will arrive or, indeed, whether it will ever arrive. Those of us who do ontology may feel ourselves to be in a similar situation; we think the train is on its way, only that its approach is slow. From my point of view, it is not a matter of going back to ontology because, in fact, we have never left it. We have been doing ontology for centuries, and yet perhaps even this has been little time to obtain more significant results. However, if we bother to take a look, we will see that the old abandoned station has in fact been growing in size, it has filled with travellers of all kinds, and what was deemed to be a derelict zone has reclaimed its place as the *ancien quartier* of our philosophical *civitas*.

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Wright on the Cognitive Role of Entitlements

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1. Preliminaries

According to an old tradition, for cognitive purposes reality—everything that is the case—divides up into two realms: a privileged realm of facts which are immediately accessible to us and pose no significant cognitive challenge, and everything else, which is not immediately accessible to us and does pose a cognitive challenge. Our evidence is restricted to what is immediately accessible to us, and cognition of facts beyond the immediately accessible is somehow based on those immediately accessible materials, but its success requires satisfaction of a second-order epistemic condition. Descartes, for example, located within the privileged realm of immediately accessible facts the truth that he is a thinking thing and maybe other facts concerning his current mental states; cognition of everything else had to be somehow based on these materials, but its success required satisfaction of the condition that he *knows* that he is not systematically deceived by an evil demon. This condition contrasts with the condition that he *is not* systematically deceived by an evil demon, which is a first-order epistemic condition; *knowing* that such a first-order condition obtains is then a second-order epistemic condition. Traditionally, in the hands of the sceptic this picture of our cognitive situation in the world has disastrous consequences. The sceptic argues persuasively that we can never fulfill the second-order condition in question and by *modus tollens* concludes that we know nothing of what lies beyond the designated realm of immediately accessible facts.

Some philosophers, however, have recently put forward a novel version of the old picture described above. Crispin Wright, for example, describes a version of that picture when he says that:

Cognitive locality is the circumstance that only a proper subset of the kinds of states of affairs which we are capable of conceptualising is directly available, at any given stage in our lives, to our awareness. So knowledge of, or warranted opinion concerning the remainder must ultimately be based on defeasible

inference from materials of which we are so aware.
(Wright 2004a, 173)

Here Wright endorses the traditional thought that some facts are immediately accessible, or “directly available,” to one. Such facts constitute what he calls our “cognitive locality.” Cognition of everything beyond one’s locality has to be somehow based on materials within one’s locality, for these materials constitute all the evidence we can have. Although Wright does not explain what “direct availability” consists in, the examples he uses make it clear that, quite in line with his Cartesian predecessors, he locates inside of one’s locality all subjective appearances manifested in one’s conscious mental life, and outside of one’s locality the material world. For example, the fact that *one’s current experience is in all respects as if one had two hands* is a fact directly available to one, and therefore within one’s locality, but the fact that *one has two hands* is not (cf. Wright 2004a, 170). Accordingly, cognition of the state of one’s hands has to be somehow based on one’s seeming experiences concerning one’s hands.

Like the proponents of the traditional view, Wright also holds that cognitive success beyond one’s locality requires satisfaction of a second-order epistemic condition, but Wright’s novel version of the traditional picture reconceptualizes the second-order epistemic condition in terms of an epistemic status, distinct from knowledge, that he calls “entitlement.” The reconceptualized view is that a necessary condition for one’s evidence to constitute a warrant to believe something beyond one’s cognitive locality is that one is *entitled to assume* that one’s cognitive systems operate reliably. For example, in order for one’s seeming experiences of one’s hands to constitute a warrant to believe that one has two hands, one needs to have an entitlement to assume that one’s perceptual systems operate reliably. As with the traditional view, the implicit thought here is that our evidence for facts outside of our locality consists of some “immediately accessible” facts inside of our locality, in this case facts concerning our seeming experiences. Such evidence by itself is deemed to be insufficient to constitute a warrant for believing a designated fact outside of our locality; it needs a supplement in the form of an entitlement to assume that the cognitive capacity that generates such evidence operates reliably.

Unlike its predecessor condition framed in terms of *knowledge*, the novel second-order condition framed in terms of an *entitlement to assume* is easily satisfied, indeed satisfied by default,¹ therefore, no sceptical conclusions can follow from the view via *modus tollens*.² The proponents of the reconceptualized view agree with the sceptic that we occupy a cognitive locality and that cognitive success, in particular warranted belief, beyond our cognitive locality requires satisfaction of a second-order epistemic condition, but disagree with him on what the nature of that condition is and on whether the condition postulated is, or can be, satisfied.³

Apart from being presented as an element in a general anti-sceptical strategy, the novel version of the old view is thought to have other theoretical uses. In particular, it is used in the context of identifying what is wrong with certain forms of argument that seem unacceptable, notoriously “Moore’s Proof,” but also more pedestrian forms of reasoning, like the famous “Zebra-argument.” In this context the view that entitlements are necessary for warranted belief beyond our cognitive locality is used with diagnostic purposes, as part of a larger project that classifies the targeted forms of reasoning as suffering from *transmission-failure*.⁴

In this paper we will ignore the details of the diagnostic contexts where the view concerning the cognitive role of entitlements is embedded. The topic of the paper is rather the

soundness of what can be seen as the master argument for the view. The question whether that argument is sound should have priority over the question whether the view has all the theoretical uses it is thought to have, for if the master argument for the view fails then the view cannot legitimately serve the diagnostic purposes just mentioned. This paper argues that there are two possible formulations of the master argument for the view: On the first it is invalid and to turn it into a valid argument one needs to assume the analogue of the KK-principle for warrant, the WW-principle, which is highly controversial (section 3), and on the second there are good reasons to think that its first premise is false (section 4).⁵ In the conclusions (section 5) we consider what exactly are the consequences of these results for those of Wright’s theoretical projects where he thinks that his notion of entitlement can play a pivotal role. But first, let’s say something about the nature of entitlements (section 1) and then formulate in a precise form Wright’s argument for the cognitive role he assigns to entitlements (section 2).

2. The nature of entitlements

Before we engage with the argument in question we need to have a clearer formulation of the view the argument seeks to establish, and distinguish the question I will pursue from a related question. I will focus the discussion on the case of perceptual warrant. So restricted, the view is that ordinary perceptual evidence lies inside of our cognitive locality and ordinary perceptible facts lie outside it, hence a piece of ordinary perceptual evidence can constitute a warrant to believe a perceptible fact only if we are entitled to assume that our perceptual systems operate reliably. This idea is encapsulated in the following principle:

(ENT) In order for some of one’s perceptual evidence to constitute warrant to believe a given proposition *p*, it is necessary that one is entitled to assume that one’s perceptual systems operate reliably.

In discussing (ENT) we must distinguish two questions: First, what is the *nature* of an entitlement to assume something? And second, what are the *reasons* for thinking that an entitlement to assume the reliability of perception is necessary for warranted belief concerning perceptible facts? This paper discusses only the second question; for our purposes we need only to list the defining features of entitlements, since our critique of the argument for the cognitive role of entitlements does not depend on any specific features of entitlements. A thorough discussion of the nature of entitlements would go beyond the scope of this paper.

For Wright an *entitlement* is a species of the genus *epistemic warrant*, another species of warrant is *justification*.⁶ The central difference between entitlements and other forms of warrant is that an entitlement is *not* an *evidential* warrant, in the sense that to have an entitlement for *p* does not consist in having a piece of evidence that raises the probability of *p* (Wright 2004b, 53). An entitlement is a non-evidential species of warrant.⁷ In connection with this, entitlements contrast with other forms of warrant in that, if one has an entitlement for *p*, one has it by *default*. That is, an entitlement is “a warrant that does not need to be earned by investigation” (Wright 2003, 69). The proponents of this type of view sometimes describe this feature of entitlements by saying that unlike other types of warrant, an entitlement is *not* a “cognitive *achievement*” (Davies 2003, 27-28).⁸

In the official statement of the view entitlements attach to a special kind of proposition. Wright calls those special propositions “cornerstones.”⁹ Cornerstones are extremely general propositions to the effect that some overarching conditions for the reliable and proper operation of one’s

cognitive capacities and methods obtain. They include: *There is an external world*, *The Earth has a past of millions of years*, and *My perceptual systems are generally reliable*. Our capacity to obtain warrants through ordinary exercises of our cognitive faculties is said to depend on our having entitlements for cornerstones. However, Wright sometimes claims, or at least is committed to hold, that entitlements attach to quite *specific* propositions to the effect that our perception is not unreliable in a thoroughly specific way. For example, given his diagnosis of the well-known Zebra-argument, he is committed to say that one's perceptual evidence constitutes warrant to believe that the animal in the cage is a zebra only if one is *entitled to assume* that it is not a cleverly disguised mule. But the proposition *that it is not a cleverly disguised mule* lacks the generality characteristic of cornerstones.¹⁰ In this paper we will assume that entitlements attach to both cornerstones and more specific propositions.

Very often Wright talks about being entitled to *assume* that *p*, but he explains that this term should be understood in a quite special sense. In recent work he actually prefers to use the technical term “taking on trust” to designate the doxastic attitude that goes with entitlements.¹¹ In this paper we can set aside these subtleties, our critique of the master argument for (ENT) does not turn on ignoring them.

There is a lot more to be said concerning the nature of entitlements, but that will take us far away from our aim in this paper. What I have said is enough to make (ENT) reasonably intelligible, so we can proceed to discuss the argument for it.

3. The Argument from Subjective Indistinguishability formulated

For uniformity, let us take one of Wright's cases as our working example. Consider a case where one is in a zoo and while looking at a cage one comes to believe, on the basis of what one perceives, that the animal in the cage is a zebra. One in fact reliably perceives that there is a zebra in the cage; nothing interferes with the reliable operation of one's perceptual capacities. In order to abbreviate the exposition let us introduce the following terminology¹²: Let's call the case where nothing interferes with the reliable operation of one's perceptual capacities *the good case* and let's define as *the bad case* a case that is like the good case except that something does interfere with the reliable operation of one's perceptual capacities, so that one does not reliably perceive that there is a zebra in the cage, but the interference takes place in such a way that leaves all perceptual appearances as they are in the good case. As Wright would put it, the bad case is *subjectively indistinguishable* from the good case.

Wright implies that the interference of reliability in question here is *external* to the proper functioning of the perceptual capacity. He writes: “there are external preconditions for the effectiveness of your method—causal observation—[...] made-up mules and tricky lighting involve the frustration of those preconditions” (Wright 2000, 154), and elsewhere he writes, “if we are having to deal with circumstances where appearances of animals are deceptive, then conditions are unsuitable for the reliable operation of the relevant cognitive capacities—those involved in the identification of animals by casual observation of their appearance” (Wright 2003, 63). But the circumstances described are compatible with the relevant perceptual capacities working *properly*, for disguising animals in a zoo and setting up tricky lighting in a room leave intact the workings of one's perceptual systems from the skin inwards. The reliability of such capacities could also be disrupted by interfering with their proper functioning, for example, by ingesting a hallucinogenic drug or electrically modifying some

neural patterns. But such is not the interference of reliability that Wright envisages. The bad case then is one in which some condition *external* to the proper functioning of the relevant perceptual capacity interferes with its reliable operation, in the sense of making the perceptual states it delivers become deceptive.

It also needs emphasising that, given Wright's remarks, the bad case differs from the good case not necessarily with regard to the truth-value of the proposition believed, but with regard to whether the external conditions for the reliable operation of the perceptual capacities obtain. For example, there is a *good* case where it seems perceptually to one that there is a zebra in the cage, it is *true* that there is a zebra there, and the external reliability conditions obtain. And there is a corresponding *bad* case where it seems perceptually to one that there is a zebra in the cage, it is *also true* that there is a zebra there, but the external reliability conditions do not obtain because all other animals in the zoo have been disguised to look other than what they really are, and one fortuitously happens to be looking at the only animal that is not disguised. In such a case, despite truly believing that there is a zebra in the cage, the external conditions are unsuitable for the reliable operation of one's method, which Wright calls “casual observation,” because that same method, in those conditions, could have easily led one to false belief; e.g., if one had looked at the neighboring cage. What makes a bad case bad is not that the proposition believed is false (although there are bad cases where it is false) but rather that the absence of the external reliability conditions make the case unsuitable for the acquisition of perceptual warrant.

Similarly, there is a *bad* case where it seems perceptually to one that there is a zebra there, it is *not true* that there is a zebra there and the external reliability conditions do not obtain. And there is a corresponding *good* case where it seems perceptually to one that there is a zebra there, the external reliability conditions do obtain, but it is *not true* that there is a zebra there, because you happen to be looking at the only disguised animal in the zoo. In such a case the external conditions are suitable for the reliable operation of one's method, viz. casual observation, because that same method would have led one in many slightly different circumstances to true belief, e.g., if one had been looking at any of the other cages. What makes a good case good is not that the proposition believed is true (although there are good cases where it is true) but rather that the external reliability conditions make the case suitable for the acquisition of a perceptual warrant.¹³

As the cases are defined, our evidence in the good case for believing that there is a zebra in the cage consists of a state that is subjectively indistinguishable from the state that is our evidence in the bad case for believing that there is a zebra in the cage. Our evidence in the bad case is subjectively indistinguishable from our evidence in the good case. Wright asks us to envisage a situation in which we *take ourselves* to be in the good case; let's call it “the actual case.” Given that our evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from our evidence in both the good case and the bad case, Wright raises the question whether in the actual case our perceptual evidence constitutes a warrant to believe that there is a zebra in the cage. His answer is negative for the reasons expressed in the following passage¹⁴:

The key question is what, in the circumstances, can justify me in accepting *p*? Should I just not reserve judgment and stay with the more tentative disjunction, either (I have warrant for) *p* or *BC*? For it is all the same which alternative is true as far as what is subjectively apparent to me is concerned. The answer has to be, it would seem, that the more tentative claim

would indeed be appropriate unless I am somehow *additionally* entitled to discount alternative *BC*. (Wright 2003, 62; his emphasis)¹⁵

Wright is implying here that just because one's evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from one's evidence in the good case and one's evidence in the bad case, one's evidence in the actual case does not constitute a warrant for believing *p*, but only for believing

either I am in the good case (where I have a warrant for believing that *p*) or I am in the bad case (where I do not have a warrant for believing that *p*).

The parenthetical remarks are intended to make explicit that the disjunction of cases is *exclusive* with respect to whether the subject has warrant for believing that *p*; in the good case the subject has warrant for believing that *p* and in the bad case he doesn't.¹⁶ Wright claims in the above quotation that in order to get past this disjunction and acquire an outright warrant for the first disjunct one needs to have an additional entitlement to assume that the second disjunct does not obtain. Having such entitlement is a necessary condition for our evidence to constitute a warrant for the first disjunct alone of Wright's tentative disjunction. Wright claims it would be fallacious to suppose that our perceptual evidence by itself constitutes a warrant for the first disjunct:

So long as it is granted that perception and delusion can be subjectively indistinguishable, there *is* a weaker claim which is justified whenever, as one would ordinarily suppose, the corresponding perceptual claim is justified, viz. precisely the disjunction:

Either I am perceiving thus-and-such *or* I am in some kind of delusional state.

...it is our practice to treat one in particular of the disjuncts as justified—the left-hand one—whenever the disjunction as a whole is justified and there is, merely, *no evidence for the other disjunct!* That's a manifest fallacy unless the case is one where we have a *standing reason* to regard the lack of any salient justification for a disjunct of the second type as reason to discount it. And...it's hard to see what could count as such a standing reason except a prior entitlement to the belief that delusions are rare. (Wright 2002, 346; his emphases)

We can represent Wright's *Argument from Subjective Indistinguishability* (ASI) for (ENT) as follows¹⁷:

1. If one's perceptual evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from one's perceptual evidence in the good case and in the bad case, then one's perceptual evidence in the actual case by itself only warrants believing [*W(p)* or *BC*].
2. One's perceptual evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from one's perceptual evidence in the good case and in the bad case.
3. One's perceptual evidence by itself in the actual case is a warrant for believing only [*W(p)* or *BC*]. 1, 2, MP.
4. If one's perceptual evidence by itself constitutes a warrant for believing only [*W(p)* or *BC*], then in order for one's perceptual evidence to constitute a warrant for believing *W(p)* one needs to have an antecedent entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$.
5. One's perceptual evidence constitutes a warrant for believing *W(p)* only if one has an entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$. 3,4 MP.

4. The Argument from Subjective Indistinguishability examined

Clearly, the conclusion of (ASI) is *not* the thesis that Wright seeks to establish, i.e., (ENT); while (ENT) is the claim that an antecedent entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$ is necessary for our evidence to constitute a warrant for believing *that p*, the conclusion of (ASI) is that an antecedent entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$ is necessary for our evidence to constitute a warrant for believing *that one has a warrant for believing that p*. Wright has moved from the first-order question:

(FIRST-ORDER)-A Is an entitlement to assume $\neg[BC]$ necessary for *S*'s perceptual evidence to constitute a warrant for believing *that p*?

To the different, second-order question:

(SECOND-ORDER)-A Is an entitlement to assume $\neg[BC]$ necessary for *S*'s perceptual evidence to constitute a warrant for believing *that S has a warrant for believing that p*?

The thesis he seeks to establish, i.e., (ENT), is an answer to (FIRST-ORDER)-A, not to (SECOND-ORDER)-A, whereas the conclusion of his argument (ASI) is an answer to (SECOND-ORDER)-A, not to (FIRST-ORDER)-A.

But are we not misrepresenting Wright's reasoning in saying that the tentative disjunction involved is [*W(p)* or *BC*]? It might look as if in so representing the disjunction I am picking on that single passage where Wright says: "Should I just not reserve judgement and stay with the more tentative disjunction, either (I have a warrant for) *p* or *BC*?" (Wright 2003, 62). And it might be thought that this is a slip on Wright's part, for what he really meant was "either *p* or *BC*." It is easy to check that adjusting the premises of (ASI) in accordance with this reading of Wright's tentative disjunction would have the effect that the argument's conclusion would match (ENT).

Below I will examine such adjusted version of (ASI); at this point I want only to emphasize that my choice to represent the disjunction as "[*W(p)* or *BC*]" is not based on an isolated passage: in many occasions Wright suggests that he understands the disjunction precisely in that way. I've quoted earlier the passage where he says:

Either I am perceiving thus-and-such *or* I am in some kind of delusional state. (Wright 2002, 346)

It is true that here the first disjunct is not *I have a warrant for believing that p*, but it is not *p* either; it is rather *I am perceiving that p* which, like *I have a warrant for believing that p* but unlike *p*, claims that I am in an epistemically good position with respect to *p*. And there are several other passages that support the [*W(p)* or *BC*] reading of the disjunction; consider this:

To recap. In no case can I *rationally claim warrants for the premises* of an argument unless I am entitled to take it that all the conditions necessary for the reliability of the cognitive functions involved in the acquisition of those warrants are met. (Wright 2003, 75; my emphasis)¹⁸

He is saying here that an entitlement to assume reliability is necessary to be able to *rationally claim warrant for believing that p*. Given that in his view the entitlement is needed to get past the tentative disjunction and be warranted in believing the first disjunct alone, it is clear that he must be treating *I can rationally claim warrant for believing that p* as the first disjunct of the tentative disjunction. Again, it is true that so interpreted the first disjunct is not *I have a warrant for believing that p*, but it is not *p* either; it is rather *I can rationally claim warrant*

for believing that p which, like *I have a warrant for believing that p* but unlike p , claims that I am in an epistemically good position with respect to p .

The reading of Wright’s tentative disjunction as $[W(p)$ or $BC]$ does not pick on an isolated slip on his part, it is well supported by careful scrutiny of the actual formulation of his reasoning at various and crucial places. But if the tentative disjunction is interpreted in that way, Wright’s reasoning only establishes an answer to (SECOND-ORDER)-A, not to (FIRST-ORDER)-A, which is the question that his reasoning should address. Moreover, there are *prima facie* good reasons to think that Wright’s answer to (SECOND-ORDER)-A does not automatically justify a corresponding answer to (FIRST-ORDER)-A.

Consider that *I have warrant for believing that p* and p are distinct propositions and so one should not expect the conditions necessary for being warranted in believing the former to be the same as the conditions necessary for being warranted in believing the latter. Commonsensically, a piece of perceptual evidence by itself can warrant believing that p but not believing that I have a warrant for believing that p , for one might have done nothing to check that the “external preconditions” for warrant are indeed fulfilled. More specifically, the proposition *I have a warrant for believing that p* has an epistemic import that the embedded proposition p lacks; it claims that I am in an epistemically good position with respect to p . One should accordingly expect that the conditions necessary to have a warrant to believe the proposition with epistemic import are different from the conditions to have a warrant to believe the embedded proposition p that lacks such import.

One should expect the conditions for being warranted in believing that *I have warrant for believing that p* to be different from the conditions for being warranted in believing that p . Hence, even if it is true that a supplementary warrant (entitlement) to assume that a possible bad case is not occurring is necessary in order to have warrant for believing that one has warrant for believing that p , that by itself leaves open the question whether such a supplementary warrant (entitlement) is also necessary for having warrant for believing that p . Without some extra-premise Wright cannot validly infer from his answer to (SECOND-ORDER)-A the corresponding answer to (FIRST-ORDER)-A that he needs in order to establish (ENT).

What might that supplementary premise be? Wright needs the following inference to be valid¹:

$$W(W(p)) \Rightarrow E(R)$$

$$/ W(p) \Rightarrow E(R)$$

This inference says that from the fact that having an entitlement to assume the external reliability conditions for perception obtain is necessary for having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p , it follows that having such entitlement is necessary also for having warrant to believe that p . The inference goes from the claim that something is a necessary condition for a second-order epistemic status, to the claim that it is also necessary for the embedded first-order epistemic status. This suggest that in order to make the inference a valid one we need to assume the analogue of the KK-principle for the relevant epistemic status, i.e., *having warrant to believe*, for such a principle would allow us to guarantee that the necessary conditions for the second-order epistemic status are also necessary for the first-order, embedded, epistemic status. The principle would be this:

$$(WW) W(p) \Rightarrow W(W(p))$$

(WW) says that having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p is necessary for having warrant to believe that p . With (WW) as an extra-premise the inference Wright needs is a valid one:

$$1. W(p) \Rightarrow W(W(p)) \quad (WW)$$

$$2. W(W(p)) \Rightarrow E(R) \quad (ASI)\text{'s Conclusion}$$

$$/ W(p) \Rightarrow E(R) \quad 1, 2 \text{ Hypothetical syllogism}$$

By hypothetical syllogism, (WW) and the conclusion of Wright’s argument entail (ENT): if an entitlement to assume the external reliability conditions for perception is necessary for having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p , and having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p is in turn necessary to have warrant to believe that p , then, necessarily, an entitlement to assume the external reliability conditions for perception is also necessary to have warrant to believe that p . It seems that if Wright wants to infer (ENT) from the second-order claim that figures as the conclusion of his Argument from Subjective Indistinguishability, he must assume the analogue of the KK-principle for warrant.

The KK-principle has been subjected to severe criticism, and the principle is today highly controversial.²⁰ Is the WW-principle any less problematic than its knowledge cousin? Some well-known problems with the KK-principle are obviously mirrored by analogue problems with the WW-principle. For example, if accepted with unrestricted generality both principles give rise to an infinite regress, for if having a warrant for a warrant for p is necessary for having a warrant for p then, *pari passu*, having a warrant for a warrant for a warrant for p is necessary for having a warrant for a warrant for p , and so on *ad infinitum*. On the other hand, there might be objections to the KK-principle which do not apply to the WW-principle, but whether this is so is a large question we cannot take up here, as answering it would involve clarifying the nature of the type of warrant in question and how it relates to/differs from knowledge. In any case, the point is that the validity of Wright’s reasoning for (ENT) depends on a premise that is, at best, under a cloud of controversy. The burden of proof is on him to dispel the cloud and explain why we should accept that principle.

5. An alternative formulation of the argument

On behalf of Wright we can envisage a way of fixing (ASI) in such a way that the (WW)-principle is eschewed. The required fixing is rather obvious and consists of writing “[p or BC]” instead of “[$W(p)$ or BC],” and accordingly “ p ” instead of “ $W(p)$ ”:

ASI*:

- 1*. If one’s perceptual evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from one’s perceptual evidence in the good case and in the bad case, then one’s perceptual evidence in the actual case by itself only warrants believing [p or BC].
- 2*. One’s perceptual evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from one’s perceptual evidence in the good case and in the bad case.
- 3*. One’s perceptual evidence by itself in the actual case is a warrant for believing only [p or BC]. 1*, 2*, MP.
- 4*. If one’s perceptual evidence by itself constitutes a warrant for believing only [p or BC], then in order for one’s perceptual evidence to constitute a warrant for believing that p one needs to have an antecedent entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$.
- 5*. One’s perceptual evidence constitutes a warrant for p only if one has an entitlement for assuming $\neg[BC]$. 3*, 4* MP.

Unlike the conclusion of (ASI), the conclusion of (ASI*) is (ENT), not a corresponding second-order claim, hence there is no need of adding the (WW)-principle as an extra-premise to validly obtain the desired conclusion. Any controversy surrounding such a principle is eschewed by the envisaged modification of the argument. However, such a fixing has its cost: it results in the loss of plausibility in the argument's first premise.

As we did before with the conclusion of the original argument, we can note now two different questions related to its first premise:

(FIRST-ORDER)-B Does *S*'s evidence by itself constitute warrant for believing that *p*?

(SECOND-ORDER)-B Does *S*'s evidence by itself constitute warrant for believing that *S* has warrant for believing that *p*?

Premise (1) of ASI answers "no" to (SECOND-ORDER)-B, and premise (1*) of ASI* answers "no" to (FIRST-ORDER)-B. But premise (1) is plausible, whereas (1*) is not, for the reasons that follow.

Wright answers "no" to (SECOND-ORDER)-B on the grounds that *S*'s evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from his evidence in the good case and in the bad case, and so *S*'s evidence only warrants the disjunction [$W(p)$ or BC], for "it is all the same which alternative is true as far as what is subjectively apparent to me is concerned" (Wright 2003, 62). This assumes that the fact that *S*'s perceptual evidence is subjectively indistinguishable across good and bad cases constitutes an obstacle for *such evidence to constitute a warrant for S to believe that he is in the good case*, where nothing interferes with the reliability conditions for perception and they are suitable for the acquisition of warrant for believing that *p*.

Does that fact about the subjective indistinguishability of *S*'s evidence across cases also constitute an obstacle for *S*'s actually *being* in the good case, where nothing interferes with the reliability conditions for perception and they are suitable for the acquisition of warrant for believing that *p*? Clearly not! From the mere fact that *S*'s evidence in the actual case is subjectively indistinguishable from his evidence in the good and in the bad cases, it does not follow that *S*'s evidence in the actual case is compatible with both his being in the good case and his being in the bad case. If *S* is actually in the good case then nothing interferes with the reliability conditions for perception and they are suitable for the acquisition of warrant for believing that *p*; in that case *S*'s evidence is *incompatible* with his being in the bad case, despite the fact that it is subjectively indistinguishable from what his evidence would be if he was in the bad case. The subject's inability in the actual case to tell whether he is in the bad case or in the good case, on the basis of his perceptual evidence alone, might well be relevant for determining whether *he has a warrant to believe that he is in the good case*, but it is not for determining whether *he actually is in the good case*.²¹ Just because in the actual case the subject is ignorant of what his evidence is, i.e., of whether he is in the good case or in the bad case, it does not follow that his evidence is not the evidence proper of being in the good case, where the reliability conditions for perception are suitable for the acquisition of a warrant for *p*. Second-order ignorance concerning what one's evidence is does not by itself imply the first-order claim that one's actual evidence is not the evidence proper of having a warrant for *p*.

The point can be made from a slightly different angle. Wright explicitly acknowledges that warrant possession has "external preconditions," such as the external conditions for the reliability of the cognitive capacities responsible for generating

the warrant (Wright 2003, 61). If that is so, then the mere fact that *S*'s evidence in one case is subjectively indistinguishable from his evidence in another case, does not guarantee that *S*'s epistemic position is the *same* in both cases; in particular, it might well be that his evidence constitutes a warrant for *p* in one case and not in the other, precisely because the relevant "external preconditions" for warrant obtain in the former but not in the latter. Therefore, the fact that "it is all the same which alternative is true as far as what is subjectively apparent to me is concerned" (Wright 2003, 62) has no immediate bearing on the first-order question whether *S*'s evidence constitutes a warrant for believing that *p* in one given case, for differences in "external preconditions," which are crucial for possession or lack of warrant, might not get reflected in what is subjectively apparent to one. Even if Wright's answer was the right answer to (SECOND-ORDER)-B, that does not automatically guarantee that the same answer is the correct answer to (FIRST-ORDER)-B. Indeed, Wright's own view about the "external preconditions" for warrant blocks any automatic inference from a "no" answer to the second-order question, based on considerations of subjective indistinguishability of one's evidence across cases, to a "no" answer to the corresponding first-order question.

The irrelevance of considerations of subjective indistinguishability of *S*'s evidence across cases for answering the question whether *S* actually has a warrant for believing that *p*, is concealed partially by the fact that sometimes Wright describes the subject's evidence uniformly across cases, as *an experience as of p*, and partially by the fact that Wright frames the question in the first-person singular, present-tense. Describing the subject's evidence in both the good and the bad cases as *an experience as of p* encourages the idea that his evidence is the *same* in both cases, but that does not follow from Wright's explicit characterization of the cases. What he says implies only that *S*'s evidence in one case is *subjectively indistinguishable* from his evidence in the other, which is not equivalent to saying that his evidence is the *same* in both cases, unless one assumes a controversial phenomenal conception of evidence on which if two evidential states are subjectively indistinguishable for *S* then they place *S* in the same epistemic position. But Wright would only weaken the plausibility of the first premise of his argument if he adopts such a controversial conception of evidence.²² Wright asks the relevant question in the first-person present-tense: *Do I have a warrant for believing that p?*; one cannot answer "yes" to this first-order question and answer "no" to the second-order question: *Do I know (or have a warrant to believe) that I have a warrant to believe that p?* for that would commit one to assert a version of Moore's paradox: *I have a warrant to believe that p and I don't know (or have a warrant to believe) that I have a warrant to believe that p*. But the inappropriateness of such assertion by itself does not imply that its two conjuncts cannot be simultaneously true, in the same way that the inappropriateness of an assertion of: *It is raining but I don't know that it is raining* does not imply by itself that its two conjuncts cannot be simultaneously true. Wright owes us an explanation why the two conjuncts in the epistemic assertion cannot be simultaneously true; in particular, why if one's evidence by itself doesn't constitute a warrant to believe that one has a warrant to believe that *p* (because of its subjective indistinguishability across cases) then it does not constitute a warrant to believe that *p* either.

In summary: Unlike (ASI), (ASI*) does not need the WW-principle to validly reach (ENT). But so avoiding the WW-principle in Wright's reasoning has the high cost that premise (1*) of the modified argument loses the plausibility of premise (1) of the original argument, for considerations of indiscriminability of one's evidence across cases are plausibly relevant for the warrantability of the belief that one has a

warrant to believe that p , but not for the warrantability of the belief that p .

6. Conclusions

How damaging is it for Wright's theoretical projects, where he wants to make use of his notion of entitlement, that his argument for the cognitive role of entitlements only establishes the second-order thesis that appears as the conclusion of (ASI) and not the first-order thesis formulated as (ENT)? In some of his latest work on the matter Wright has made it clear that the question he purports to address with his view about the cognitive role of entitlements is a second-order issue that he thinks is the real issue at stake in discussions of scepticism. He wants to address "a scepticism focused not on the possibility of knowledge in a targeted region but on *our right to claim it*" (2007, 31; my emphasis). He believes that:

what is put in doubt by sceptical argument is—of course—not our *possession* of any knowledge or justified belief. ...What is put in doubt is rather our right to *claim* knowledge and justified belief. It is this which the project of making out entitlements tries to address..." (2004a, 210; his emphasis)

I've argued in this paper that Wright's argument (ASI) for the cognitive role of entitlements establishes a second-order thesis. Such a thesis can legitimately serve the project of addressing the kind of scepticism Wright describes in the quoted passages, which is a challenge not to the first-order claim that we have warrant to believe and knowledge that p , but to the second-order claim that we can warrantably claim that we have warrant to believe and knowledge that p . In effect, if what is necessary for warrantably believing (and claiming) that one has a warrant to believe that p is that one is entitled to assume that our perceptual systems operate reliably (as the conclusion of (ASI) states), then given that we enjoy such entitlement by default and without any supporting evidence, it follows that, contrary to what the second-order sceptic holds, we *are* ordinarily warranted (in the sense of being entitled) to claim that we have warrant to believe that p .

So, the conclusion that Wright's argument establishes is exactly at the epistemic level it should be to serve the specific anti-sceptical purposes he wants to address. But as we pointed out in § 1, he thinks that his view on entitlements is at the service of another theoretical project as well, in particular, that it helps to diagnose some patterns of inference as suffering from transmission failure. The problem is that when Wright describes the conditions under which transmission failure occurs, he does not invoke the second-order thesis that an antecedent entitlement is necessary to have a warrant to believe (and claim) that one has a warrant to believe that p , but rather the first-order claim that the antecedent entitlement is necessary to have a warrant to believe that p . For example, in describing some general conditions under which warrant fails to transmit from premises to conclusion in a valid inference, he writes:

So one important general limitation on transmission will apply whenever the conclusion of an inference spells out a known constitutively necessary condition for the realization of an entitlement *which conditions the acquisition of a particular kind of noninferential warrant for one of its premises*. (2003, 70; my emphasis)

The view clearly stated here is *not* the second-order thesis that an antecedent entitlement is a condition for being warranted in claiming that one has a warrant to believe one of the premises, but the first-order thesis that it is a condition for acquiring, and therefore having, a warrant to believe one of its premises.

Elsewhere, when he is arguing that Moore's Proof exemplifies transmission failure, he writes:

since *the conditions for the possession of warrant* for a perceptual claim which apply in ordinary circumstances—and which Moore was implicitly assuming—*presuppose* an entitlement to dismiss the sceptical possibility, there should be no question of a warrant provided under their auspices being transmissible to the denial that the sceptical possibility obtains. (2002, 345; first emphasis mine)

Again, the thought here is *not* the second-order thesis that an entitlement is a condition for Moore to be warranted in claiming that he has a warrant to believe that there is a hand here, but rather the first-order thesis that such entitlement is a condition for Moore to possess a warrant to believe that there is a hand here.

So, by Wright's own lights, in order to serve the project of diagnosing Moore's Proof and other patterns of inference as suffering from transmission failure, the cognitive role of entitlements is not to be understood as the second-order role that the conclusion of his argument (ASI) assigns to them, but rather the first-order role that the conclusion of (ASI*) assigns to them. This sends us back to the arguments of this paper: that he cannot derive the first-order thesis he needs from the second-order thesis that (ASI) establishes without assuming the WW-principle, and that (ASI*) yields the first-order thesis he needs, without needing the WW-principle, but using a first premise which lacks plausibility.

The theoretical projects for which Wright thinks entitlements can play a pivotal role in fact seem to demand assigning different cognitive roles to entitlements. The project of addressing second-order scepticism requires entitlements to be conditions for warrantably believing that one has a warrant to believe ordinary empirical propositions, whereas the project of diagnosing Moore's Proof and other patterns of inference as failing to transmit warrant to their conclusions requires entitlements to be conditions for the possession of warrant to believe ordinary empirical propositions. Wright's reasoning for the cognitive role of entitlements demanded by the first project can be granted as compelling, but he still needs to supply a reason to think that entitlements *also* play the cognitive role demanded by the second project, for the considerations he uses in his argument for the former role are implausible if used as considerations for the latter role.

But can those two cognitive roles for entitlements be coherently integrated in an epistemology? One might think that they cannot for the following reason. Like many epistemologists, Wright thinks that the reliable operation of one's cognitive capacities is an "external precondition" for them to be "effective" in delivering warrants. The reliable operation of our cognitive capacities is necessary for them to deliver warrants to believe that p . But then the claim that a supplementary warrant to assume that their reliability is not frustrated in certain ways is also necessary for them to deliver warrants to believe that p is bound to look incongruous. For if the *truth* of the claim that one's cognitive capacities operate reliably is necessary for one *to have warrant to believe that p* , then an antecedent warrant to assume the truth of the claim that one's cognitive capacities operate reliably will be naturally seen as necessary for having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p . This is intelligible as a special case of having gone one epistemic level up: from the conditions for having warrant to believe that p to the conditions for having warrant to believe that one has warrant to believe that p . But in this architecture of epistemic levels and their progressive conditions there is no room for (ENT), for it

strangely categorizes a condition naturally seen as necessary for a second-order epistemic status as a necessary condition for a first-order epistemic status. This is an incongruous mismatch unless the relevant analogue of the KK-principle is smuggled into that architecture. As we have seen, that principle will allow us to guarantee that the conditions necessary for the relevant second-order epistemic status are, *ipso facto*, necessary for the embedded first-order epistemic status too.

So the two cognitive roles for entitlements demanded by Wright's theoretical projects could be smoothly integrated by assuming the WW-principle; without such analogue of the KK-principle it is unclear how those different cognitive roles for entitlements could be coherently integrated into a single epistemological outlook. Therefore, the acceptability of Wright's views about the cognitive roles of entitlement turns on the acceptability of an old and characteristic tenet of internalist epistemologies, for which he has given no argument. Probably this should come as no surprise, since, as I emphasised in § 1, Wright's novel notion of entitlement is nested in a quite old, Cartesian picture of our cognitive situation in the world. His notion of entitlement modifies a detail of that picture, leaving its structure intact. Perhaps it should be expected that, embedded in that structure, entitlements would play their intended cognitive functions only if the internalist commitments of that structure are already in place.

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Endnotes

1. On this point see §1 below.
2. See Wright 2004a for his statement of the view explicitly as a bulwark against scepticism.
3. In Davies 2000 and 2003, Martin Davies endorses a view similar to Wright's, although he does not explicitly present the view as a component of an anti-sceptical strategy.
4. See Wright 2000 and 2003 and Davies 2003 for developments of such a project. See Zalabardo forthcoming for a critical appraisal of Wright's and Davies' diagnostic projects.
5. I want to emphasize that in what follows I will be dealing with just *one* specific argument for imposing *one* specific second-order epistemic condition on warrant. The argument exploits considerations of subjective indistinguishability of evidence and the second-order condition it seeks to impose is framed in terms of the concept of *entitlement*. But there have been arguments that exploit different sorts of considerations for second-order conditions on warrant framed in different terms, and those arguments require separate scrutiny. See Alston 1991 for discussion of some other second-order conditions on justification and the arguments for them.
6. Other authors have recently developed and used notions of entitlement that are related to, but substantially differ from, Wright's notion in various ways. Wright's notion contrasts with, for example, the notions of entitlement developed by Peacocke (2004, ch. 3) and Burge (2003). The discussion that follows is intended to apply only to Wright's and Davies' notion.
7. When Wright first introduced the notion of entitlement he introduced it merely as a generic type of non-evidential warrant. In more recent work, e.g., 2004a and 2004b, he has distinguished various subtypes in the original generic type. The specific features of such subtypes are not relevant for the discussion that follows; the criticism I will develop in the paper concerns the argument Wright gives for the cognitive role he assigns to entitlements *in general*. The critique does not depend on any feature *specific* to any of the various subtypes of entitlement.
8. Davies also uses the terminology of *defaultness* and *cognitive achievement* to contrast entitlements with evidential forms of warrant, which he labels "question-settling justifications" (2003, 29).
9. See Wright 2004a, pp. 167-168, for his explanation of what a cornerstone is.
10. Wright (2004b, 38-41) discusses the idea of extending the applicability of the concept of entitlement to propositions that are not cornerstones.
11. See Wright 2004a, pp. 183, 194, for his explanation of what it means to "take on trust" that *p*.
12. Borrowed from Williamson 2000, ch. 8.
13. Wright seems to treat the case where one happens to look at the *only* disguised animal in the zoo, i.e., the mule cleverly disguised as a zebra, as a case where the external reliability conditions do not obtain. He says, "made-up mules...involve the frustration of those precondition" (2000, 154). But for the reasons given in the text, this is implausible. The fact that one's method, i.e., casual observation, leads one to false belief in *only one* of its many possible applications in the circumstances given surely does not show that the conditions in such circumstances are not conducive to the method's reliable operation. They clearly are, for it would have led one to true belief if used to identify *any* other animal in those circumstances.
14. Read "BC" as "I am in the bad case."

15. I have replaced “p” for his “A” and “BC” for his “C.”
16. Note that in the above quotation Wright himself adds the parenthetical remark corresponding to the good case.
17. Read “W(p)” as “I have a warrant for p” and “BC” as before.
18. See also this passage of Wright’s (2002, 343):

I must have some sort of appreciable entitlement to affirm C already, independent and prior to my recognition of its entailment by [the premises], if I am to claim to be warranted in accepting [p] in the first place. The inference from [the premises] to C is thus not at the service of cogently generating conviction that C, and my warrant does not transmit.

Although the words “rationally” or “justifiably” don’t appear attached to “claim to be warranted,” it is obvious that he is treating the antecedent entitlement as a condition for *rationally* claiming to be warranted in accepting that p, and not merely as a condition for uttering the words involved in the claim.

19. Read “W(p)” as before and “E(R)” as “I have an entitlement to assume that the external reliability conditions for perception obtain.”
20. See, for example, Nozick 1981, pp. 245-247. A consequence of Nozick’s analysis of knowledge in terms of truth-tracking is that the KK-principle fails. For a different and more straightforward criticism of the KK-principle see Williamson 2000, ch. 5.
21. Compare this point with Brown’s remarks (2003, 120-23) on Wright’s “internalist” commitments.
22. See Williamson 2007 for discussion of some problematic consequences of adopting a purely phenomenal conception of evidence.

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The fall 2011 issue of the *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy* will be open to any topic on Hispanic/Latino philosophy. Submissions should be accompanied by a short biographical summary of the author. Electronic submissions are preferred. All submissions should be limited to 5,000 words (twenty double-spaced pages) and must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language and *The Chicago Manual of Style* formatting.

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Use endnotes instead of footnotes. Examples of proper endnote style:

- John Rawls. *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 90.

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