PROKOPTON

Undergraduate Philosophy Journal of Bilkent University

Issue #7 November 2026



PROKOPTON

Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy
Bilkent University

Prokopton is an annual online journal.

It is first of its kind in Turkey as a refereed international journal of philosophy for undergraduate students. 'Prokopton' is a Greek term used by Stoics, meaning making progress toward truth or being a student of wisdom.

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First-Personal Continuity and the Explanatory Limits of Derivative Identity

Kevin Don | Department of Philosophy, University of Edinburgh

Introduction

Philosophical discussions of personal identity often begin by asking what makes a person at one time identical with a person at another. Analytic theories usually answer this by specifying relations that are taken to settle the issue: psychological continuity, bodily persistence, biological continuity, or the right kind of causal connection. Once the relevant relations obtain, the facts about identity are supposed to be fixed.

In this paper, I will call accounts of this kind *derivative*. I use the term in a deliberately broad and stipulative sense. A theory is derivative when facts about diachronic personal identity are taken to be wholly determined by more basic facts concerning psychological states, bodies, organisms, causal relations, or some combination of these. This does not imply that all derivative theories give the same criterion of identity. Locke, Olson and Parfit plainly do not. What they share, for present purposes, is the thought that nothing further concerning personal identity remains once the relevant underlying facts have been fixed.

There are at least two different questions that can be asked of such accounts. One concerns *numerical identity*: whether a person existing at one time is one and the same individual as a person existing at another. The second concerns the first-personal structure through which a subject anticipates its own future. When I fear tomorrow's pain or look forward to tomorrow's pleasure, the anticipated experience is presented not merely as an experience that will occur to someone appropriately related to me, but as part of my own future. These questions are closely connected, but it does not follow that answering the first automatically explains the second.

The argument of this paper is therefore more limited than an objection to derivative theories as such. I do not argue that psychological or biological accounts give the wrong verdict about numerical identity. Nor do I argue that there must be some additional immaterial entity, Cartesian ego, or metaphysical fact over and above the physical and psychological facts. My claim is instead explanatory: a criterion that settles numerical identity does not, merely by settling it, explain the first-personal character of

anticipation. A theory may correctly determine that a future person is identical with me while leaving further work to be done in explaining how that future is given as mine from within an ongoing conscious life.

Teletransportation makes this distinction especially vivid. The point of the case will not be to assume that a reconstructed individual is merely a successor rather than the original person. That would beg the question against the derivative theorist. Instead, I will grant, for the sake of argument, whatever identity verdict the relevant derivative theory supplies and ask what explanatory resources that verdict provides for understanding first-personal anticipation.

Barry Dainton's work on phenomenal continuity is important here because it shows that the continuity of consciousness has received a detailed treatment within contemporary analytic philosophy. His account also forces an important qualification on any straightforward appeal to a single continuous stream of consciousness: phenomenal continuity can involve difficult cases of division, interruption and branching. I therefore do not offer first-personal continuity as a simple alternative criterion of numerical identity. Rather, I use Dainton together with Bergson's account of duration to identify a feature of conscious persistence that may not be exhausted by the relations used to determine identity.

I begin by clarifying derivative accounts and the explanatory target of the paper. I then reconsider teletransportation without assuming that the reconstructed subject is numerically distinct from the original. I next situate the argument in relation to Dainton's account of phenomenal continuity and Parfit's cases of divided consciousness. I then use Bergson's account of duration to explain why the temporal structure of first-person experience may resist straightforward reconstruction from relations among independently specifiable states. Finally, I consider objections from Parfit and Williams and clarify the limited conclusion that follows.

1. Derivative Identity and the Explanatory Target

Locke provides the classic starting point for psychological approaches to personal identity. For Locke, personal identity follows consciousness rather than sameness of substance, with memory playing a central role in extending consciousness backwards to past experiences (Locke, 1694/1975). A familiar difficulty for a simple memory criterion is circularity. If genuine memory already requires that the remembered experience was originally undergone by the person who now remembers it, then personal identity has been presupposed in determining whether the relevant memory relation exists. Shoemaker's introduction of quasi-memory is

intended to avoid this problem by specifying a memory-like psychological relation without building personal identity into its definition (Shoemaker, 1963). Psychological continuity can then be understood through overlapping chains of appropriately caused psychological connections rather than through direct memory alone.

The phrase *appropriately caused* also requires clarification. Mere psychological resemblance is plainly insufficient. Someone might accidentally possess beliefs or apparent memories resembling mine without thereby being psychologically continuous with me. The relevant later psychological states must therefore arise from the earlier states in the appropriate causal way. Parfit similarly builds the "right kind of cause" into Relation R, his relation of psychological connectedness and continuity (Parfit, 1984, p. 215). For present purposes, the important point is not to settle every dispute about what the right causal relation consists in. It is that psychological continuity theories appeal to facts about psychological states and the causal relations between them in order to determine facts about persistence.

Biological accounts change the criterion rather than this general explanatory structure. Olson's animalism holds that we persist because we are human animals and continue for as long as the relevant organism continues (Olson, 1997). Psychological change, including substantial loss of memory or personality, need not therefore amount to the loss of the individual. Here the relevant identity facts are grounded primarily in biological rather than psychological continuity.

Williams's thought experiments reveal an important pressure on purely psychological accounts. In "The Self and the Future", the same imagined transformation can be presented either as an exchange of psychological characteristics between bodies or as a series of increasingly radical psychological interventions performed on one continuing body (Williams, 1970). The second presentation makes fear of what will happen to the body appear difficult to dislodge. Williams therefore gives us reason to resist the assumption that prudential concern straightforwardly follows psychological continuity.

Parfit moves in a different direction. He argues that personal identity itself is not what fundamentally matters in survival. What matters is psychological connectedness and continuity with the right kind of cause, or Relation R (Parfit, 1984). Strict numerical identity is the one-one relation in which something is identical only with itself. Relation R, by contrast, can in principle take branching forms in which identity cannot. This allows Parfit to claim that what matters in survival may be preserved even where numerical identity is indeterminate or absent.

These theories disagree about what makes someone persist. Yet a distinction can be drawn between three questions. First, what criterion determines whether the person at t_1 is numerically identical with the person at t_2? Second, what facts constitute or ground that identity? Third, what explains the first-personal structure through which the subject at t_1 anticipates experiences at t_2 as its own?

Derivative theories are principally designed to answer the first two questions. Nothing in this paper establishes that their answers are mistaken. The present argument concerns the move from those answers to the third question.

That distinction matters because an identity verdict and an explanation of anticipation are not obviously the same thing. Suppose a theory establishes that the person who will undergo an operation tomorrow is numerically identical with me. This tells us who will undergo the operation. It does not yet analyse the distinctive way in which I now dread that pain as something that will be experienced by me. The first-personal character of that anticipation is not merely an additional proposition concerning the future individual's identity. It is a feature of the present subject's temporal perspective.

To describe this feature as *non-derivative* is therefore not to posit an additional identity fact. The claim is weaker. First-personal continuity is non-derivative in the sense that it is itself part of the phenomenon requiring explanation rather than something that can simply be replaced, without argument, by a statement of the relations used to determine numerical identity.

This distinction also limits what the paper needs to establish. Showing that Locke, Olson or Parfit encounters a difficult case would not demonstrate that every possible derivative criterion must fail. A better criterion may be available. The argument does not depend on denying this possibility. The question is whether discovering such a criterion would, by itself, provide a complete explanation of first-personal anticipation.

2. Teletransportation and First-Personal Anticipation

Consider a familiar teletransportation case. A machine records a person's complete physical and psychological structure, destroys the original body, and reconstructs an individual elsewhere with the same memories, character, intentions and dispositions. For a psychological continuity theory, the relevant relations may be preserved to an extraordinary degree.

It would be question-begging to describe the reconstructed individual simply as a duplicate or successor and then demand an explanation of why I should regard that

individual's experiences as mine. If the psychological theorist holds that the relevant continuity relation constitutes personal identity, then the reconstructed individual is, according to the theory, not merely someone related to me. The individual is me.

The argument can grant this verdict.

Suppose, then, that the pre-transport subject at t_1 and the post-transport subject at t_2 are numerically identical. The question raised here is not whether some additional metaphysical fact must determine whether this verdict is correct. It is what explanatory work the identity criterion performs in accounting for anticipation from t_1.

Before entering the machine, the subject can know every relevant fact specified by the theory. The future subject will remember entering the machine, continue the same projects, possess the same character and stand in the appropriate causal relation to the earlier subject. If these facts settle identity, then the subject can also accept that the person appearing at the destination will be numerically identical with the person entering the machine.

There nevertheless remains a distinction between accepting an identity proposition and describing the first-personal structure of anticipation. The subject does not ordinarily experience anticipation as the detached inference that a person satisfying some identity criterion will later undergo an experience. The anticipated future is presented as the continuation of the subject's own experiential life.

This need not introduce a mysterious further fact. The claim is instead that the phenomenon has not yet been described merely by giving the conditions under which the later subject counts as identical with the earlier one. A derivative theorist can respond that the relevant psychological or biological continuity does not merely establish identity but also explains first-personal anticipation. That is a coherent response. But it requires an argument connecting those relations to the temporal structure of first-person experience. Restating the identity criterion is not yet such an argument.

Teletransportation makes this explanatory distinction unusually visible because it separates two ideas that coincide in ordinary life: preservation of psychological structure and the apparent continuation of an unfolding conscious process. In ordinary survival, memories, intentions, bodily processes and conscious experience develop through an overlapping temporal history. Teletransportation asks us to imagine the relevant structure being reproduced through an unusual causal process. A psychological theory may consistently regard this process as identity-preserving. The present argument does not deny that. The case nevertheless forces us to ask whether

reproducing or preserving the relations that constitute identity is also sufficient to explain the first-personal temporality within which a future is anticipated as one's own.

Williams's work is relevant at this point, although it does not provide the conclusion I am defending. His torture case shows how unstable our judgements can become when bodily and psychological continuities are pulled apart. Presented in one way, psychological transfer encourages us to follow memories and character; presented differently, the prospect of torture encourages concern to remain with the body (Williams, 1970). One possible conclusion is that bodily continuity rather than psychological continuity supplies the correct criterion of personal identity.

Nothing in the present argument rules that out. But a Williams-style bodily criterion would still leave a distinct explanatory question. To say that tomorrow's tortured body is numerically identical with my present body determines who is tortured. The first-personal character of my present fear remains a feature of the way my future is anticipated from within this life. Williams therefore supports the importance of prudential perspective without requiring us to adopt his apparent preference for bodily continuity.

This also clarifies the role of intuition. Teletransportation is not being used on the assumption that reluctance to enter the machine reveals metaphysical truth. Intuitions about unusual cases can be unreliable. The point is instead methodological. The case separates questions that ordinary cases allow us to run together. A theory may tell us that identity survives teletransportation. The remaining philosophical question is what, within that theory or in addition to its identity criterion, explains the first-personal structure of anticipating the post-transport experiences as one's own.

3. Dainton, Phenomenal Continuity, and Fission

The idea that continuity of consciousness deserves an independent analysis is not peculiar to phenomenological philosophy. Dainton's work develops one of the most detailed contemporary accounts of phenomenal unity and continuity. In *The Phenomenal Self*, Dainton asks how experiences occurring at different moments belong to a single stream of consciousness. His account of diachronic phenomenal unity appeals to overlapping specious presents connected through forms of diachronic co-consciousness (Dainton, 2008, pp. 51–74). On this model, the stream is not constructed simply by placing isolated experiences side by side. Successive experiential phases overlap and are internally connected in ways that generate phenomenal continuity.

Dainton's account is directly relevant because it treats phenomenal continuity as philosophically substantive rather than assuming that the unity of a conscious life is automatically explained once facts about personal identity have been specified. His broader C-theory also develops an account of subjects in terms of capacities for consciousness rather than a Cartesian substance (Dainton, 2008). This is important because it shows that taking first-personal or phenomenal continuity seriously does not require positing an immaterial ego.

The position defended here nevertheless differs from Dainton's in an important respect. I am not attempting to provide a complete ontology of subjects, nor do I claim that phenomenal continuity supplies a sufficient criterion of personal identity. Dainton offers a positive theory of the structure and persistence of conscious subjects. My argument is more limited: phenomenal continuity identifies an explanatory target that should not be assumed to disappear once a criterion of numerical identity has been given. Bergson will later provide a different explanation of why this target may resist analysis purely in terms of externally related states.

Parfit's cases of divided consciousness create an immediate difficulty for any stronger claim. In his Physics Exam case, a subject is imagined as temporarily dividing consciousness into two streams in order to pursue two calculations before the streams are reunited. Each divided stream appears continuous with the single stream that preceded the division (Parfit, 1984, pp. 245–248). Similar considerations become more dramatic in cases of permanent fission.

If phenomenal continuity were proposed as a straightforward sufficient criterion of numerical identity, this would be a serious problem. If the original stream is phenomenally continuous with both later streams, strict numerical identity cannot simply follow that continuity, since numerical identity cannot branch in the same way. The lesson should be accepted rather than resisted. First-personal continuity cannot simply replace psychological or biological continuity as another uncomplicated criterion of numerical identity.

But that concession does not undermine the weaker claim of this paper. It instead sharpens the distinction on which the paper depends. Fission shows that questions about phenomenal continuity and questions about strict numerical identity can come apart. There can be meaningful questions about the continuation, division and organisation of conscious perspective even where the language of one-one numerical identity becomes difficult to apply.

Dainton himself takes fission seriously rather than treating it as fatal to a consciousness-based account. He considers whether phenomenal continuity can branch and develops a model involving branching personal time (Dainton, 2008, pp. 364–408). I do not need to adopt his particular solution. What matters here is that the fission problem concerns the topology of conscious continuation rather than showing that phenomenal continuity is philosophically unreal or irrelevant.

Indeed, Parfit's example helps reveal why the present claim must remain explanatory rather than criterial. During the divided phase of the Physics Exam, each stream can possess its own internally unified first-person perspective. Asking what unifies the experiences within each stream is not identical to asking how many numerically distinct persons exist during the experiment. Parfit himself uses the case to challenge attempts to explain experiential unity merely by saying that the experiences belong to the same person. If one person has two mutually inaccessible streams, saying that all of the experiences are that person's experiences does not explain what makes each stream internally unified.

The direction of explanation therefore matters. Personal identity cannot simply be invoked as an all-purpose explanation of phenomenal unity when cases can be constructed in which the unity and identity questions diverge. Equally, phenomenal unity should not simply be promoted into a new criterion of numerical identity. The more modest conclusion is that the structure of conscious continuity constitutes a distinct philosophical problem.

This point also helps distinguish the present view from a simple appeal to the intuition that survival must consist in one unbroken stream of consciousness. That claim is too strong. Fission, sleep, anaesthesia and other interruptions make clear that conscious life is more complicated. What requires explanation is not uninterrupted awareness but the temporally organised first-person perspective through which experiences belong to an unfolding life.

4. Bergson, Duration, and the Structure of Conscious Persistence

Bergson's relevance to this problem does not depend upon treating his famous example of a melody as an argument for personal identity. Taken by itself, an analogy between a melody and a life would establish very little. The important part of Bergson's account lies in the distinction between time as represented and time as lived.

Bergson argues that we often represent time by treating successive moments as if they were objects arranged alongside one another in space. Time becomes homogeneous, divisible and measurable. This representation is indispensable for

practical and scientific purposes, but Bergson argues that it does not reproduce the character of duration as it is experienced (Bergson, 1910). Lived duration is qualitative. Earlier phases of experience are not simply absent points standing externally related to the present. They remain implicated in the way the present is experienced.

The melody illustrates this claim rather than establishing it. A melody is not heard as a collection of independent notes whose identities remain unaffected by their temporal position. The earlier notes are retained within the experience of what follows, so that the same physical note occurring in a different place can have a different experiential significance. What matters is not merely which elements occur but the temporally organised way in which they unfold.

The connection to first-personal continuity can now be made more precisely. If conscious experience has this temporally extended structure, then the subject's present perspective is not simply one independently existing psychological state standing in an external relation to earlier and later states. The past is already involved in the structure of the present through memory, retention, character, expectation and the accumulated organisation of experience. Anticipation similarly projects the present towards a future that is experienced as belonging to the continuation of this unfolding perspective.

Derivative accounts can represent many of the relations involved in this process. Psychological continuity theories can describe memory, intention and causal dependence. Biological theories can describe the persistence of the organism that sustains conscious life. Nothing in Bergson's view requires those descriptions to be false.

The question is whether a description of relations between temporally located states is equivalent to an explanation of the temporal unity from which those states are abstracted.

This is where Bergson's criticism of spatialisation becomes philosophically relevant rather than merely metaphorical. Analysis requires us to distinguish states, properties and relations. In doing so, we can treat a conscious life as though it consisted of a sequence of independently specifiable temporal stages linked in the correct ways. Bergson's claim is that lived duration has a different structure: its phases interpenetrate rather than merely stand next to one another. If this is correct, then an analysis conducted entirely in terms of externally specifiable relations may describe the structure produced by a continuing life while leaving the character of that continuation itself under-described.

Teletransportation brings that possibility into focus. The machine is stipulated to preserve whatever physical and psychological information the relevant derivative theory requires. The psychological theorist can therefore conclude that identity is preserved. Bergson does not give us grounds simply to deny that conclusion. What his account gives us is a reason to distinguish the reproduction or preservation of a structural profile from an explanation of the temporally extended process through which a conscious perspective unfolds.

The derivative theorist may respond that this distinction ultimately makes no metaphysical difference. Perhaps the right causal and psychological relations simply are what the continuation of the process consists in. That possibility remains open. But if this is the response, an argument is required showing why Bergson's distinction between lived temporal unity and its analytical representation does not create an explanatory remainder. It is not enough to observe that all of the states and relations used by the criterion have been preserved, because the point under dispute is whether the phenomenon of first-person temporal continuity is exhausted by such specification.

A further difficulty concerns interruptions in consciousness. If first-personal continuity consists in an uninterrupted unfolding, then dreamless sleep, general anaesthesia or coma appear to destroy the person. That conclusion is implausible, and the phrase should therefore be rejected. The relevant claim concerns *diachronic unity*, not uninterrupted occurrent consciousness.

Dainton provides one possible way of making this distinction. His later development of the C-theory treats subjects in terms of capacities for consciousness, allowing a subject potentially to persist through periods in which consciousness is not being exercised (Dainton, 2008, pp. 311–340). The present paper need not adopt that theory to make the more limited point that gaps in occurrent experience do not straightforwardly entail gaps in the existence of the subject or the destruction of every form of first-personal continuity. A consciousness-based approach therefore need not claim that we cease to exist every night.

The case of a newborn raises a related but different issue. If continuity involves the way past phases are retained within later phases, how can a conscious life begin when there is no earlier phase to retain? The answer is that persistence and origination are different questions. A process need not have existed eternally in order subsequently to possess diachronic continuity. Its initial experiential phase does not owe its existence to continuity with an earlier phase; continuity becomes relevant as later phases emerge from and incorporate what precedes them. A complete theory of persons would need a fuller account of when a conscious subject begins to exist. The present argument does

not provide one, just as it does not provide a complete criterion of personal identity. Its subject is persistence and anticipation once a first-person perspective exists.

These limiting cases therefore constrain the account without defeating it. First-personal continuity should not be understood as a permanently unbroken chain of conscious episodes. It is better understood as the temporally organised continuation of a perspective whose experiential phases are internally related in ways that are not obviously captured merely by assigning them to the same numerically identified person.

5. Parfit, Prudential Concern, and the Limits of the Claim

The strongest reductionist response is Parfit's. If all of the physical and psychological facts are fixed, Parfit denies that there is a further fact about personal identity waiting to be discovered. Relation R captures what matters in survival, and the demand for something more may reflect a mistaken picture of persons as separately existing entities (Parfit, 1984).

Nothing in the present paper establishes the existence of the further fact Parfit rejects. This point is important. To ask for an explanation of first-personal anticipation is not to assume that an additional metaphysical object must travel from one moment to another. Nor does the persistence of a first-person question prove that there must be some hidden answer of the kind reductionism denies.

Parfit can also challenge the appeal to prudential concern more directly. Perhaps our ordinary concern for our own future should not be treated as evidence about the metaphysics of identity at all. On Parfit's view, recognising that identity is not what matters can alter our practical attitudes. His famous description of escaping the "glass tunnel" presents reductionism not as failing to capture ordinary self-concern but as giving us reason to loosen its grip (Parfit, 1984, p. 281). Metaphysics may therefore correct prudential concern rather than being constrained by it.

This objection succeeds against a stronger version of my argument. We cannot infer simply from the fact that I fear my future pain differently from another person's pain that there must be a deep metaphysical fact explaining this difference. Ordinary prudential concern is not an infallible guide to ontology.

But two questions again need to be separated. One is *normative*: how much concern should I rationally have for my own future rather than the future of others? Parfit's reductionism may have revisionary consequences for that question. The other is *explanatory*: what is the structure of the first-personal anticipation that we presently

have, and how is it related to diachronic consciousness? The fact that an attitude ought to change does not eliminate the need to understand what that attitude is or how it is possible.

Parfit could answer that psychological continuity provides both explanations. Because future psychological states are appropriately connected with present ones, the future is experienced and anticipated as one's own. This is a substantive answer, and the present paper does not show that no such account can succeed. What it does show is that the answer requires more than pointing to the existence of Relation R. The connection between those relations and the first-personal temporality of anticipation must itself be explained.

A second objection concerns the scope of the argument. Even if Locke, Olson and Parfit fail to provide such an explanation, why conclude that the derivative method is itself limited? Perhaps the correct derivative account simply has not yet been formulated.

This objection should also be accepted insofar as it targets a universal claim. The examples considered here do not establish that every possible derivative account must fail. The conclusion is deliberately weaker. Existing derivative criteria should not be regarded as explanatorily complete merely because they settle the identity question. A future account might show how the relevant biological, psychological or causal facts also constitute first-personal temporal continuity. If so, it would answer the challenge raised here rather than evade it.

The disagreement is therefore not best understood as a choice between mysterious first-person metaphysics and respectable third-person analysis. Nor is it simply a contest between intuition and theory. It concerns what a successful explanation of persistence is required to explain.

For a derivative account, one central task is to identify the relations in virtue of which a person persists. The present argument adds another demand: if the account is intended to explain survival as it matters from within a conscious life, it must connect those relations to the temporally structured first-person perspective in which a future is anticipated as one's own.

Bergson gives us reason to suspect that this connection cannot simply be assumed because analytical representation tends to reconstruct temporal processes as relations among distinguishable states. Dainton gives us reason to take phenomenal continuity seriously while also showing why it cannot simply function as a replacement criterion for numerical identity. Parfit's fission cases demonstrate that phenomenal continuity

and strict identity can diverge. Williams shows that prudential anticipation does not straightforwardly follow psychological continuity.

Taken together, these considerations do not overthrow derivative accounts. They show why there is an explanatory question that such accounts must answer.

Conclusion

Dominant theories of personal identity attempt to determine the conditions under which a person persists over time. Psychological, biological and reductionist theories give importantly different answers, but each seeks to settle identity through more basic facts about persons, organisms, psychological states or causal relations.

I have argued that the success of such a criterion should be distinguished from a complete explanation of first-personal anticipation. Teletransportation makes the distinction visible, but it does not establish that the reconstructed subject is merely a successor. The argument can grant the derivative theorist's identity verdict. What remains is the question of how the relations that determine identity explain the distinctive temporal perspective from which a subject anticipates future experience as its own.

Dainton's account of phenomenal continuity demonstrates both the importance and the complexity of this question. Parfit's fission cases show why continuity of consciousness cannot simply be substituted for existing identity criteria: phenomenal continuity may branch where numerical identity cannot. Yet precisely this divergence shows that phenomenal unity and numerical identity are not straightforwardly the same explanatory problem.

Bergson helps explain why the distinction arises. If conscious life is characterised by duration, its temporal phases are not merely discrete states standing in external relations. Earlier experience is incorporated into the organisation of the present, while anticipation belongs to the movement through which a perspective projects itself towards its future. Analytical descriptions of psychological and biological relations may capture indispensable facts about this process without thereby exhausting its first-personal structure.

This conclusion is deliberately limited. I have not shown that derivative theories are false, that teletransportation necessarily destroys the original person, or that first-personal continuity constitutes a further metaphysical fact. Nor have I supplied an alternative sufficient criterion of personal identity. The claim is instead that settling numerical identity and explaining first-personal continuity are distinguishable

philosophical tasks. Derivative theories may succeed at the former. If they are also to explain survival as it is anticipated from within a conscious life, the latter remains work they must still do.

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The Sophisticated Obstacle: The Cynic Critique of the Polis on Eudaemonist Grounds

Matthew Ewy | Department of Philosophy, Rollins College

For the political philosophers of classical Greece, the polis set the horizon within which the question of the 'good life' could be constructed and more importantly interrogated. Plato's *Republic* outlines and argues for an ideal city on the premise that the soul cannot achieve justice apart from a justly ordered state, and his *Laws* legislates for a second-best city on the same assumption. Against this tradition stood the Cynics — Diogenes of Sinope, his teacher Antisthenes, and his followers Crates of Thebes and Hipparchia — whose deliberate poverty and theatrical defiance of convention constituted a standing rebuttal to the claim that flourishing requires political order. This paper argues that the Cynic critique succeeds on the classical tradition's own terms. If justice names the conditions under which human beings are most capable of achieving eudaimonia, then life outside the institutional structures of the city-state provides better conditions for virtue, and therefore for justice teleologically understood, than life within them. The just city, on this reading, is not the apex of human achievement but its most sophisticated obstacle.

The question this paper takes up is a live one in the scholarship, though its two halves are distinctly a challenge to combine. One debate concerns whether Cynicism contains a positive political philosophy at all. Schofield treats Cynic cosmopolitanism as essentially negative, a rejection of existing cities with little constructive content, and locates the first genuine cosmopolitan politics in Zeno's Stoicism (Schofield, ch. 3). Against this deflationary account of the Cynic philosophy, Moles argues that Diogenes' cosmopolitanism carried substantive ethical commitments (Moles 105–20), Desmond reconstructs a Cynic politics of poverty and freedom (Desmond 77–131, 184–208), and Husson contends that Diogenes' lost *Politeia*, attested by Philodemus and Diogenes Laertius, was a deliberate philosophical rival to Plato's *Republic* rather than a doxographical fiction (Husson 23–41; Diogenes Laertius 6.80).

A second debate, descending from Foucault's final lectures, concerns Cynic parrhesia as a political practice. Foucault made the Cynic's true life central to his genealogy of truth-telling (Foucault 157–66), and Gardner has developed this into a reading of Diogenes as an immanent critic of the polis (Gardner 128–34). A third body

of work, running from Popper and Morrow through Bobonich, concerns the character of the persuasion Plato's *Laws* prescribes, and it bears directly on any critique of that dialogue's regulatory apparatus (Bobonich 365–88).

Moles establishes that Cynic cosmopolitanism carried positive ethical content, but his question is what the Cynics held rather than whether what they held defeats Plato. Desmond reconstructs a Cynic politics of poverty and freedom in its own terms, treating the Cynics as an object of historical reconstruction rather than as a party to an argument with the Academy. Husson comes closest, since establishing the *Politeia* as a deliberate rival to the *Republic* implies that the two positions are commensurable, but her case is philological and textual, and she does not carry the rivalry into an evaluation of which side wins.

What none of these debates has produced, accordingly, is an evaluation of the Cynic position against Plato on a standard Plato himself accepts. That is the contribution of this paper: an internal critique, culminating in an argument that the regulatory apparatus of Plato's *Laws* is limited by its own teleological measure, and limited in a way that the most rationalist reconstruction of that dialogue makes sharper rather than softer. The Cynic challenge in this paper therefore is not an eccentric provocation from outside the tradition but a defeater generated from within it.

Justice as a Teleological Standard

Justice, as I understand it here, is not merely the arrangement of legal codes or the equitable distribution of resources. It denotes the institutional and normative conditions under which human beings are most capable of achieving genuine flourishing (eudaimonia), understood not as pleasure or social stability but as "an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1098a16–17). A candid methodological note is required. Plato explicitly connects justice to the soul's flourishing. The Cynics, by contrast, left no theory of justice in the Platonic manner, and I do not attribute one to them. What follows therefore needs a standard of comparison, and the choice of standard determines whether the critique is genuinely internal or only appears to be.

The obvious candidate is a shared conception of eudaimonia, and it will not serve. A Platonist may grant that both traditions prize flourishing while denying that they mean the same thing by it. Platonic flourishing is the harmonious ordering of a complex soul crowned by knowledge of the Forms; Cynic flourishing is autarkeia and life according to nature, deliberately stripped of theory. If those are different targets, then showing that the Cynic attains Cynic flourishing outside the city shows nothing

about Platonic flourishing, and the internal critique is external after all. Nor is the difficulty removed by retreating to the formal criteria of *Nicomachean Ethics* 1097b–1098a — that flourishing is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue, self-sufficient, and choiceworthy for its own sake. Those criteria are Aristotle's, and importing them to adjudicate between Plato and the Cynics is precisely the move a Platonist should refuse. The bridge must be built from something Plato himself accepts.

He supplies it. In the *Laws* Plato holds that virtue is unconditionally good for its possessor, good regardless of what other things he has or lacks, and that virtue is both necessary and sufficient for happiness (*Laws* 631b–d, 660e–661e, 874d). Bobonich, whose reading of the dialogue I engage at length below, documents this commitment and treats it as fundamental to Plato's justificatory structure, noting that the ultimate end of all laws and social institutions in Magnesia is the production of the greatest possible happiness for the citizens (Bobonich 378–80). The commitment is not incidental. It is what allows Plato to justify the entire legislative apparatus, since every institution must be defended by showing how it furthers that end.

Grant Plato this and the comparison becomes tractable without any assumption that the two schools agree about what virtue consists in. If virtue suffices for happiness, then the polis is necessary for eudaimonia only insofar as it is necessary for virtue. Plato's case for the city must therefore be a case about the conditions of virtue, and it is exactly that: the city supplies material security and moral formation, and without such formation individual justice is nearly impossible. The question dividing Plato from the Cynics is accordingly narrower and sharper than a dispute about the content of the good life. It is whether the institutional-coercive order is a condition of becoming virtuous. That question can be posed in terms both sides accept, because it does not require them to accept the same account of virtue, only to agree that whatever virtue is, the dispute concerns what its acquisition requires.

Two consequences follow. First, the Cynics need no theory of justice for the argument to proceed. They need only the claim, which no source disputes, that their way of life is the truest path to the good, together with a demonstration that this claim is coherent and the life livable. Second, the burden of the paper is correspondingly specific. It is not to show that Diogenes achieved Platonic flourishing, which would require the equivalence I have just disclaimed. It is to show that Plato's necessity claim about the conditions of virtue fails by his own lights. Whether the Cynics possessed a positive conception of justice is a further question, and one I return to below.

Three Senses of "Polis"

The Cynic position is easily caricatured, and the caricature must be dismantled before the argument can proceed. "Polis" conflates at least three things: first, the human community as such — language, cooperation, shared deliberation; second, the economic and commercial infrastructure of the city — its markets, surplus, and exchange; third, the coercive institutional order — laws, borders, citizenship classes, magistracies, and the authority to compel. The Cynic target is the third sense alone. This distinction answers Aristotle's famous objection in advance. Aristotle declares that man is by nature a *zoon politikon* and that the one who lives outside the city is "either a beast or a god" (Aristotle, *Politics* 1253a); on this view the Cynic has not transcended the human condition but fallen below it. But the objection equivocates between the first and third senses. The Cynics do not deny human sociality — Diogenes taught in the marketplace and engaged constantly with others (Diogenes Laertius 6.20–81; Kuin 86–88). What he rejected was the claim that the coercive institutional form of the city-state is the natural expression of human sociality rather than its distortion. The Cynic is not the isolated beast of the *Politics*; he is a human being who has found a way to be social without being political.

One refinement of the third sense is needed, since it bears the argument's weight. The objectionable feature of the institutional order is not naked compulsion narrowly construed — the sword behind the law — but something wider: the formation of the soul by an order the person did not choose and cannot contest. Plato's own city works largely through means other than force, and a Platonist may fairly protest that the load-bearing mechanism of Kallipolis is formation rather than compulsion. The Cynic target includes this. What he opposes is soul-shaping without standing to contest it, whether it proceeds by the threat of the magistrate, by the curated song, or by argument the citizen is not free to reject. Each installs a disposition in a person who was given no purchase on it. This is the sense of "polis" that Plato claims is necessary for flourishing, and it is this sense the Cynic denies.

The distinction also sharpens the thesis against a subtler objection. The same evidence from Moles that supports the reconstruction above might suggest that the Cynic quarrel is only with strong states like Kallipolis rather than with minimal association as such. I concede the point, and the concession costs nothing. A voluntary community of the virtuous, held together by shared recognition of the good and not by compulsion, is precisely not a polis in the third sense. It is, as we shall see, Zeno's city of the wise — a distinct idea born from the Cynic tradition and transformed in the Stoic

school of thought. The Cynic challenge is to institutional-coercive political architecture, and it is that architecture which Plato claims is necessary for flourishing.

Plato's Case for the Polis

Plato's *Republic* provides the most foundational account of the just political order. Justice is structural harmony: as the soul achieves its proper condition when reason governs spirit and appetite, the state achieves justice when each class performs its proper function, so that "each does his own work" (*Republic* 433a–b). The account rests on three premises.

First, human beings are "not self-sufficing but full of wants" (369b), so that flourishing requires a division of labor no individual can supply alone.

Second, virtue is knowledge, and knowledge requires the leisure that only an organized city provides, since the philosopher accesses truth because the producer class frees him from material concern. This premise is stated in its *Republic* form. As will emerge below, Plato's position in the *Laws* differs in a way that matters for the argument, and the difference is one his modern defenders have documented rather than one I am imposing.

Third, and most fundamentally, the external order of the city shapes the internal order of the soul. Without proper institutional formation individual justice is nearly impossible, and even the philosopher who has glimpsed the Forms must return to the cave, since isolated virtue corrupts in an unjust environment (519c–521b). The polis thus supplies two essential goods — material security and moral formation — and flourishing becomes inextricable from political life. The human being, on this account, is constitutively incomplete outside the city.

Diogenes as Normative Exemplar

The Cynic reply begins with a figure, and the figure requires methodological care. Diogenes reaches us almost entirely through chreiai, pointed anecdotes compiled centuries after his death by Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, and others, and the historical record is, as Kuin emphasizes, full of holes (Kuin 4–6). I therefore do not present Diogenes as an empirical datum, a documented case of flourishing outside the city. He functions instead as a normative exemplar, in precisely the way Plato's Socrates functions: a philosophically constructed model whose argumentative force is independent of biographical accuracy. The construction is not built on sand even where individual anecdotes are legendary, since the philosophical commitments that constitute the exemplar — autarkeia, the priority of *physis* over *nomos*, and the reduction

of needs to what nature supplies — are attested across the tradition independently of any single story. It is those commitments, and not the pithos or the encounter with Alexander, that the argument requires.

What the exemplar shows is that the Cynic way of life is a coherent object of choice. Plato's premise is a necessity claim, so a coherent counter-model would defeat it, but coherence alone invites the reply that many things are describable without being livable by beings constituted as we are. The Cynic tradition answers this in practice. Crates and Hipparchia abandoned wealth and citizenship to take up the life, and a school formed around it and persisted (Diogenes Laertius 6.85–98). Whatever the status of any particular anecdote, the existence of practitioners over generations is evidence that the model is livable and not merely statable, and livability is what Plato's necessity claim denies.

The exemplar must also survive against another objection: Diogenes was not materially independent of the city. His pithos stood near the agora, and he lived on alms and dinner invitations (Kuin 86–88). If self-sufficiency means producing one's own sustenance, Diogenes fails the test. But this mistakes the Cynic claim. Autarkeia is a psychological and moral condition — the reduction of needs to what nature supplies easily, and indifference to everything else — not agricultural self-provision (Diogenes Laertius 6.37, 6.44). The Cynic uses the city's surplus without being constituted by its institutions. He takes bread from the marketplace but no identity from the citizen rolls, no obligations from the law courts, and no measure of the good from convention. When Alexander offered him anything he wished, Diogenes asked only that he stand out of his light (Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 14), which is to say that the most powerful ruler in the world could not augment his needs. The city, for the Cynic, is a stage and a granary; it is not a soul-forming necessity. That is the precise point at issue with Plato, whose claim was never merely that cities are materially convenient but that they are morally constitutive. The dependency objection, properly analyzed, concedes the trivial claim and leaves the crucial one refuted.

The Cynic Counter-Politics: Zeno, the Lost *Politeia*, and Cosmopolitan Justice

The Cynics did not merely live an alternative way of life; they wrote one. Diogenes composed a *Politeia* of his own, a fact preserved by Philodemus and the catalogues in Diogenes Laertius and defended as authentic by Husson (Husson 23–41; Diogenes Laertius 6.80). The challenge to Plato was thus textual and deliberate rather than merely performative. Its fullest development came through Zeno of Citium, who composed his *Republic* on the dog's tail, that is, while still under the influence of the Cynic Crates (Sellars 8). Zeno's community is held together by virtue and by shared

recognition of the good, with no legal or compulsory mechanism doing the work, and its doctrines follow from the Cynic ideal of living according to nature (Sellars 17). This is where Schofield's deflationary reading comes under pressure. If Zeno's community follows from the Cynic ideal of living according to nature, then the constructive content Schofield locates in Stoicism was inherited rather than invented, and the negativity he ascribes to the Cynics is a feature of the surviving evidence rather than of the position itself.

What is philosophically significant about Zeno's *Republic* is its diagnostic function. On Sellars' reading, the text operates as an argument rather than a blueprint: every institution the actual city requires — law courts, currency, temples — testifies to the vices its citizens have not overcome (Sellars 8–9). This reading can be pushed further than Sellars takes it, though the further step needs a premise the Platonist will contest. Suppose every civic institution is a remedy for vice. A Platonist may reply that designing an effective remedy is itself an achievement of practical reason, so that institutional complexity measures excellence after all, as a well-run hospital measures medical skill rather than the prevalence of disease. The analogy fails at the point that matters. Medicine aims at health, and its success is the patient's restoration to a condition in which the physician is no longer needed. Plato's institutions do not aim at their own dissolution. Kallipolis is designed to persist, its formative apparatus operating in perpetuity on each generation, because on Plato's account the conditions producing the need never lift. An institution whose success condition is its permanence is not a cure. What it measures is the depth of the failure it manages.

The diagnosis extends to Plato's epistemic premise, and here the standard established above does the work. Plato ties virtue to knowledge and knowledge to the leisure that only an organized city provides, so that the philosopher can contemplate because the producer feeds him. The premise is meant to establish that the city is necessary for virtue and thereby, given that virtue suffices for happiness, necessary for eudaimonia. Whether it establishes this depends entirely on what kind of knowledge virtue requires.

The difficulty is that Plato's own answer changes, and the *Laws* answers in a way that undercuts the premise. In the *Republic*, knowledge is required for the possession of any virtue in the full sense. In the *Laws*, as Bobonich argues at length, Plato abandons that claim while continuing to hold that some sort of true belief, rationally justified, is necessary for virtue; he freely attributes unqualified virtue to citizens who lack philosophic knowledge, and he never confines ordinary citizens to a merely popular grade of virtue (Bobonich 380 n. 59, 384). The Magnesian citizen becomes virtuous by

receiving and grasping the reasons contained in the preludes, not by ascending to the Forms.

This is a substantial concession, and it costs Plato the epistemic premise. If virtue requires rationally justified true belief about how one should live rather than theoretical wisdom, then what the division of labor secures is no longer what virtue needs. The leisure of the producer class purchases contemplation of the Forms; it does not purchase the citizen's grasp of a practical argument about how to act, which is available to anyone capable of following one. The Cynic can therefore accept Plato's late position without alteration and observe that it no longer supports the conclusion Plato drew from it. He does not need a rival epistemology of his own. He needs only to note that Diogenes' askesis is a method of acquiring rationally held convictions about how to live, tested in practice, and that on the *Laws*' own account of what virtue requires there is nothing further the city must supply.

A Platonist may reply that the preludes themselves are the mechanism by which citizens come to hold justified true beliefs, so that the city remains necessary as the deliverer of the arguments even if not as the guarantor of leisure. This is the strongest form of the epistemic premise and I take it seriously, since it is what Bobonich's reading makes available. But it relocates the necessity claim rather than defending it. The question is no longer whether the city underwrites the leisure that theoretical knowledge demands. It is whether the specific manner in which Magnesia delivers its arguments produces convictions the citizen can call his own. That is the question the final section takes up, and it is there that the Platonic project encounters its own limits.

Here the question of Cynic justice, deferred above, can be answered. The Cynics do have a conception of justice, though it is deflationary and relocated. Justice is a property of persons rather than of institutions, and it consists in living according to nature: physis over nomos. When Diogenes declared himself kosmopolitēs, a citizen of the world (Diogenes Laertius 6.63), the claim was not merely a rejection of Sinope and Athens. As Sellars notes, it affirmed allegiance to the law of nature over the conventions of any city (Sellars 5), and as Moles argues, it carried positive content, committing the Cynic to a moral community grounded in shared rationality rather than shared territory and recognizing no authority higher than virtue (Moles 105–10). Diogenes Laertius preserves the deflationary thesis in a single line, that the only true commonwealth is the one in the cosmos (6.72). Justice, so conceived, needs no architecture. The Platonic question "what institutional order is just?" receives the Cynic answer that the question is malformed, since institutions of justice are remedial responses to vice, at best palliative and at worst a means of entrenching the dependency they claim to cure. This is a rival

theory rather than the absence of one, and it is what allows the Cynic challenge to target justice and not merely virtue.

Parrhesia as the Practice of Virtue

The instrument of Cynic justice is parrhesia, fearless and unlicensed speech. Foucault, in his final lectures, made Cynic parrhesia the hinge of his genealogy of truth-telling, reading the Cynic's scandalous life as the true life that indicts the existence of others (Foucault 233–34). My use of the concept is narrower and eudaimonist rather than genealogical. Parrhesia matters here because of its function in the economy of virtue. Gardner captures that function precisely: Diogenes' practice operates as an immanent critique, exposing from within civic life the gap between what the city claims to value and what it rewards (Gardner 130–35). Parrhesia is not incidental to Cynic flourishing but constitutive of it. The Cynic achieves virtue by continually testing himself and others against the standard of nature, and this testing requires the freedom to speak and act without the constraints political life demands. The critique requires an audience, and so it requires the city, though as stage rather than as source. The Cynic diagnosis is medical in form and inverted in content: the polis manages the symptoms of vice while preventing recovery.

The *Laws* and the Limits of the Platonic Project

If the *Republic* is Plato's ideal, the *Laws* is his concession to reality, and it is here that the internal critique bites hardest. The second-best city regulates its boundary with radical strictness. Citizens under forty are prohibited from traveling abroad, and those permitted are only the most established and virtuous (*Laws* 950a–951c). Expression fares no better. Musical and poetic performance must be judged by magistrates trained in virtue rather than by audience pleasure. Pleasure is explicitly rejected as a criterion of correctness, since citizens delight in what corrupts them (659c–660a), and Athens' instability is attributed to the elevation of audience judgment over normative standards (700a–701b). The soul of the citizen is to be protected by the state's control of what it may hear, see, and encounter.

The critique must be stated with care, because two powerful replies stand ready and the crude version of the objection walks into both. The crude version runs: a citizen conditioned into virtue by the state is a puppet made to act well rather than a genuinely virtuous agent.

The first reply is that the puppet image is Plato's own. In the *Laws* he pictures the human being as a divine puppet pulled by competing cords and urges that we yield to the golden cord of calculation and law (644d–645c). He embraces the charge of

producing puppets and asks only that we be pulled by the right string. Nor is the appeal to conditioning a weakness he has overlooked. The developmental orthodoxy that he and Aristotle share holds that habituation is the precondition of virtue rather than its enemy, since we become just by doing just acts long before we can give an account of them (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a31–b2). The *Laws*' regime of regulated travel, art, and thought is, in this view, the systematic form of the moral education every virtue ethics requires. "You make puppets" is Plato's self-description, willingly owned.

The second reply is more recent and more damaging, since it denies the picture of Magnesia on which the crude objection depends. On Bobonich's reading, the persuasion Plato prescribes in the *Laws* is rational persuasion. The preludes are characterized as teaching, citizens are to be given good epistemic reasons for the beliefs they adopt, and the governing analogy is the free doctor who gives his patient an account rather than the slave doctor who issues commands and hurries off (Bobonich 373, 380). Against Popper's charge of lying propaganda and Morrow's and Stalley's milder claim that the preludes work on the emotions, Bobonich shows that Plato's own language throughout the relevant passages is the language of argument, teaching, and learning. Bobonich further confronts the censorship directly and defuses much of its apparent force. Because the whole of the *Laws* serves as a school text, and because the dialogue itself stages an extended argument with an imagined atheist, the citizens are exposed to views the lawgiver rejects, and they receive a public statement of how their inquiry has been limited and why. Magnesia thereby satisfies a publicity requirement that the *Republic*, with its noble lie, conspicuously fails (Bobonich 377–78).

I accept this reading. The Cynic critique that follows is not the charge that Plato bewitches his citizens, which Bobonich has answered, but a narrower charge that Plato's own account of rational persuasion generates. It has three parts.

Consider first the standing of the citizen who remains unpersuaded. Bobonich grants that law in Magnesia retains its penalties and that Plato will apply force to those whom the preludes fail to convince (Bobonich 382). The prelude therefore reaches the citizen as an argument he is invited to accept and required in any case to obey. This matters for the tradition's own account of virtuous action. An action is virtuous only when the agent chooses it for its own sake and acts from a firm and unchangeable disposition (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1105a28–33), and choosing an act for its own sake requires that not performing it be a live option the agent has considered and set aside. Where compliance is guaranteed independently of assent, the argument's success or failure changes nothing about what the citizen will do. Rational justification of this kind

establishes that the lawgiver has reasons. It does not establish that the citizen has them, in the sense of reasons on which his conduct actually turns.

Consider next what Magnesia excludes. On Bobonich's own account of the censorship, what is kept out is a false opinion likely to appeal strongly to the emotions and desires of the citizens and thereby to undermine their capacity for rational reflection (Bobonich 378). That description picks out precisely the material against which a disposition would be tested: the foreign example, the seductive song, the unlicensed argument. Bobonich and the Cynic agree, then, about what the city removes, and disagree about whether the removal is a benefit. Plato's position is that a soul protected from such appeals is better placed to reason well. The Cynic position is that a disposition which has never met them has not been shown to be firm and, more strongly, has not been made firm, since the alternative it was never offered cannot have been rejected. What Magnesia produces remains arrested at habituation and never ripens into the self-owned hexis the standard demands. A golden cord that moves an agent who could never have resisted it produces the motions of virtue without the endorsement that would make them his own. The Cynic, by contrast, forges virtue through exposure to hardship, temptation, and the full disorder of unregulated life. Diogenes' askesis is training in the open, under conditions the trainee does not control (Kuin 95–99). Where Plato removes the test, the Cynic is nothing but the test.

The deepest difficulty is one Plato creates for himself, and it emerges most clearly on Bobonich's reconstruction rather than in spite of it. Bobonich shows that Plato does not ground his advocacy of rational persuasion in the special status of what is known or in the value of the psychic states of those who know it. He grounds it in the status of the citizen. Because the citizen is free, the state ought to secure his rational agreement and foster his powers of rational understanding; a free person is benefited by exercising those powers and by reaching a rational understanding of the bases of his own action; and it is his freedom that makes his virtue depend upon his rational capacities (Bobonich 386–87). Bobonich calls this the first attempt in Western philosophy to explicate individual freedom in terms of the capacity for rational inquiry.

The relocation anticipated above therefore arises here. If the city's necessity rests on its delivery of arguments rather than on its provision of leisure, then everything turns on whether arguments delivered under Magnesian conditions become the citizen's own. It is Plato's own justification of persuasion that supplies the standard by which they do not. Grant that principle, and the regulatory apparatus becomes self-limiting. If virtue depends on the exercise of rational capacities, and if the exercise of those capacities is what the citizen's freedom consists in, then the systematic restriction of that exercise

cannot be neutral with respect to virtue. Plato may reply, as Bobonich does on his behalf, that the restrictions serve rational inquiry by removing what would corrupt it, so that the disagreement concerns the best means to rational reflection rather than its value.

The reply is available, and it is not foolish. But it cannot be extended indefinitely without cost. Rational deliberation requires access to competing ideas, including dangerous ones, and a soul that has never encountered a challenge to its beliefs has not chosen them in any sense that would distinguish it from a soul that was simply given them. Where Plato holds that unchecked expression corrupts the soul, the Cynic holds that foreclosing the confrontation between convention and nature corrupts more thoroughly, because that confrontation is what independent moral judgment is made of. The *Laws* does not engineer the impossibility of eudaimonia. It constrains, by the measure Plato himself supplies, the very capacity on which the flourishing it aims at depends. This is the sense in which the Cynic challenge operates from within: it borrows nothing the tradition does not already grant, and on this final point it borrows the premise from Plato's own justification of persuasion.

Objections and Conclusion

The strongest Platonic reply is that Diogenes is an exception, that radical self-sufficiency is a path for the philosophically extraordinary rather than a generalizable account for ordinary human beings. The objection has force, but it concedes too much, and Plato's own text shows why. In the *Republic* he grants that the best natures are the ones a corrupt city ruins most thoroughly (491d–495b), and that in every actually existing city the true philosopher, finding no community fit for him, withdraws from political life and keeps himself pure, like someone sheltering under a wall from a storm (496d–e). Plato therefore concedes the decisive point himself. Absent the ideal city, which has never existed, the philosopher's road to flourishing runs away from political life rather than through it. The necessity claim is not unconditional even in Plato; it holds only relative to Kallipolis. Diogenes is then no alien counterexample but an instance of Plato's own displaced philosopher, who has converted the sheltering withdrawal into a positive way of life. The exception, so understood, is the form Plato's own rule takes under real conditions.

Plato's claim is, after all, a necessity claim: the human being is constitutively incomplete outside the polis. If even one coherent human life can flourish without the city, the necessity claim is unsound as stated, and the *Republic*'s foundation shifts from philosophical premise to empirical generalization, one the tradition never defends as such. The Cynic has, moreover, a diagnosis of the exception's rarity. The city produces the dependency it then claims to remedy, since citizens habituated from birth into

institutional reliance never develop the capacities whose absence is later cited as proof that the city is necessary. This developmental claim should be stated in its modest and falsifiable form, lest it collapse into an unfalsifiable dogma that explains away every non-flourishing outsider as merely habituated. The claim is not that no one flourishes within cities, nor that everyone would flourish without them. It is that institutional dependency is largely produced rather than natural, a claim for which the existence of even a few who develop otherwise is evidence, and which predicts that such lives will be difficult and uncommon rather than impossible. Were human beings not so habituated, Diogenean independence might prove far less exceptional than it appears.

A second objection holds that the Cynic merely parasitizes the polis he condemns. The three-sense distinction answers it. The Cynic depends on human community and on the city's material surplus, but Plato's argument rests on neither. Plato's polis is a soul-forming coercive order, and it is that order, and not sociality or the marketplace, which the Cynic shows to be unnecessary for virtue and, in its *Laws* form, corrosive of it.

A third objection deserves separate treatment, since the foregoing argument invites it. If Magnesia's citizens are formed by a regime they cannot contest, the Cynic's askesis is also a formation, chosen under conditions the chooser did not select and sustained by a school with its own orthodoxies. Why does one count as testing and the other as conditioning? The answer lies in what each regime does with the alternative. Magnesia's design removes competing possibilities from the citizen's horizon before he can entertain them. Cynic askesis proceeds in the agora, in continuous contact with the conventions it rejects, and the Cynic's rejection of those conventions is renewed daily against their standing availability. Diogenes could have taken Alexander's offer. That the offer was live is what makes the refusal his.

If eudaimonia is the standard by which justice must be measured, then the state-centered models of the *Republic* and the *Laws* fall short of it. They secure compliance where they aimed at virtue. The Cynic alternative is not the absence of justice but its relocation, from the constitution of the city to the constitution of the person, and from nomos to physis.

Justice, properly understood, does not require an elaborate political architecture. It requires a human being with the courage to live according to nature, and the freedom to do so.

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The Marriage Boundary: How Social Exclusion Constructs the Unmarried Woman as Other

Nazlı Kesriklioğlu | Department of Industrial Engineering, Bilkent University

Abstract

The "marriage imperative" is not just a social expectation, but a system of mutually reinforcing boundaries that limit women's freedom. Drawing on Simone de Beauvoir's concept of situated freedom alongside feminist theories of adaptive preferences (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000; Khader, 2011), this paper argues that cultural vilification, economic precarity, and internalized misogyny work together to narrow the practical options available to women. Against claims that rising employment and changing social attitudes have dissolved the marriage boundary, I show that structural penalties persist in updated institutional forms. When remaining unmarried carries real economic, social, and psychological costs, a woman's "choice" to marry must be evaluated within these constrained conditions. Undoing the marriage boundary requires dismantling cultural vilification, decoupling basic economic security from marital status, and unlearning lateral social policing.

Keywords: boundaries, Other, marriage imperative, Beauvoir, situated freedom, adaptive preferences, internalized misogyny, Kate Manne, social exclusion

Introduction

From early childhood, popular media, family expectations, and public policies frame marriage not as one lifestyle option among many, but as the primary destination of a woman's life. This widespread social arrangement—what I call the "marriage imperative"—shapes how society judges single and married women, embedding itself deep within everyday language, digital trends, and state structures.

The core philosophical question is not simply whether this expectation exists, but how it functions structurally and whether choices made under its influence can be considered genuinely free. I argue that the marriage imperative operates through

three mutually reinforcing boundaries: symbolic (cultural and linguistic vilification), material (economic and institutional precarity), and psychological (internalized and lateral misogyny). Together, these mechanisms treat singlehood as a state of lack, ensuring that non-marriage remains genuinely costly. Treating these forces as mere "social pressure" misses how they lock together to reshape the baseline field of real options available to women.

Understanding this dynamic requires a clear account of human agency under social constraint. By connecting Simone de Beauvoir's concept of situated freedom with modern feminist work on adaptive preferences, this paper examines how each boundary works in practice. Through focused case studies of linguistic stereotyping, contemporary digital subcultures, healthcare access, and social self-policing, I demonstrate that despite changing public rhetoric, the marriage boundary remains structurally active.

Situated Freedom and Adaptive Preferences

To analyze how the marriage boundary limits freedom, we must first establish what choice means under conditions of social inequality. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* demonstrates that human agency is always "situated"—we have an inherent capacity to act and make choices, but our options are always shaped by background conditions, opportunities, and limits we did not choose (Beauvoir, 1949/2011; Bergoffen & Burke, 2023). Within patriarchal structures, Beauvoir shows that women are positioned as the Other: man defines himself as the primary subject and human baseline, while woman is defined strictly in relation to him—as his secondary partner, complement, or dependent (Beauvoir, 1949/2011).

Applying Beauvoir (1949/2011) to marital status requires precision regarding how Otherness functions. Within Beauvoir's framework, "Woman" is already the fundamental category of Otherness, and marriage has historically served as the primary patriarchal institution designed to manage and legitimize female dependency. Consequently, the unmarried woman is targeted not because she belongs to an entirely new or separate category of identity, but because remaining single directly challenges the relational reliance that defines womanhood under patriarchy. Her social exclusion is therefore an active enforcement of the primary oppression of womanhood itself.

This framework introduces an important philosophical question: if societal conditions heavily push women toward marriage, does claiming that marriage is coerced invalidate the lived experiences and agency of women who feel genuinely happy, fulfilled, and autonomous in their marriages? Dismissing a woman's explicit

testimony about her own love or desire as mere delusion would be patronizing, and it would dismiss female agency in its own right.

Feminist philosophy resolves this tension through the concept of adaptive preferences (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000; Khader, 2011). Adaptive preference theory explains how people living under limited or oppressive conditions gradually adjust their desires to match the few realistic options available to them. As Serene Khader (2011) emphasizes, an adaptive preference is neither an absence of agency nor a sign of irrationality. Instead, it is a practical, psychologically protective response to an unfair environment. When staying single brings social isolation, harsh judgment, and financial instability, forming a strong desire for marriage can be completely authentic to a woman's experience while still being heavily shaped by her circumstances. Recognizing a preference as adaptive does not mean judging individual happiness or mocking personal testimony; rather, it shifts our focus away from individual choices and toward evaluating the fairness of the background conditions themselves. True freedom requires transforming those conditions so that remaining unmarried becomes an equally secure, viable, and respected choice.

The Symbolic Boundary: Vilification as Othering

Symbolic boundaries work by denying singlehood the status of a legitimate, positive, or autonomous life path. Instead, cultural narratives, language, and media tropes work together to frame non-marriage as a personal failure or a social defect.

Language acts as a fundamental tool in this process. Words do not simply describe social reality in a neutral way; they shape how actions are judged and valued. Consider the history of the word *spinster*. In late medieval contexts, spinning thread was one of the few respectable jobs that allowed a woman to earn an independent living without relying on a male breadwinner. The term *spinster* originally designated an occupational identity centered on self-sufficiency. However, as economic and family structures tightened around domestic reliance, the term underwent a clear negative shift, turning into an insulting label for an unmarriageable and pitiable woman (Kaplan, 2023).

As Mukhopadhyay (2016, as cited in Bhatt, 2020) notes, this shift in language reframed single women as unlucky figures who simply failed to find a husband. The label acts as an interpretive filter: when an unmarried woman asserts her independence, the cultural trope of the spinster reinterprets her autonomy as sad deficiency. Her choice is stripped of its positive meaning and read purely as an inability to meet the social baseline of marriage.

This symbolic mechanism is actively renewed in modern digital culture through the rise of the "trad-wife" (traditional wife) trend. On social media, trad-wife creators romanticize traditional domestic roles, presenting reliance on a male provider as the true path to female happiness and peace (Proctor, 2023). The trad-wife trend does not exist in a vacuum as a harmless personal choice; it functions as an explicit critique of modern female independence. By framing domestic submission through polished video aesthetics, the trend creates a sharp divide. It places the married, domestic woman at the center of social approval, while subtly casting career-focused, unpartnered, or childfree women as stressed, unnatural, and unfulfilled. The symbolic boundary does not need to explicitly ban singlehood; it achieves its goal by ensuring that stepping outside marriage costs a woman her standing as a fully respected person in society.

The Material Boundary: Coercion as Constraint

Symbolic judgment alone would not be enough to enforce the marriage imperative if it were not backed by concrete economic structures that penalize female independence. Throughout history, marriage has functioned as an economic distribution system designed to organize property, wealth, and basic survival resources. Modern legal and financial systems continue to reflect this design, creating structural instability for those who remain outside the marital unit.

A prime example of this material boundary appears in the structure of healthcare access. Research by Bernstein et al. (2009) shows that unmarried working-age women face significantly higher rates of being uninsured or underinsured compared to married women across all income levels. Because employer-sponsored health insurance was historically built around a primary male earner providing coverage for a dependent family, single individuals face much higher baseline costs for medical security. When access to essential healthcare, tax advantages, and housing stability are systematically easier to secure through a spouse, marriage acts as a practical economic shelter. Unmarried women are left to absorb the full burden of economic penalties—including wage gaps and higher costs of living—without the safety net of a shared household income.

Here, Mary Wollstonecraft's (1792/2009) classic critique in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* remains strikingly relevant. Wollstonecraft argued that when society deprives women of real economic independence, marriage degrades into a transaction where women trade companionship for basic financial survival. When remaining single carries clear financial and physical risks, choosing to marry is better understood as a rational response to economic insecurity rather than a completely free personal preference.

The Internal Boundary: Misogyny as Self-Policing

The most persistent boundaries are those that become internalized within individual psychology and embedded in everyday social dynamics. Internalized misogyny happens when women absorb patriarchal standards and judge their own worth—and the worth of other women—through those restrictive rules (Sunny & Sreenivasulu, 2024).

This internal enforcement functions across two distinct levels. At the psychological level, self-policing occurs within a woman's own mind when she internalizes societal expectations and the male gaze. This internal adoption of external rules turns social pressure into personal feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, or shame about being single. An unmarried woman comes to experience her status not as a position caused by structural conditions, but as a personal moral or romantic failure.

At the social level, enforcement takes the form of lateral policing across peer groups. This happens when women actively enforce traditional norms against other women by excluding, judging, or distancing themselves from single women within their social circles. In *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*, Kate Manne (2017) offers a clear distinction that illuminates this dynamic. Manne defines sexism as the ideology that justifies gender hierarchy, whereas misogyny is the law-enforcement branch of patriarchy—the system of social policing that punishes women who step out of line or challenge traditional roles. Crucially, Manne points out that misogyny is not only carried out by men against women; women frequently participate in policing other women to protect their own standing and safety within a patriarchal system.

This lateral policing appears clearly online and offline through "pick-me" subcultures, where women publicly criticize single, independent, or feminist women to signal their own compliance with traditional expectations (Manne, 2017; Petkova, 2021). Because this enforcement happens through peer dynamics and internal thoughts, the boundary becomes invisible. Structural pressure is misrecognized as natural social preferences or personal choice.

An Objection Considered: Has the Boundary Dissolved?

A prominent objection to this thesis argues that the analysis is outdated. Critics point out that public stigma against single women has dropped significantly in recent decades, single-person households are common, and sociological studies show that single women often report high levels of personal independence and satisfaction. Furthermore, women's increased participation in the workforce provides financial independence that previous generations lacked. From this perspective, the marriage

boundary has dissolved, and marriage is now simply one option among many equal choices.

This objection correctly notices real cultural changes, but it mistakes a shift in appearance for total structural dissolution. While explicit public hostility toward singlehood has softened in many modern spaces, material penalties remain demonstrably active. Ongoing healthcare coverage gaps (Bernstein et al., 2009) and wealth disparities show that institutions remain organized around the married couple.

Furthermore, expanded female employment does not automatically guarantee full independence. Women entering the workplace still face systemic wage gaps and disproportionate unpaid caregiving burdens. Earning an individual income helps cushion financial pressure, but it does not remove the underlying institutional advantages that make a two-earner married household far more secure than living independently.

As feminist philosopher Amia Srinivasan (2021) observes in her work on freedom under patriarchy, a drop in explicit social disapproval does not mean structural equality has been achieved. As long as remaining unmarried carries higher material risks, lower institutional support, and subtle social penalties, the field of options remains heavily skewed.

What Freedom Would Require

The marriage boundary functions not as a single obstacle, but as a connected network of cultural narratives, economic necessity, and internal psychological policing. Symbolic judgment deprives singlehood of positive social value; material structures penalize female financial independence; and internalized misogyny leads women to enforce these limits on themselves and one another.

Achieving genuine freedom requires establishing real, unpenalized alternatives, rather than settling for formal legal permissions. This demands coordinated action across three connected dimensions. First, material reform requires separating essential social benefits—such as healthcare access, tax policy, and housing stability—from marital status, while actively closing gender wage gaps. Second, cultural change requires dismantling media narratives that measure female worth through marriage, while expanding stories that highlight alternative life paths, including independent singlehood and deep, non-marital friendships as envisioned by Wollstonecraft (1792/2009). Finally, psychological unlearning involves recognizing lateral policing and internalized misogyny as mechanisms that maintain gendered power structures.

The goal of this analysis is not to criticize marriage as a personal choice, nor is it to blindly glorify singlehood. Rather, it is to transform the structural conditions under which choices are made. Only when remaining unmarried carries no economic penalty, institutional disadvantage, or social degradation can the choice to marry finally be recognized as genuinely free.

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Kitap İncelemesi

Berk Celayir, *Bilimin Sınırları: Bilim Neyi, Ne Kadar, Nasıl Bilebilir?*

Akademim Yayınları, Çanakkale, 2024, 88 sayfa

Emir Alp Tunaboylu | Department of Philosophy, Bilkent University

1. Giriş

Berk Celayir'in "Bilimin Sınırları" adlı kitabı, analitik bilim felsefesinin üç klasik tartışma alanını seksen sayfalık dar bir hacimde bir araya getirmeyi amaçlayan bir giriş metnidir. Kitap, iddialı bir sentez denemesi olmaktan çok literatürdeki temel argümanları düzenli ve genellikle isabetli bir şekilde aktaran bir harita sunar.

Bu incelemede kitabın genel çerçevesini özetledikten sonra, kitabın üç noktasına ilişkin çekincelerimi dile getireceğim: zayıf bilimciliğe karşı sunulan itirazlar, kötümser tümevarıma karşı yapılan itirazlar, sınır çizme problemine getirilen çözüm. İlkinin zayıf bilimciliğin özünü tam yakalayamamasından, ikincisinin tarihi kaynaklarla yeterince uyuşmuyor görünmesinden, üçüncünün de problemi çözmekten çok kaydırıyor görünmesinden kaynaklanıyor olduğunu göstermeye çalışacağım. Bu itirazların bir kısmının, kitabın seksen sayfalık bir giriş metni olmasından kaynaklanan sınırlılıklarla da ilgili olabileceğinin farkındayım.

2. Metne Genel Bakış

Berk Celayir, kitabında bilim felsefesinin halk arasındaki popüler görüşün aksine bilim tarafından gereksiz veya faydasız bir alan haline getirilmediğini, aksine bilimin öz-kavrayış eksikliğini gidermesi sebebiyle son derece önemli olduğunu iddia eder. Bunun sebebi bilim felsefesinin, bilimin sınırlarını görmemizi ve bilimsel bilginin genel bilgi ağımız içindeki yerini anlamamızı sağlamasıdır.

Celayir'e göre bilimin gözlem ve deneyle kanıtlanmış, öznel yargılardan arınmış saf nesnel bir faaliyet olduğu bir gerçek değil, sadece yaygın bir mittir. Bilim evreni ölçebilir ama kendi başarısını ölçecek araçlara sahip değildir; bu nedenle bilimin metafiziksel ve epistemolojik varsayımlarının ne olduğu, bilimsel teorilerin hakikati mi yoksa yalnızca işlevsel araçları mı temsil ettiği gibi sorular felsefi düzlemde ele alınmalıdır.

Bu çerçevede kitap üç bölüme ayrılır: Bilimcilik, Bilimsel Realizm ve Antirealizm, ve Sınır Çizme Problemi.

I. Bölüm bilimin gerçekliğe ulaşmanın tek ya da en üstün yolu olduğunu iddia eden pozisyonu, Mikael Stenmark'ın sınıflandırmasını takip ederek akademi-içi ve akademi-dışı bilimcilik olarak ayırır; ardından epistemik, akılcı, ontolojik, aksiyolojik, kurtarıcı ve kapsayıcı bilimcilik türlerini tanıtır. Bu bölümün işlevi büyük ölçüde kavramsal haritalama sağlamaktır, yazarın kendi tezinden ziyade literatürdeki ayrımların netleştirilmesi öne çıkar.

II. Bölüm kitabın felsefi ağırlık merkezidir. Burada bilimsel realizm (bilimsel teorilerin başarısının onların yaklaşık doğruluğuna işaret ettiği görüşü) ile antirealizm (teorilerin değerinin doğruluktan ziyade araçsal işlevsellikte yattığı görüşü) arasındaki üç klasik argüman incelenir: mucize argümanı, eksik belirlenim problemi, kötümser tümevarım. Celayir bu üç argümanın her birinde antirealist itirazları tek tek ele alıp kendi pozisyonunu netleştirir. Örneğin mucize argümanına yöneltilen Van Fraassen'in "doğal seçilim" açıklamasını, seçilim sürecinin neden bazı teorileri empirik olarak yeterli kıldığını açıklamadığı gerekçesiyle yetersiz bulur; Howson'ın "temel oran safsatası" itirazını ise yerleşik teorilerin rastgele bir teori havuzundan seçilmediğini vurgulayarak reddeder. Kötümser tümevarıma karşı da Lange ve Lewis'in "devir yanılgısı" temelli itirazlarını aktarır ancak bunların Laudan'ın asıl iddiasını tam olarak çürütmediğini belirtir. Celayir bu bölümde genel olarak ölçülü ama net bir biçimde bilimsel realizme yakın bir pozisyon benimser. Eksik belirlenim ve kötümser tümevarımın bilimin tamamı için "yıkıcı" olmadığını, ancak kuantum mekaniği gibi belirli alanlarda gerçekten ciddiye alınması gerektiğini savunur.

III. Bölüm ise "içsel sınır" sorununa, yani sınır çizme (demarkasyon) problemine ayrılmıştır. Popper'ın yanlışlanabilirlik ölçütünden başlayarak bu ölçütün ne yeter ne de sorunsuz bir gerek koşul olduğunu gösterir, Duhem-Quine tezinin bütüncü itirazını aktarır, Derksen ve Lilienfeld'in "sahte bilimin alametleri" yaklaşımını tanıtıp bunu Wittgenstein'ın aile benzerliği kavramıyla ilişkilendirir. Bölümün sonunda Celayir, biçimsel ve içeriksel kriterlerin tekil olarak yetersiz kaldığını gördükten sonra Gregory Dawes'in "sosyal süreç yaklaşımı"nı benimser: Bilimin sınırlarının, önermelerin içsel özelliklerinden çok bilim camiasının standartları, yöntemleri ve kabul ettiği teorik erdemler tarafından belirlendiğini öne sürer. Bu çerçeveyi, Wegener'in kıta kayması teorisi gibi başlangıçta "sahte bilim" sayılıp sonradan bilim camiasınca kabul edilen örnekleri açıklamak için kullanır.

3. Kendi İncelemelerim

3.1 Birinci İtiraz

Bana kalırsa Celayir her ne kadar bilimdeki felsefi varsayımların önemini vurgulamakta haklı olsa da bunların zayıf epistemik bilimciliğe karşı bir problem oluşturduğu konusunda yeterince ikna edici olmayabilir. Celayir'e göre zayıf epistemik bilimcilik görüşü problematiktir. Öncelikle "zayıf" bir bilgi türünün "güçlü" olan bilime dair inancı temellendirmesi tuhaf bir asimetri yaratır. İkinci olarak da bilim bazı başka felsefi varsayımlara dayanır ve bu da bilimin güvenirliğinin bu felsefi varsayımların güvenilirliğine bağlı olduğu anlamına gelir. Celayir'e göre bu, felsefi varsayımlar ne kadar güvenilirse bunlar üzerine "inşa edilenlerin" de o kadar güvenilir olacağından ötürü bir problemdir. Bu varsayımların doğruluğunun önemsiz olduğunu varsaydığımızda bilimsel önermelerin de doğruluklarının önemsiz olduğunu kabul etmemiz gerekir. Ayrıca bundan bilimsel önermelerin doğruluğu yerine başarılı olmalarına bakarak kurtulamayız. Çünkü bu yine de bilimsel önermelerin doğruluğunu görmezden geldiğimiz anlamına gelecektir (Celayir 28-9).

Fakat Celayir'in dediklerinin aksine zayıf bilimcilik bilimin diğer bilgi kaynaklarından üstün olduğunu iddia eder, görmezden gelinmeleri gerektiğini değil. Bu da varsayımların doğruluğunun görmezden gelinmesinin zayıf bilimciliği ekarte edeceği fikrini daha az ikna edici kılıyor gibi görünmektedir. Çünkü zayıf bilimciliği kabul ettiğimizde, güçlü bilimciliğin aksine varsayımları ciddiye almamamız ve sorgulamamız için herhangi bir engel yoktur. Üstelik kendisinin de belirttiği üzere bu varsayımların bir kısmı bilimin sınırlarının dışında, diğerlerinde de bilimsel yollar problematik olduğundan (ve bu durumda da tercih edilmeyeceğinden) bilimcilik inancımızın bu noktada bize herhangi bir eksisi olmayacaktır. Bir bilimcilik karşıtı bu varsayımların doğruluğunu ne kadar bilebiliyorsa bir zayıf bilimci de aynı düzeyde bilebilecektir.

Celayir, buna karşılık olarak bilimin kendi alanında başarılı olmasını iddia etmenin bir sorun değil aksine doğal olduğunu, asıl sorunun diğer alanların bu alana kıyasla daha önemsiz olduğunu iddia etmek olduğunu söyleyebilir. Çünkü hem bilimsel önermeler, hem bilimsel ilerleme, hem de bilimsel alan bilimin sınırları dışındaki felsefi varsayımlara dayanır. Bu sebeple de bilimsel alan diğer alanlara üstün tutulamaz ("Bilimin Sınırları" 00:36:50-00:40:30).

Kanaatimce bu karşı itirazın zayıf epistemik bilimcilik hakkında yeterince hesaba katmamış gözüktüğü iki önemli şey vardır. Öncelikle itiraz, bilimsel alanın felsefe ve din gibi diğer pek çok alanla kesiştiğidir. Bilimin bu kesişen alanlarda

en tercih edilebilir yol olduğu iddiası; bilimin bu alanlarda diğer yollara nazaran daha başarılı sonuçlar vermesi, daha fazla ilerleme kat etmesi ve bu alanlarda çalışanların çoğu tarafından öncelenmesi tarafından desteklenir. Felsefe gibi diğer yolların da kavramsal netleşme ve olasılıkların daha iyi incelenmesi yoluyla ilerleme kaydettiği iddia edilebilecek olsa da bunun ilerleme sayılmasının zorluğu ve bu çeşit bir ilerlemenin bilimin ilerlemesi yanında tercih edilebilirliğinin az olduğu daha inandırıcıdır. Çünkü bilimdeki ilerleme somut olarak sınanabilir, gözlemlenebilir ve reddedilmesi zorken; felsefede gerçekten bir ilerleme mi yoksa büyük ölçüde haksız olduğumuz şeyleri fark etmekten kaynaklanan, daha az haksız olabileceğimize dair zayıf bir inanç mı olduğu belli bile değildir. Tabii bilimsel alanın temelinde diğer alanlara dayanmasının neden bu alanlardan daha önemli görülmesine engel olacağı da meçhuldür. Bina benzeri bir analoji ve yarattığı tuhaflık gibi bazı sezgisel iddialar dışında bir sebep gösterilmemiş gibi görünmektedir.

İkincisi, itiraz bilimsel olmayan alanların bilimsel olana kıyasla önemsiz olduğu iddiasını sanki bu alanlar sabitmiş gibi değerlendirmesidir. Oysaki zayıf bilimcilik, bilimin alanına henüz girememiş zihin ve zaman gibi alanların tamamiyle önemsiz olmadığı fakat bu alanlardaki "yolların" yetersiz oldukları ve alanlar bilimleşene kadar kayda değer bir şüpheyle yaklaşılması gerektiğini iddia eder. Nasıl ki bir zamanlar bilimin alanına girememiş hatta girebileceğine (veya nicelenebileceğine) dair pek de inanç olmayan bazı alanlar; kimya, astronomi, meteoroloji ve psikoloji gibi alanlara dönüşmüşlerse henüz bilimsel olmayan alanlar da bilimsel hale gelebilirler. Elbette bu inancı kesin olarak gösterecek yeterli kanıtımız olmasa ve sadece şimdiye kadar olmuş şeyler üzerinden tahminde bulunuyor olsak da bu inanç, zıttına nazaran daha inandırıcı gözükmektedir. Çünkü hem şimdiye kadar neyin bilimin alanına girebileceğine dair inançlarımız yanlış ve küçümseyici çıkmıştır, hem giderek daha çok şey bilimin alanına girerken henüz bilimsel alanın dışına çıkan şeyler olmamış, hem de bilim (felsefe tarafından fazlasıyla benimsenen deterministik nedenselliğin; kuantum mekaniğince daha zayıf, farklı ve istatistiksel bir nedenselliğe dönüştürülmesi gibi) girdiği alanlarda diğer "yolların" dediklerine üstün tutulduğunda daha iyi sonuçlar vermiştir.

3.2 İkinci İtiraz

İkinci olarak, Celayir realizmi kötümser tümevarıma karşı çıkarken bazı önemli şeyleri yeterince ele almıyor ve tarihi kaynaklarla tam olarak örtüşmüyor gibi görünmektedir. Kötümser tümevarım argümanı şimdiye kadar ortaya atılan pek çok başarılı teori olmasından ve bu başarılı teorilerin azımsanamayacak miktarının yanlış olduğunu görmemizden ötürü, bir teorinin başarılı olmasının onun doğru olması için güvenilir bir sebep olamayacağını iddia eder. Celayir buna karşı temelde iki

argüman sunar. İlk karşı çıkışa göre başarılı yanlış teorilerin başarılı doğru teorilerden fazla olması, doğru teorilerin çoğunun fakat yanlış teorilerin azının başarılı olma ihtimalinden ötürü, bize bu farkın anlamlı olmayabileceğini gösteriyor olabilir. Yani başarılı ama yanlış teorilerin fazlalığı bizim için yeterli bir sebep teşkil etmiyor olabilir. İkinci karşı argümana göreyse teorilerin başarısından çok, bu başarılı teoriler arasında aktarılan entitelere ve yapılara odaklanmamız gerekir. Çünkü eğer Mizrahi'nin gösterdiği üzere 40 unsurun 32'si hala kabul ediliyor ve bunca çok somut sonuç veriyorsa bu unsurların gerçek olmamaları birer mucize olmalıdır (Celayir 46-53).

Lakin Celayir'in sunduğu bu itirazların metodolojiden kaynaklanan bazı sınırlılıkları bulunuyor gibi gözükmektedir. Kitap boyunca tarihi kaynakların belirleyici olacağı bilim tarihi üzerinden yapılan iddialarda, bana kalırsa var olan çalışmalardan çok, ("bilim tarihine baktığımızda" gibi) genelleyici ifadeler kullanılıp yeterince inceleme yapılmamış veya (devir yanılgısı itirazındaki gibi) argümanların yapısındaki eksikliklere odaklanılmıştır. Bu itirazların sonunda Miazma teorisi gibi bazı karşı örneklerin olduğunu söylense de; bilim tarihi ve tarihçiliğindeki örneklere baktığımızda elde edilen resim, Celayir'in itirazlarından çok kötümser tümevarımı destekliyor ve realistlerin göz ardı edemeyeceği teorik güçlükler barındırıyor gibi görünüyor.

Kötümser tümevarıma karşı sunulan ilk itirazı inceleyelim. Nasıl ki doğru olduğu düşünülen bazı teorilerin sonradan yanlış olduğu anlaşılıyorsa, benzer şekilde başarılı olduğu düşünülen teorilerin sonradan başarısız oldukları (veya yeterince başarılı olmadıkları) da anlaşılabilir. Bunun sebebi başarı standartlarımızın içinde bulunduğumuz zamanın pratik, düşünsel ve hayali sınırlarınca belirleniyor olmasıdır. Bu sebepten ötürü de ne elimizde başarılı olarak gördüğümüz teorilerin yanlış şekildeyken başarılı olmaları mucize gibi görünür ne de bu teorilerin başarılı olduğunu bu kadar rahat iddia edebiliriz. Benzer biçimde, ele aldığımız itiraz ve mucize argümanı gibi başarının sabit olduğu kabulüyle yapılan iddiaların güvensiz bir zeminde ve yetersiz olduklarını da. Bahsettiğimiz sınırları ve tarihi örnekleri daha yakından inceleyelim.

Pratik sınırlar; içinde bulunulan dönemin teknolojik, ekonomik ve hatta yasal imkanlarınca neleri nasıl test edebileceğimizin sınırlanmasından kaynaklanır. Örnek olarak: 2. yy.da Ptolemaios tarafından ortaya atılan dünya-merkezli sistem, neredeyse 1500 yıl boyunca gezegenlerin geri hareketlerini açıklaması ve gözlemlerden elde edilen verilerle tutarlı olması sebebiyle başarılı bir teori olarak görüldü (Kuhn 64-73). Fakat 16. yy.da teleskopun geliştirilmesi sayesinde Galileo tarafından Venüs'ün evrelerinin ve Jüpiter'in uydularının gözlemlenmesi sayesinde bu teori terk edilmeye ve yerine bu

gözlemlerle daha tutarlı güneş-merkezli sistem kabul edilmeye başlandı (Kuhn 219-25). İkinci bir örnek olarak da eter (veya esir) teorisine bakabiliriz: 19. yy.da fizikçiler uzayın boş olamayacağına ve ışığın Dünya'ya ulaşması için tüm evreni kaplayan "eter" adında görünmez bir madde olması gerektiğine inanıyordu ancak Dünya bu eterin içinde hareket ediyorsa yönlere göre bir "eter rüzgarı" oluşmalı ve ışık hızı az da olsa değişmeliydi (Lalli 159-62). Fakat Michelson ve Morley, bu rüzgarı tespit edebilmek için ışığı ikiye bölüp hız farkını ölçecek "interferometre" adında son derece hassas bir cihaz icat ettiler. Deney yaptıklarında ışığın hızının her yönde tamamen aynı olduğunu ve "eter" rüzgarına dair hiçbir iz olmadığını gördüler (Lalli 161-3). Tahmin edebileceğiniz üzere bu "başarısız" deney, eter teorisinin çökmesine neden oldu. Teleskop ve interferometre örnekleri elimizdeki teknolojinin verilerimizi nasıl sınırlandırdığını ve bu sebeple de hangi teorinin (açıklama veya öngörü açısından) ne kadar başarılı veya genel olarak başarılı olup olmadığını etkilediğini gösteriyor.

Düşünsel sınırlar ise insanların bir teorinin başarılı olup olmadığına karar verirken (Wittgensteincı aile benzerliği gibi) zaten var olan ve başarılı olarak görülen teorilerden yola çıkmaları sebebiyle oluşur. 19. yy.da Galton tarafından ortaya atılan "ırk bilimi", dönemin empirik ve istatistiksel standartlarına göre doğrulanmış ve başarılı sayılmıştı (Kevles 21-5). Irk bilimi sonraki dönemlerde karşı örnekler sayesinde yanlışlanmış olsa da o dönem teorik bir erdem olarak görülen ve 1940'larda terk edilmeye başlanan doğrulamacılık prensibi bu başarı algısında etkiliydi (Kevles 227-8). Başka bir örnek de Celayir'in kendisinin de bahsettiği Kıta Kayması Teorisidir. Her ne kadar kendisi buna değinmese de bu teorinin reddedilmesinin en önemli sebepleri, Wegener'in kıtaların kaymasını sağlayan mekanizmayı bulamamış olması ve dönemin katı şekilde gözleme öncelik veren metodolojisiyle uyuşmamasıydı (hatta bilimsel olmadığı iddia edilmişti) (Le Grand 30, 46, 63; Oreskes 331-7). Verilerce desteklenmiş olsa da hem (önerilen nedenin gerçek ve bağımsız şekilde doğrulanması gerektiğini söyleyen) vera causa hem de (o dönem daha basit olan Sabit Kıta Teorisi karşısında zayıf olduğu) basitlik erdemlerindeki eksiklik sebebiyle uzun süre kabul edilmemişti. Bu iki örnek düşünsel sınırlarımızın başarısız teoriyi başarılı, başarılı teoriyi de başarısız olarak görebildiğimizi ve bu yüzden de başarı standartlarımızın dönem tarafından etkilendiğini gösterir.

Üçüncü olarak hayali sınırlara gelecek olursak, bu sınırlar; neyin test edilebilir, neyin tahmin edilebilir, neyin fiziken veya pratik olarak mümkün veya olası olduğuna dair inançlarımızdan kaynaklanır. Buna örnek olarak Chladni ve meteoritik teorisini verebiliriz. 19. yy.ın başlarına kadar, ayın ötesinde gezegenler ve yıldızlardan başka bir şeyin olmadığına ve şu an göktaşı olarak bildiğimiz şeylerin volkanlardan geldiklerine inanılıyordu (Marvin 545-9). Chladni, bu taşlar üzerine yaptığı incelemeler sonunda

bunların dünya-ötesinden geldiğini, uzayda bazı taşların kümelendiğini hatta Mars ve Jüpiter arasında olduğu bilinen büyük boşluğun bu tarz taşlarla kaplı olduğunu iddia etti (Marvin 549-52). Bu görüş, dönemin fizikçileri tarafından alay konusu edilmiş ve reddedilmişti (Marvin 558, 569-70). Fakat daha sonrasında Biot gibi bazı tek tük fizikçiler tarafından test edilmeye başlanmış ve en sonunda da çoğunluk tarafından kabul edilmişti (Marvin 572-7). İkinci bir örnek olarak da Lavoisier ve hassas terazisini örnek gösterebiliriz. 18. yy.da bilim dünyası, maddelerin yanarken içlerindeki "filojiston" (ateş ruhu) adlı gizemli bir maddeyi dışarı salarak hafiflediğine inanıyordu (Chang 35). Fakat Lavoisier, kapalı bir cam fanusta yanan metallerin aslında hafiflemediğini, tam aksine havadaki bir gazla (oksijen) birleşerek ağırlaştığını ve sistemin toplam ağırlığının hiçbir zaman değişmediğini göstermiş oldu. Bunu yapmasını sağlayan da henüz o dönemde laboratuvarlarda kullanılmayan hassas terazileri kullanması ve bunun gibi bazı başka yeni test yöntemleri üretmesiydi (Chang 40-2). Bu örneklerden de anlayabileceğimiz üzere nelerin mümkün olduğuna dair inançlarımız hem nelerin ciddiye alınıp nasıl test edilebileceğini hem de henüz var olabileceğini dahi düşünmediğimiz ve elimizdeki teorileri yanlışlayabilecek (teleskop gibi) test yöntemlerinin olabileceğini belirler. Bu da mantıksız olduğu için yeterince test etmediğimiz fakat elimizdekilerden daha güçlü (ve potansiyelde daha başarılı) teorilerin olabileceğini ve elimizdeki teorileri yanlışlayabilmemizi sağlayabilecek yöntemleri henüz hayal edemediğimiz için başarılı olduğunu düşündüğümüz teorilerin aslında başarısız olabileceğini gösterir.

Celayir'in kötümser tümevarıma ikinci itirazına gelecek olursak, kullanılan tarihi kaynakların ve metodolojinin argümanın inandırıcılığını düşürüyor olabileceğini düşünüyorum. Bunun sebeplerinden ikisi Mizrahi'nin çalışmasının tarihçilik standartlarıyla tam olarak örtüşmemesi ve bu varlık veya yapıların korunmalarının kanıt olarak yeterli olmamalarıdır. Mizrahi makalesinde rastgele seçilen kavramların hâlâ kabul edilip edilmediklerini incelerken bu kavramların kullanıldığı metinleri tek tek incelemek yerine JSTOR Data for Research ve Springer Examplar kullanmıştır (Mizrahi 3-13). Bu veri toplamak için hızlı bir metot olsa da eşölçülemezlik ve zaman içinde yaşanan semantik veya kavramsal kaymalardan ötürü, bu kavramların aynı şeyi kast edip etmedikleri meçhuldür. Entelektüel tarihçiliğe göre yazarların kullandıkları kavramlara değil, bu kavramlarla neyi kast ettiklerini incelememiz gerekir (Skinner 3-4). Ve Mizrahi'nin çalışması örtük şekilde metinleri zamansız kabul etmesi ve kelimelerin kullanımından çok kelimelerin kendisine odaklanması itibariyle tarihçilik standartlarınca yeterli görünmemektedir. Bu sebeple de Mizrahi'nin çalışması, kötümser tümevarıma karşı ikna edici bir kaynak olmayabilir.

Kaldı ki bu varlıklar ve yapılar teoriler arasında aktarılıyor olsa bile bu, onların gerçek olduklarına inanmak için yeterli gözükmemekte. Başarılı teoriler tarafından bu kadar sık kullanılmış unsurların gerçek olmamalarının mucize olacağı düşüncesi; hem bu unsurların teoriler arasında aynı şeyi kast ettiklerini yeterince temellendirilmemiş şekilde varsayması sebebiyle, hem bu unsurların benzer şekilde başarısız teorilerce kullanılmış ve kullanılıyor olması sebebiyle, hem de bahsettiğimiz üç sınır ve bu sınırların başarı standartlarımızı değiştirmesi sebebiyle sorunlu görünmektedir. Aktarılan unsurlar, bulundukları teorilerin başarıları ve bu unsurların gerçek olmaları arasında güçlü bir ilişki olduğunu iddia etmek çok daha kapsamlı bir çalışma gerektirmektedir. Elbette bu konuda da pek çok destekleyici örnek ve karşı örnek verilebilecek olsa da kitap incelemesinin kapsamı sebebiyle buna çok değinemeyeceğim.

3.3 Üçüncü İtiraz

Üçüncü olarak, Celayir'in sınır çizme problemine getirdiği çözümde bazı açıkların olduğunu düşünüyorum. Celayir kitabın üçüncü bölümünün sonlarında, sınır çizme problemine getirilen tek veya çoklu kriterli çözümlerin; karşı örneklerle kolayca çürütülebilir ve hem bilim hem de sahte bilimi tespit etmekte yetersiz olmaları yüzünden terk edildiklerini söyler. Buna karşı olarak da bilimi spesifik türden yöntemlerce elde edilen spesifik türden önermeler olarak görmek yerine; belirli epistemik erdemler, yöntemler ve normlarla bağlı bir topluluğun faaliyeti olarak sunar. Yani Dawes'tan hareketle, sınırı teorilerin içeriğinden onları üreten sosyal sürece taşıyor. Bu hamlenin görünürdeki gücü, kıta kayması gibi vakaları (içerik değişmeden statü değişimi) ve parapsikoloji gibi vakaları (kurumsal gömülülüğe rağmen topluluk tarafından reddedilme) aynı çerçeveyle açıklayabilmesinde yatıyor (Celayir 74-8).

Fakat bu iddiaların iki noktada daha fazla geliştirilmeye ihtiyaç duyduğunu düşünüyorum. Öncelikle, bu bir çözümden çok sorunun yer değiştirmesi gibi gözükmekte. Orijinal soru "hangi içerik/teori bilimseldir?" idi. Yeni çerçevede soru "hangi topluluk/süreç bilimseldir (ya da bilimsel-yapıcıdır)?" haline geliyor. Ama bu ikinci soru, birincisinden daha kolay değil, hatta belki daha zor. Çünkü artık şunu sormamız gerekiyor: Bir topluluğu "meşru bilimsel topluluk" yapan nedir? Eğer cevap "iyi epistemik erdemlere ve normlara sahip olması" ise bu erdem ve normların kendilerinin ne olduğunu tanımlamamız gerekir ki bu da orijinal sınır çizme probleminin (hangi yöntem/kriter bilimi bilim yapar) aynısı gibi görünmektedir. Sadece "teori" yerine "topluluk" öznesine uygulanmış halidir. Yani sorun bir adım geriye itilmiş ve ortadan kaldırılmamış gibi görünüyor.

Bunun dışında, bu iddialar döngüsellik riskinin daha güçlü biçimde geri dönmesine kapı aralayabilir. "Meşru bilimsel topluluk"u tanımlanırken pratikte genellikle mevcut, yerleşik, prestijli kurumlar (üniversiteler, hakemli dergiler, bilim akademileri) referans alınır. Ama bu, "bilimsel topluluk" tanımını sosyolojik statüko ile özdeşleştirmek anlamına gelebilir. Yani "bilim, şu an bilim sayılan kurumların yaptığı şeydir" gibi neredeyse totolojik bir tanıma kayma riski taşır. Döngüsellik, içerik düzeyinden topluluk düzeyine taşınmış oluyor.

Ve daha da önemlisi, parapsikoloji örneği bana kalırsa çerçeveyi güçlendirmekten çok zayıflatıyor olabilir. Celayir parapsikolojiyi "kurumsal olarak gömülü olduğu halde topluluk konsensüsü tarafından reddedilen" bir vaka olarak sunuyor ve bunu çerçevesinin başarısı sayıyor. Ama burada bir gerilim var gibi görünüyor. Eğer parapsikoloji bazı üniversitelerde araştırılıyorsa, bazı hakemli süreçlerden geçiyorsa, parapsikolojinin kendi iç normlarına sahip bir araştırmacı topluluğu varsa (yani Celayir'in "epistemik erdemler, yöntemler, normlarla bağlı topluluk" tanımının asgari koşullarını görünüşte karşılıyorsa) o zaman parapsikolojinin reddedilmesi, çerçevenin kendi kriterine göre tutarsız bir sonuç üretiyor olabilir. Celayir'in bunu "kısmen çözdüğünü" kabul etmesinin aslında çerçevenin açıklayıcılığını zayıflattığı ve teorik bir gerilim yarattığı söylenebilir. Bu da önsel bir yargı olmadan hangi topluluğun bilimsel olduğunu ayırt edebilmek demektir: tam olarak sınır çizme probleminin çözmesi gereken sorun (Celayir 77-8).

Bence Celayir'in yaklaşımındaki eksikliğin olası bir sebebi, sınır çizme probleminin özünü yeterince yakalayamıyor olmasıdır. Sınır çizme problemi ortaya atıldığı Popper döneminde teknik bir sorun olarak algılanmış olsa da artık çoğunlukla pratik bir problem olarak görülmektedir. Hangi çalışmaların bilimsel veya insanların bilim insanı olarak görülüp finansal destek verileceği, (saygınlık gibi açılardan) toplumda özel bir konuma sahip olacağı, inançlarımızı desteklemede veya çürütmede etkili olacağı gibi meselelere bu probleme getireceğimiz cevap sayesinde karar vereceğiz. Bu sebeple de her ne kadar tek veya çoklu kriterli çözümler her zaman doğru olmasa ve karşı örneklerle çürütülse de getirdikleri netlik nedeniyle Celayir'in önerdiği daha az net çözüme kıyasla daha tercih edilebilir gözükmektedirler.

Bu sebeple Celayir'in önerdiği çözümü hepten reddetmek yerine belirli bilimsel erdem ve yöntemlere sahip topluluk demek yerine bilim insanlarını spesifik bazı erdemleri uygulayan kişiler, bilimsel çalışmaları da bu erdemin uygulandığı işler olarak tanımlayabiliriz. Bu erdemleri net bir şekilde tamamladığımızda topluluk temelli çözümü, soruya net cevap verebilen ve döngüsellikten kurtulmuş bir çözüm

haline getirmiş oluruz. Örnek olarak; entelektüel tevazu, merak, entelektüel sadelik ve tutarlılık gibi erdemleri değerlendirebiliriz.

Tabii bu çözümün, sorunu neden bilimsel toplulukların bilimsel olduğundan neden bilimsel erdemlerin bilimsel olduğuna taşıyarak yine de çözümsüz ve döngüsel bıraktığı düşünülebilir. Fakat eğer erdemlere, neyin bilim olduğu hakkında karar verirken hâlihazırda kullandığımız bazı sezgilerimizi formalize ederek ulaşırsak ve uygulanmalarıyla başarılı bilimsel teoriler arasında ikna edici bir korelasyon bulunan erdemleri seçersek; ortaya attığımız erdemleri çözümümüze temel olarak kullanmamız daha tercih edilebilir hâle gelebilir. Bu çözümün doğruluğa işaret ettiğini kesin olarak kanıtlamıyorum. Nitekim 3.2'de tam da bu türden bir korelasyon iddiasını Celayir'e karşı yetersiz bulmuştum. Ama bu erdemler, neyin bilim sayıldığına dair hâlihazırda kullandığımız sezgilerin açık bir ifadesi olduğundan, en azından pratik açıdan tutarlı ve işlevsel bir başlangıç noktası sunarlar.

3.4 Ek Bazı Eleştiriler

Tüm bunların dışında kitabın formunda da bazı problemler olduğunu düşünüyorum. Öncelikle, bu kadar fazla argümanın ele alındığı bir kitapta çok az sayıda işaretleme var. Neredeyse her üç, dört sayfada bir yeni bir argüman veya karşı argüman tartışılırken sadece 2. Bölümde, o da yine var olan argüman sayısına yetmeyen dört adet alt başlık var. Bunun okuyucuya bazı pratik sorunlar yarattığı iddia edilebilir gözükmekte.

Bunun da dışında kitabın bazı kısımlarında bahsedilen bilgilerin veya kanıt olarak sunulan şeylerin kaynağı yeterince gösterilmemiş. Gösterdiğim üzere tarihi kaynaklara ve tarihçiliğe verilen önemin yetersizliği dışında, güncel konulardan sunduğu kanıtlarda da hatalar olmasa bile sorunlar var gibi gözükmekte. Kitabın pek çok bölümünde bazı spesifik çalışmalardan çok ya alıntılara yer verilmiş ya da bu çalışmalardan kısaca bahsedilip bir kenara atılmış. Elbette bu, sunulan kanıtların yanlış olduğu anlamına gelmez. Fakat gerçeğe dayalı şeyleri yeterince derinlemesine ele almamış bir yazı; özellikle de yazarın dediklerine katılmayanlar açısından, ortaya atılan argümanların tatmin edici bulunmamasına sebep olabilir.

4. Sonuç

"Bilimin Sınırları", bilim felsefesinin üç merkezi tartışmasını (bilimcilik, realizm/antirealizm ve sınır çizme problemi) kısa ve erişilebilir bir çerçevede sunan, argümanları büyük ölçüde titizlikle aktaran faydalı bir giriş kitabıdır. Bununla birlikte, göstermeye çalıştığım üzere zayıf bilimcilik, kötümser tümevarım ve sınır çizme problemi bölümlerinde daha fazla geliştirilmeye ihtiyaç duyan noktalar bulunduğu

kanaatindeyim. Ve bunların da dışında yazarın argümanlarının inandırıcılığına ve kitabın geneline zarar veren bazı biçimsel eksiklikler de bulunmaktadır. Tabii tüm bunlar kitabın öğretici değerini gölgelemez ama ileri bir baskı ya da genişletilmiş bir çalışma için kitabın gücünü ve bütünlüğünü daha da güçlendirebilir. Seksen sayfalık bir giriş metni olarak düşünüldüğünde, "Bilimin Sınırları"nın bu üç tartışmayı bir arada ve okunabilir biçimde sunma çabası takdire değerdir.

Kaynakça

"Bilimin Sınırları - Berk Celayir - Meseleler #2." *YouTube*, uploaded by Daire1, 15 Feb. 2025, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfJ22vdS_HY.

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Interview:

James Ladyman

Department of Philosophy, University of Bristol

James Ladyman is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Bristol. He received his BA from the University of York, his MSc from the University of London, and his PhD from the University of Leeds, where he worked with Steven French. His main areas of research are the philosophy of science, the philosophy of physics, and metaphysics; he is best known for the distinction between epistemic and ontic structural realism and his defence of the latter. He is the author of *Understanding Philosophy of Science* and, with Don Ross, of *Every Thing Must Go: Metaphysics Naturalized*, and co-author with Karoline Wiesner of *What Is a Complex System?* He is a former editor of the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* and a former President of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science.

Stathis Psillos rejects the distinction between structure and nature, and critics of ontic structural realism say there can be no relations without relata. Which objection has troubled you most?

Stathis Psillos argues that properties in mature science are defined by the laws in which they feature, and so nature and structure are a continuum. In this respect he echoes Heinrich Hertz who said 'Maxwell's theory is Maxwell's equations' and this sounds like an expression of structural realism. Ontic structural realists emphasise how science represents 'modal structure'. Modal structure is understood as a general term that subsumes causal structure, mechanisms, nomological structure, probabilistic and statistical structures and so on. The 'no relations without relata' objection is due to Michael Redhead. Ontic structural realists do not claim that there are relations without relata, rather they argue that relational structure does not reduce to objects and intrinsic properties. In joint work with Hannes Leitgeb (2007), and subsequent work Ladyman (2008), and with Øystein Linnebo and Richard Pettigrew (2011), I investigated identity and discernibility in philosophical logic. I argue that there is no unanimity about the difference between individuals, objects, and entities among philosophers (2016).

With Nora Berenstain you argue that scientific realism needs natural necessity. Is modal structure in the world or only in our models? Or is realism about it simply primitive?

In some recent literature on scientific models the term 'modal information' is used to refer to the idea of a space of possibilities, some of which involve nonactual states defined by the parameters of the models. Scientific models are linked to the representation of modality by various other ideas that feature in other distinct and prominent views on the nature of scientific modelling. Sometimes the idea of modal structure may be more apt than the idea of modal information or vice versa. Scientific practice which works with phase spaces or other mathematical structures and according to an antirealist about modality such as van Fraassen, necessity, probability and possibility are all in the model not the world. The commitment to some form of realism about the modal structure of the world as represented by science may well be a primitive commitment.

What makes a pattern real, in the "rainforest realism" you defend with Don Ross? Is a recession as real as an electron?

Real patterns are projectible, but economics is much less successfully predictive than physics and I do not know whether recessions meet the criteria for being a real pattern but electrons definitely do (Don Ross has written about whether the business cycle is a real pattern).

Herman Cappelen argues that analytic philosophers do not really rely on intuitions as evidence. If so, does your critique of analytic metaphysics lose its target?

Cian Dorr's review of *Every Thing Must Go* (2010) argues that our criticisms miss the mark because metaphysicians do not after all appeal to common sense or intuitions as a source of evidence or information about how things are. This is puzzling because there are so many examples of metaphysicians using talk of what is commonsensical or intuitive as evidence in favour of a particular view. Jonathan Tallant (2014) (who is concerned to defend analytic metaphysics against us) cites metaphysicians such as Ned Markosian, Ted Sider and Dean Zimmerman whose work is core to the literature explicitly claiming that being intuitive and counterintuitive are epistemically significant features of theories or propositions. For example, Zimmerman (2008) says

that being commonsensical counts 'very strongly in favour' of a proposition, and Markosian (2008) makes explicit the cost-benefit approach and among the benefits he adduces he explicitly includes satisfying intuitions. Indeed, Dorr appeals to intuition in various ways himself in a paper on relations (2002) saying "I have not been shy of appeals to modal intuitions in this paper: in fact my method of argument relies essentially upon them" (p. 183).

Following Frankfurt, LLMs have been called bullshitters, yet with Ryan Nefdt you argue they are genuine scientific models of language. Can something be both?

LLMs are models of language because they are trained to reliably produce linguistic output that is appropriate to the input, but that does not entail that they faithfully represent the world more generally, and of course much of what they output is bullshit. So, yes.

Language models remain largely black boxes. Does a science that leans on them buy predictions at the price of understanding?

See my new book with Emanuele Ratti and Alberto Termine, *The Modelling Structure of AI Science*, forthcoming with CUP.

You thank Bas van Fraassen for teaching you philosophy of science, yet you have long argued against his constructive empiricism. What has that taught you about how philosophical disagreement works?

Philosophical disagreement works because there is also philosophical agreement.

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