

ELEUTHERIA

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Message from the President

Francis Peddle

On this, the occasion of the inaugural issue of our semi-annual publication *ELEUTHERIA*, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome all new members and associates. In particular, I would like to sincerely and enthusiastically thank those who have so generously donated both their time and financial resources to the goal of seeing the Institute become a viable philosophical enterprise during the past two years.

The intent and objective of *ELEUTHERIA* is to provide members with an informal medium for exchanging views and information on topics relevant to the discipline of speculative philosophy and other related activities of the Institute. *ELEUTHERIA* will therefore complement the formal writings of the Institute in the Yearbook, which is projected to begin publication in 1990.

As always with fledgling organizations our initial concerns must be with increasing membership and ensuring ongoing financial stability. By far the greater part of our finances will be used in such crucial areas as publications and teaching. Launching glossy membership drives of any significance will not be possible at present. I therefore encourage all members to spread by word of mouth, or by any other medium within their means, information about the Institute. Extra copies of our flyer are available on request. Funding from other organizations and foundations, both governmental and private, is often

closely tied to the number of members in an organization. Size of membership also determines economies of scale with regard to the distribution of publications and the availability of courses. Increasing membership over the next few years has to be a principal objective of the Institute.

We are currently making an effort to put as much information as possible relating to speculative philosophy on computer disc. This includes articles, addresses, monographs, bibliographies and so on. If any member wishes to directly access this information via an electronic file transfer, arrangements can be made. Here is some preliminary information. The Institute stores information on an IBM AT computer. The wordprocessing program being used is WordPerfect, Version 5.0. We are also using a 2400 baud Hayes modem and the Telix communications system, Version 3.11. Starting in June, the system will be in "host" mode on the first Monday evening of every month between the hours of 7:00 and 10:00pm. EDT. Please use this telephone number: (613) 594-5881, and access the following drive path and directory: D:\SPECPHIL.DOC. Subdirectory files such as articles and papers are identified by author; all other files are named descriptively as far as is possible.

A number of representations on behalf of the Institute have been made in national fora over the past year. On November 4, 1988 I gave an address entitled "Private Scholars and the Humanities" at a National Forum on the Un/Under-Employment of Humanities Graduates sponsored by the Canadian Federation for

the Humanities. Brief extracts appeared in the Canadian Association of University Teachers' Bulletin, Vol.36, No.1, January, 1989, and the Canadian Federation for the Humanities Bulletin, Vol.12, No.1, Spring, 1989. I argued in the paper that the "independent" or "private" scholar is best able to pursue the classical ideals of education within the constraints of modern organizational and corporate life. The contemporary university is essentially a corporatized instantiation of a socio-economic ethic which is non-humanistic and deliberately counteridealistic. Philosophy cannot but become delimited and misformed in such a setting. Reform of the modern university must be driven by philosophical ideals and not by ad hoc utilitarian criteria based on the external determinations of a onesidedly materialist and economic culture. I advocated a simple reform in order to resurrect and further develop the classical paradigm of education. Anyone wishing to pursue a course of studies at a university in a pure, theoretical discipline should be admitted free of charge. Tuition fees would, however, be charged to those who study technical, job-oriented disciplines primarily with a view to receiving employment after graduation. This simple reform has many wideranging implications. For example, the applied disciplines will be purged of a false scientific and conceptual intellectuality. On the other hand, the theoretical disciplines will be relieved of the fleeting necessity of constantly having to prove their relevance.

Indicative of the utilitarian culture pervading modern universities is that multiple social, economic and cultural ills are only thought remediable by multiple and diverse solutions. Indeed, most university based research in the social sciences and the humanities is almost totally directed towards the description of externally encountered problematics. "Solutions" are thus defined by narrow methodological, epistemological, and analytical frameworks.

Genuine and fundamental reform, however, must involve animating and unitary principles which order and sustain historical contingencies. It is because the modern university has been thoroughly historicized that therein no "solutions" can be found to the "modern crisis". Contemporary intellectuality and research in the inaptly named "humanistic sciences" can only find an *operational* agenda in its professional undertakings. It thus skillfully manages to avoid crucial reflections on cosmology, absolutes, first principles, and related matters, by relegating these considerations to the speculative infancy of the human race. Speculation has, according to the view of modern "scientific" ethical, positivistic and analytical philosophy, merely sustained the myth-making capacity of human culture. What is fundamental to philosophy is marginalized by modernity and its professional practitioners, who, for the most part, live that marginality in fragmented writings and wistful second-order critiques of largely extraneous material served up by sundry disciplines clamouring for recognition in the modern university.

The Institute has also been actively involved in making representations to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) regarding procedures in its Standard Research Grants program. The Council is currently undergoing a review of these procedures and input has been received from the academic community as a whole. On November 29, 1988 Dr. Lowry and myself submitted a detailed response to the Courtney Committee Interim Report. We opposed the concept of "person-based" funding in the Interim Report and called for the implementation of appeal procedures in the adjudication of research grant proposals. At present the adjudication committees have absolute discretion and this has led to arbitrary and often biased decisions in the awarding of grants. Given the pivotal role that such funding could play in the development of

philosophy, and the humanities in general, the distribution of taxpayers' money in this regard needs to be carefully monitored. Unfortunately, at the present time these funds are being directed primarily towards narrowly focused research in either various analytic and phenomenological forms of sociopolitical philosophy or merely descriptive historical scholarship. This situation should be rectified so that government based funding reaches all manner of philosophical and scholarly research in Canada. Copies of our response are available from the Institute.

On January 12, 1989 I attended, on behalf of the Institute, a national conference, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the SSHRCC, entitled "Taking the Pulse: Human Sciences Research for the Third Millennium". From the keynote addresses to the various workshops, the dialogue reflected an overwhelmingly quasi-scientific eclecticism. Systematic, absolute and unitary philosophy was referred to only as an historical curiosity. There was a noticeable absence of transhistorical or transtemporal referents, even though the conference ostensibly was about the "future". The view of many participants was that the humanistic studies have merit, and thus ought to be vigorously supported by government and society, because of their pluralistic, qualitative, value-oriented nature. Their very historicism was thus seen to be the source of their virtue in a society overrun by the debilitating value-neutrality, ethical insouciance, and uniformity of modern science and technology. Needless to say most participants left the conference with a promise to continue the "dialogue". Nothing, however, was mentioned about the need for

constructing a philosophy for the third millennium which would be the - "guide and guardian of the general reason" - to use a felicitous phrase of Albert Schweitzer's.

One of the fundamental aims of the Institute is to preserve and cultivate a philosophical tradition which is ignored, often forgotten, and insufficiently understood by modern academic institutions. The thought orientation of these institutions is primarily empirical, nonsystematic, and inductive. Authority seeps down from the natural sciences into the humanistic disciplines. Quantitative measures have come to be the primary modes of reference for these disciplines. Historically, they find their thought-world in the utilitarian philosophies of the English Enlightenment and positivistic nineteenth century Continental philosophy. The modern university is in essence the practical working out of these thought orientations. We are thus in an unique position to witness and evaluate the inadequacies of these philosophies as they pervade and shape modern intellectual discourse.

From the standpoint of speculative philosophy, however, utilitarianism and positivism are not absolutes, but derivative ethical, historical and epistemological systems that do not wholly recognize either the implications or limitations of their own principles. The subordination of modern pluralistic thought-orientations, which hold themselves as either absolute or relative, or which provisionally maintain their theoretical veracity, is, and has always been, a central task of speculative thinking. This subordination is a fundamental element in the speculative rethinking of "modernity".

REVIEW: THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

James Lowry

The television series: *The Struggle for Democracy*-created and hosted by *Patrick Watson*; *Companion Volume* by *Patrick Watson* and *Benjamin Barber* (Toronto, Lester and Orpen Dennys Ltd., 1988); *Questions and Activities for the Classroom* by *Paul Bennett*.

For the last three months or so the Canadian public has had the opportunity to watch on television a series which Bill Hopper, president of the sponsor, Crown-owned oil giant Petro-Canada, describes as being "informative as well as entertaining". Mr. Hopper's goals are modest enough, and I think it is fair to say that the program has fulfilled them. If we take the series, the companion book, and the proposed companion school program together, it is clear that the intention is not so modest. Watson and Barber have an agenda in the sense that they are both passionately interested in government and in the political directions of the contemporary world. They are both molded by the assumptions of the present. In that they have committed themselves to be in some way teachers of democracy, they have taken on a task which must test the limits of their assumptions.

In the discussion of what follows we will not try to distinguish between television series, book, and school program. The differences are generally, certainly intellectually, small. In passing we may point out that the book is more expansive than the TV series, has a useful preliminary bibliography, and many fine illustrations, while the school program asks some useful questions. More interesting than these superficial differences is the unity of perspective that threads its ways through the mass of largely historical material.

Watson and Barber are clearly democrats, but maintain an open-ended stance on what democ-

racy might be, and are content to simply state that democracy is people power, and to expatiate on some of the traditional difficulties such as majorities imposing their will on minorities. Initially, this tolerance of definition - "to be democratic is to disagree about what democracy is" - is disarming. The authors are "sure that there is no consensus on what democracy is or what it requires", and are content that "there are few generalizations about democracy that can stand up under scrutiny". What has given our authors such confidence in the endless fluxion of definition? They have surveyed first history and then travelled the globe to see for themselves the permutations of their democratic quarry. In short, they have the kind of empirical certainty that only a combination of historicism and experience can command.

At the same time the limits of this seemingly liberal faith haunts the carrying out of the self-appointed task. The program is confused both intellectually and artistically. There is no real plot, no story line that holds the program together. The journey remains a journey. The selection must be arbitrary, since it must be the result of induction. Instead of illustrations, we get vignettes. Instead of discussion, we are treated to a string of aphorisms interspersed with interview clips. Perspective is reduced to a loose nationality innocently, if disappointingly, projected under the rubric of "a Canadian perspective" in lieu of commercials. These additional vignettes, like commercials, are repeated several times, and consist of rather stylized exercises in idiosyncrasy that are more entertaining (until repeated) than informative. All this would cause us to simply turn the dial or close the book, except that the subject matter is interesting, the information entertaining, and the photography excellent. But it is all unsatisfying and unsettling, because, without meaning to, Watson has

embodied the fragility of democracy itself.

A child of modernity, Watson believes that communication is the key to freedom. And for him freedom's rightful form is democracy. And democracy is full of talk. Watson also has a number of other beliefs: that in the end "democracy is about power"; that "we're all members of tribes"; and that "there are two events that have been absolutely crucial in the struggle for democracy. One was the birth of Christ and the other was the invention... of moveable type". What Watson's beliefs lack is not commitment or a strategy for selection, but a coherent intellectual basis for their moral and ethical certainty. And this is why democracy is fragile. It must be fragile in so far as it is without definition; in so far as freedom is undefined; in so far as power and the tribe are not subordinated to, that is defined by, the rule of law; in so far as what Watson most wishes to enjoy, freedom of speech, is not founded upon the supremacy of God as rationally known. Unless beliefs cease to be merely idiosyncratic, cease to be merely historical accidents, cease to be merely the faith of an unidealized eclectic empiric experience, they will end up as self-destructive, rather than as the basis for their construction, as the cornerstone of their own continued instantiation.

Politics is not merely the art of the possible; it is the possibility of ideality, however imperfectly *able* to be instantiated. This is the teaching of constitutional history. Constitutions are not simply the aftereffects of revolution, but the effort of ideality. The struggle for democracy must also be the struggle for justice, for an equality that *transcends* tribe and power and *subordinates* them to freedom and eternity. Yet how can this be known as more than one aphorism among many, one hope competing against others? This is the crucial question; not as Watson would have it, how fares democracy? It is just this question of knowledge, of a certainty that politics and science and religion are not open-ended, that communication can be sophistry as well as enlightenment, that needs to be answered decisively. The most striking aspect

of Watson's work, and that of his collaborators, is how certainly they speak, on the one hand, of the questions of politics, and of how uncertainly they speak, on the other hand, of any solutions. It is important for us, and for them, to understand why this fracture of the will is the mark of intellectual sophistry, and as such is inimical to democracy.

We may for the sake of future discussion turn our attention to the Canadian Constitution. Canada is in the process of being defined by its citizens. At the same time Canadians are, without perhaps realizing it fully, defining themselves. All the problems of modernity, of the assumptions and beliefs Watson embodies, can be found in the newly minted *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982*. This Constitution begins with the remarkable assertion that:

"Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:"

The whole content of what follows, including the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, is stated unequivocally to be based on the recognition of these two truths, both of which are presumably *beyond* the power of human will to change, but *within* the power of human reason to know. Unfortunately, the Canadian Constitution proceeds to undermine itself by de-absolutizing virtually every section of itself through, among other things, the notorious "Notwithstanding" clause. This self-contradiction is the result of two irrationalities: that of the provinces, which tend to place a greater faith in tribal than in fraternal power; and that of the legally-trained, who consider the power of the people, embodied in a majority-rule Parliament to be more ample than that of a supramundane God or law. How Canada eventually defines itself cannot be predicted, but what the idealities involved are is not nearly so open to question as generally thought.

The ultimate question of government is not power, but freedom. And the ultimate question of freedom is whether it shall be exercised from *within* (self-government) or from *without* (tyr-

anny). Plato here, rather than Sir Karl, had it right when he wrote of government as primarily a question of justice, whose answer lay in the rationality of an education which frees the self from all accidental confinements. The philosopher-king is not a tyrant, and certainly not undemocratic in any ordinary sense. He is simply the only one who has gone through the process necessary to govern the self. Like a "bodhisattva" he returns to help the "demos", who are generally in a state of potentiality, who have not gone through the process of enlightenment. If Plato did not see how the many could become one, he also did not advocate the barbarism of blood, and soil, and tribal nation, nor did he advocate the "scientific method" as suitable for a free people. Aristotle, with his peculiar ability to clearly define, points out that the mark of an aristocracy is merit, that of oligarchy wealth, and that of democracy freedom. While, like Plato, he is not a believer in the possibility of democracy as a stable form, neither does he adhere to the philosopher-king as practical. Rather, Aristotle opts for merit, not incidentally advocating, as did Plato in a different way, the necessity that political life, if it is to be efficacious, be governed by a knowledge of what is best.

What in fact the decisive events, acknowledged and insightfully stated by Watson, of the birth of Christ and the invention of printing have made more possible than with the ancients, is the possibility that excellence and merit can be achieved by more than a few. And this was in fact the faith of the Enlightenment, whose greatest actors were supremely confident in the authority of God as the authority of Reason. In this they were Greek. In that they thought this rationality capable of being universal they were Christian. The ideality remains that of a rationality which can recognize the best. Out of this the idea arose of a *publicly* educated citizenry whose commitment as soldiers and property owners was at once justified and reinforced by knowledge.

How fares democracy? Perhaps we should rather ask: How fares government of the self? How fares reason? If we ask these questions, we cannot but

pause. Contemporary political assumptions do not generally understand why natural rights, which are *potential* by nature, must be undergirded by *actual* freedom, transcendently grounded. As a consequence, freedom, instead of being recognized as a state of actuality, is regarded as a state of nature. The result is terrorism, a drug culture, and an educational system in which reason is trained to self-destruct in an orgy of ambiguity, sophistical questions, and the uncertainty of tribal values.

The politics of these many irrationalities is the unreasoned tyranny of scientific materialism on the one hand and religious fundamentalism on the other. The secularity of the one feeds on the terrorism of the other. Both democracy and freedom suffer. Philosophy, unknown as an independent activity in the East, has been reduced to a sycophant of "small" questions in the West. Endlessly embroiled in the "articulation" of the trivial and mundane, reason has been rendered harmless, ousted by a scientific reductionism which would get its principles from the flux of matter. It is only *natural* that politics should mirror the fatigue as it is gradually replaced by economics, a process closely paralleled in the gradual takeover of the universities by various schools of business and finance.

The solution to the modern political scene lies not in *asking*, as does the concluding segment of the series, "Whither Democracy"? but in *defining* its ideality. Canada can do this by reflecting on how "*the supremacy of God and the rule of law*" take *precedence* over tribal culture and custom; and by further reflecting on why it is that accident must always be *distinguished* from substance. Such an education will require the *subordination* of will to thought and an alliance of rationality with itself. It is *this* alliance that forms the basis of the freedom of self, and which, when *democratically* projected, of a *truly* free political life. And it is this free democratic political life, free because it is *rationally* centered, that can properly preserve and protect the natural life of the planet - a life which mankind, due to its *sapientia*, has a duty to treasure in perpetual stewardship.

That democratic political life may take many forms is no doubt true, but *only* if these forms can be seen to occur *within* the ideality of a freedom of self which transcends the immediate willfulness of nature in a *rational contract* of reason with itself. *Within* such a contract temporal political life may indeed be endlessly instantiated, if not perfectly, at least not pervertedly. The answers are what make the questions worthwhile. We must learn to question rationally and not endlessly engage ourselves in the unstable leisure of idiosyncrasy, whose self-

indulgence will only lead to its own barbarism and to yet another struggle to chain its offspring in Tartarus. We need not travel from terrorism to terrorism, if we can muster the political will to contemplate where we must go. But to do this we must understand as for the *first* time why *every* constitution *must* begin with and be conditioned by the words:

"Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:"

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

James Lowry

"The Origin of the Universe", Victor Weisskopf, *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 2, February 16, 1989.

Cosmology in the twentieth century is, it seems, no longer the reasoned exposition of Being, inherited from the Greek philosophers, but in Victor Weisskopf's words it is "physics as history". Cosmology has been levelled off to the history of matter. Philosophically, it has become the secular explanation of how the multiplicity of matter can be imaginatively condensed into a unit of matter. This reductionist effort would be of no more than trivial interest if it were not for the fact that it passes for the most profound scientific activity, and claims to be positioned on the cutting edge of knowledge.

At the same time the new cosmology's proponents characterize the activity as hypothetical and subject to change at any moment. Rather than facing up to the rational implications of this flux and the conceptual inadequacy of this hypothesizing, Weisskopf *et al*, wedded to a notion of scientific method which regards conceptualization as a second-order activity

arising from material relations, consider the constancy of revision a virtue. To have this view is only possible on the basis of an almost super-human naivete.

The present state of this naivete is that there was once upon a time a "true" vacuum which had neither energy nor matter. Nevertheless, there must be energy fluctuations even in a "true" vacuum (forgetting, of course, that a "true" vacuum has been defined as empty space, empty of matter and empty of energy). This fluctuation provides energy to a small region of a "false" vacuum (though the "false" vacuum cannot be by definition in the "true" vacuum) which "exploded, almost immediately, into a very much larger region of false vacuum". This is the so-called Big Bang. This "false" vacuum then changes to a "true" vacuum (we now have two different "true" vacuums) and out of it comes light and all manner of particles and anti-particles which over time develop into our universe. This paradigm of going from an original empty "true" vacuum to a "false" vacuum to a "true" vacuum full of matter and energy has probably happened many times, and thus the

beginning of our universe "is not the beginning of everything". Such conceptual nonsense makes a mockery of the very scientific knowledge it proclaims. Beside it Parmenides is a giant among gnats.

The problem here is really twofold. The first is an innocence of speculative philosophy, the second is the fact that this "scientific" conceptualization about the origin of the universe is actually derived from mathematical models. Present day physics is at base a form of Neo-Pythagoreanism, in which mathematics is used deductively. Induction is used as a ballast which can never really satisfy the theory, since it can always falsify. In the hypothesizing about the Big Bang this becomes all the more incomprehensible because the physics of matter cannot exist before the advent of multiplicity.

Weisskopf ends his article by asserting: "The origin of the universe is not only of scientific interest. It always was the subject of mythology, art, and religion. Such approaches are complementary to scientific ones". Noticeably, philosophy is not mentioned. Yet it is speculative philosophy, beginning with the Presocratics, that has the most theoretical discussion of the questions Weisskopf's "cosmology" takes up. It would be more accurate to say that "scientific

approaches" are the ones that are complementary to those which are more comprehensive.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the current physics is that any serious examination of the logic of "scientific" conceptualization of the mathematical calculation about matter reveals that physics conceives of a universe in which something comes from nothing. The nature of scientific reductionism is to reduce something to nothing. More philosophically, it is an effort to reduce the Many to the One, Quality to Quantity, Actuality to Potentiality. Such an effort cannot succeed in any understanding of consciousness or creation, since it cannot conceive of creation on any other than a random basis. Yet even this randomness must introduce a principle other than the first. It ought to be recollected that Nothing is a second-order concept in that any negation presupposes a something to be negated.

It is no accident that serious scientists must logically become Buddhists. The deeper question is why the Buddha must eventually become a philosopher and recognize the necessity for a Creator which can create from nothing something. It would seem that the scientific mentality of today is not so much on the cutting edge of knowledge as in the darkest bliss of ignorance.

ON THE MEANING OF THE TERM "SPECULATIVE"

Francis Peddle

Deriving from such Latin words as *specto*, *speculatio*, and *speculator*, the English term "speculative" has historically accumulated the burden of a manifold of positive and negative connotations. Literally, the Latin root means to "look at", "behold", "observe", "explore", "investigate", and "contemplate". The original

philosophical source and parallel is to be found in the Greek term *theoria*, as used by Aristotle. The positive significance, philosophically, of meditating and pondering on, or thinking about a subject, stands in stark contrast to the popular use of the term as the casual or idle review of a topic, which leaves

an aura that is inconclusive and hypothetical. "Speculative" is also often used pejoratively to denote less than socially beneficial economic activities such as real estate speculation or risky trades on the stock markets.

Within the Western philosophical tradition, the "speculative" has usually been associated with metaphysics, first philosophy, theology, cosmology, absolute-theory and in general with theoretical knowledge. Furthermore, and more profoundly, speculative philosophy is often taken as synonymous with self-enclosed and all-embracing *systems* of thought. Such an intellectual orientation has for one of its sources the conviction that the discipline of philosophy must be systematic, comprehensive and irreplaceable, and ought to be expressed as such, if it is to be true to its basic concept. Speculative philosophy is *thought* in its purest and most free form, since it develops its content wholly out of itself - unlike the non-speculative sciences and humanistic disciplines which externally take their subject matter as predetermined. The predominant forms of philosophical research and inquiry in the modern, contemporary world are unfree because they approach their content from the outside, usually by the mechanism of this or that abstract methodology - itself appropriated from another, usually scientific, discipline.

The full significance of speculative philosophy can only be comprehended by way of the concentrated effort of working systematically and developmentally through its content. It cannot be understood simply as intuitive, as is often claimed by mystical visionaries, nor is its content fully represented in logical thought-determinations. Only in speculative philosophy is to be found the most complete unity of the differentiations of subjectivity and objectivity. Yet this unity is itself an abstract differentiation, if expressed solely in propositional form. The "speculative" illuminates the discursive limitation of language and recognizes the ideality of the linguistic medium for the presentation of thought. On the "speculative" or "positive reason", Hegel remarks in Part I

of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, tr. Wallace, [para.82]:

What was some time ago remarked respecting the Idea, may be applied to this common usage of the term 'speculation': and we may add that people who rank themselves amongst the educated expressly speak of speculation even as if it were something purely subjective. A certain theory of some conditions and circumstances of nature or mind may be, say these people, very fine and correct as a matter of speculation, but it contradicts experience and nothing of this sort is admissible in reality. To this the answer is, that the speculative is in its true signification, neither preliminarily nor even definitively, something merely subjective: that, on the contrary, it expressly rises above such oppositions as that between subjective and objective, which the understanding cannot get over, and absorbing them in itself, evinces its concrete and all-embracing nature. A one-sided proposition therefore can never even give expression to a speculative truth. If we say, for example, that the absolute is the unity of subjective and objective, we are undoubtedly in the right, but so far one-sided, as we enunciate the unity only and lay the accent upon it, forgetting that in reality the subjective and objective are not merely identical but also distinct.

The popular view of "speculation" as something that has no basis in empirical or everyday perceptions of reality is not therefore the meaning of the term in philosophy proper. Indeed, on this view, speculation is equated with mere opinion and fantasy, which of course has no place in the system of speculative philosophy.

Even discussions on *speculative philosophy*, such as this brief commentary, are inherently assumptive since they approach the content of philosophy either from the standpoint of an already completed voyage through its catego-

ries and various determinations, or from a perspective which assumes that mind is to a degree self-transcendent, that opinion has been superseded in the development of thought itself, and is therefore sufficiently free to discover for itself the full content of the discipline of philosophy.

Abstractly stated, the speculative is the harmonious, the unified, and the completed. It is that which is most conclusive, and least tentative, most demanding, and least fanciful.

The speculative contains and pervades the polarities, disunities, and oppositions of analyticized intellectual and natural life. As imaginative, spontaneous thought, it is the beginning and wellspring of all human creativity. As rational system, it is the culmination of all human labour and practiced effort. The task of philosophy in the present is to recapture and freely develop transtemporal speculative truth by contextualizing and delimiting the counter-speculative directions of modern intellectual life.

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