Journal of Philosophy, Inc.

The Treadmill of Systematic Doubt
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Source: *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 26, No. 14 (Jul. 4, 1929), pp. 379-384
Published by: Journal of Philosophy, Inc.
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2014323
Accessed: 14/02/2015 11:42

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according to such principles, not all judgments are dependent on all other judgments. In this immediate meaning, then, all judgments are not interconnected by relations of dependence, and in the derivative meaning treated above they are so related only in so far as was there specified.

8. This paper attempted to contribute this one step toward the solution of the internality of relations controversy: The partial interdependence of the characters of an entity is one important possible interpretation of the doctrine of the internality of relations. It includes what that doctrine on the face of it seems to assert. If that doctrine means what this principle includes, then it is true but irrelevant to the proof of either idealism or absolutism.

It is suggested that the doggedness with which idealists have maintained the internality of relations is due to the undeniable truth of the principle of partial interdependence, and that the acerbity with which realists have denied the former is due to the conclusions which idealists have drawn from it which do not follow from the latter.

If the idealists wish to maintain that the internality of relations means something other than this principle, something with more teeth to it, then it is incumbent upon them to distinguish this meaning clearly and to show that its truth comes to it independently and not merely by transfer due to association with the true principle of partial interdependence.

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THE TREADMILL OF SYSTEMATIC DOUBT

THE true philosopher, we are often told, doubts everything that can not be proved from absolutely sure premises. Philosophy begins with doubt, usually about some theological or moral propositions that have so far held the rank of beliefs; if it is systematically pursued, it will lead the devotee to doubt, in turn, the existence of consciousness, of space, of relations, of logic, of the external world, and of other people's minds; and this skepticism is supposed to clear the way for true knowledge.

But in the shrine of pure reason, now so pure as to be empty, we find one new doctrine as easy to set up as another; we can prove to our own satisfaction, according to our inclinations, the complete certainty of Spirit, or Matter, or logical Categories, Monads, Egos, Essences, Vital Urges, or the Absolute; but the most convincing proof of our realities will not prevent the next person from doubting the whole product, going through the same mental acrobatics

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of skepticism and introspection and proof, and arriving at very different results. Every thinker must begin at the beginning not only of his specific problem, but of the whole field of knowledge. And as the collection of weird entities increases, the business of clearing the way becomes more and more irksome, for there are more and more things whose existence must be refuted. Everything must be doubted that possibly can be; and the really honest scholar, realizing that every philosopher before him has been discredited by many competent persons, becomes wary, in the end, about believing anything, for he is no longer satisfied with the "self-evidence" of his assumptions. He refutes his own ideas, and finally is faced with a choice between blind dogmatic beliefs, or no beliefs at all—between skepticism, or animal faith.

The one thing he probably never has doubted is the virtue of systematic doubt. It is a truism that any existential proposition may be false. But this does not preclude the possibility of a proposition's being *necessary in a certain universe of discourse,* namely, a proposition which states the essential concepts, the terms and relations, which compose that universe. Out of these all our propositions are compounded; and these basic concepts, quite apart from any dogmas concerning their metaphysical "reality" or "existence," are our premises.

Therein lies the force of a dictum like Descartes' "I think." It *presupposes* the thinker. Hence " I do not think" would be an abbreviated statement meaning really, "I think that I do not think." The notion of thinking is initially given in the assumption of "me, the thinker." Of course, Descartes was not aware of that presupposition. Within any system, there are these notions which are being *used,* hence can not be denied without throwing the whole universe of discourse into utter chaos. Such a basic notion is thinking (cogitare) in Descartes; and whenever we are not aware of the fact that we reason with presupposed terms (as, of course, we always do), propositions which assert them seem "self-evident." But herein also lies the reason that there is probably no proposition that will always appear self-evident to all people.

We might say, then, that it is impossible to doubt the notions we are using; and that consequently philosophers who set out to establish the "truth" of their premises are always driven back from terms and relations they have just caught themselves using, to unavowed new ones wherewith to attack the old. Thus they run from pillar to post—and just that, in the last analysis, is the process of systematic doubt.

It is bootless to doubt your premises. You can only make a bow of recognition, unless you are ready to dispense with them and

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start over again with a new set. For when we doubt a proposition, we are still thinking in its terms, and where the proposition is the establishment of these very terms, as Descartes' "Cogito," this commits us to a vicious circle of the type $\varphi(\varphi\hat{\chi})$. Given the postulates which establish your universe of discourse, you may doubt any other proposition in their terms, because it is just one of the many possible combinations, and if your premises are good, then there is a correct formulation for every theorem; but you can not doubt your concepts—you can only show, by the Cartesian criterion of self-evidence, if you like, that they *are* your basic concepts.

Descartes has been characterized as "the father of all evil in modern philosophy"; this designation was provoked chiefly by his division of the world into matter and mind, but it might as well have been inspired by his methodology. For his dualism has wrought havoc in metaphysics, but his systematic doubt has done worse—it has thrown our standards of knowledge into confusion. It has turned the human mind from its native desire for *intelligibility* to a craving for *absolute truth*. The scholastics had faith in reason, because they demanded of it merely that it should make things reasonable. They did not ask it to give special sanctions to its premises. Such guarantees were contained in the very language of the Church. The Greek thinkers, too, had held no ideal of knowledge beyond the rationalization of experience—they did not question their basic concepts, because these were the unconscious assumptions of common sense. But Descartes proposes to doubt *everything* that has not the stamp of Absolute Truth.

This challenge has led to impossible epistemologies, and metaphysical doctrines that would raise themselves by their boot-straps; attempts to see the world from *all* points of view, or from *no* point of view; but above all, it has given rise to a psychological need which is peculiar to our epoch, and may truly be called the Spirit of Modern Philosophy—our need of personal convictions.

Before Descartes, people reasoned from propositions which no one, educated or other, saw any occasion to question. Their premises were habitual assumptions, with the stability and dignity of all unconscious tradition—the warp and woof of their world, and as certain as the world itself. And the results, of course, would be as convincing as the reasoning seemed to be good. Once in a great while, a brilliant thinker, faced with some *insolubilium,* would unearth a false premise of common sense, as Leonardo and Galileo occasionally did; but he would not tamper with common sense beyond the requirements of his problem. Doubt of an old assumption was contained in the dawning of a new one; it would

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hardly have been considered as a separate step in the logical process. And naturally it was the new idea, not the old one, whose fate was interesting. The discarded one automatically dropped out of sight. No one inquired for its health after that, no one who could appreciate the new conception ever regretted the old.

But now we find people distressed at the thought that there can be wrong premises, and demanding credentials before they will accept any notions at all. Any term that is used must first be thought to "exist." And since most of us have outgrown the naïve faith that accepted the "self-evidence" of certain propositions as a proof of their truth, we have had to take recourse to such sad makeshifts as a "Will to Believe," or failing that, a philosophy of "As If." But in truth, this sort of belief is really a peculiar psychological attitude, a feeling, rather than an improvement upon our knowledge. People can attach most vehement sentiments of belief to statements which, upon analysis, are found to have no meaning whatsoever. They can believe in a "First Cause," in "the Infinite where all paths meet," in mysteries of every sort; the duchess in Wonderland is not the only person who, with a little practice, can believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast. Philosophers and laymen alike have done so well as to believe any number of impossible things, not only before breakfast, but all the time!

In other pursuits of the human reason, for instance in science or mathematics, we simply *use* our basic formulations. When they are not in use, they are not doubted, but forgotten; they are meaningless. But in philosophy we are forever looking them up and down and trying to prove that they are "true." This involves, of course, that other entities, previously "believed in," must now be thought not to exist. Thus begins a great contest of proof and refutation, for the establishment of Universals or Atoms or Monads or Selves, and in the end we take our choice more or less by personal predilection. If a philosopher says to you: "I doubt the external world," you expect him to disprove realism, to prove that certain things you had always believed in do not really exist, that they are illusory appearances, and the only things which are real are the things inside your mind. But if a physicist says "Space-time and its modifications are the ultimate physical realities," you do not expect him to refute the existence of material chairs and tables, but to make some older notion of matter simply vacuous. Indeed, you are not asked to "doubt matter"; you are merely asked to understand the notion of Space-time.

That, we are sometimes told, is all very well for scientific inquiry, but is contrary to the program of philosophy; the scientist

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does not worry about his logical principles as long as he has good "working" ideas, which lead him to the discovery of new facts, whereas the philosopher has the ideas more at heart than their precise working. There is some truth in that contention, but not as much as people generally suppose. The scientist is, indeed, interested chiefly in finding more and more *exemplifications* of his formal propositions; and as the generic notions of a science like physics are very powerful ones, the deductive and experimental work which is based upon them keeps many generations of researchers busy; that is why, as long as all goes well and the field of possible combinations and observations is vast, there is little if any point in reconsidering the premises. But as soon as there is an incomprehensible phenomenon, a theorem which ought to follow and does not, the man of science has to turn philosopher. He must review all his fundamental conceptions. It is noteworthy that the great physicists are the most ardent metaphysicians. They say far more startling things than any idealist or realist or pragmatist would dare to say. They doubt the three-dimensionality of the world, the conservation of matter, the infinity of the universe, with a matter-of-fact disregard of common sense that makes philosophers sit down and gasp. But the remarkable feature of their theorizing is that they never use systematic doubt. They look over their postulates, and perhaps say to themselves, "Ah, there's the rub; here's the contradiction." And if reforming the postulates will not help the situation, they go on to reflect whether with entirely different *terms* a more adequate set could be constructed. They do not doubt any facts, nor the existence of any familiar entities, but simply make a different analysis of experience.

The fallacy which, I think, vitiates almost all of modern philosophy, and which we owe in large measure to the reputed father of that subject, is the metaphysician's tendency to treat concepts as entities. I do not mean merely the mistake against which we have often enough been warned, of hypostatizing universals; I mean the subtler folly of asking for the "existence" of a thing which answers to no precise description, even for the "existence of anything," and worrying about the truth or falsehood of a proposition instead of asking what is its sense. William James's question, "Does Consciousness exist?" is a good case in point. What he should have asked, is, "Can we talk coherently about 'consciousness'?" For consciousness is not a thing, that might *exist*; it is a concept, which either can or can not be used in describing a certain kind of experience. If we apply the pragmatic criterion to concepts instead of propositions, it seems to me perfectly unassailable.

The function of philosophy is not to doubt everything, and

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then prove the existence of things; it is *to assume as little as possible, and understand as much as possible.* Thus its interest centers in concepts, which are the instruments of understanding, and not in entities; and its proper method is not Cartesian, but, in a somewhat broadened sense, Socratic. It can never profitably begin with doubt, because doubt is a complicated psychological attitude, which, like belief, has nothing to do with insight or knowledge, but may attach to nonsensical formulæ as well as to real propositions. Philosophy should begin not by denying something (let alone *everything!*), but by *saying* something: preferably something reasonably simple and concise. Not any and every arbitrary proposition will furnish a good starting-point. A metaphysical formulation should always be made with some ulterior motive—not to explain the world, for that is meaningless, but to describe some definite aspect of experience. It is useless to introduce a conception of Mind without any reference to its psychological uses, or to talk about Matter without intending to clarify the field of pure physics. If we would make intelligible a set of terms to describe our world, we must have an eye to the details of such description. Then, having said something that sounds promising, such as that "the modifications of Space-time are the ultimate physical realities," we may reflect upon the conceptual content of that premise, and interpret the words until they make sense. That sort of reflection may be neither necessary nor interesting to the scientist, except at certain crucial times, but it is the whole concern of the philosopher, because he is in search of meanings, not of facts: the pursuit of meaning is philosophy.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Modern Psychology, Normal and Abnormal: A Behaviorism of Personality. DANIEL BELL LEARY. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1928. ix + 441 pp.

Here is a significant book, a real contribution to the theory and technology of psychological interpretation. The author has covered an amazingly wide field, and has kept his head throughout. He is sane, alert, shrewd, frank, judicial, wise, and eminently human. Whatever may have been his native propensities to wisdom, if there be such propensities, or whether these be acquired as a matter of conditioning, it is the definite controls over his thinking, specifically acknowledged and yet through long and consistent use wrought into the very fabric of his thinking, that have enabled him to produce so wise and significant a book; for they have even motived and guided

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