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ЗА ЛАШТУНКАМИ РОЗУМУ: СПРОБА КОНЦЕПТУАЛІЗАЦІЇ ТИПІВ СУБ'ЄКТІВ ФІЛОСОФУВАННЯ (науково-дослідницька стаття)

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Досліджується метафілософська проблема суб'єктів філософування. Залучається трансцендентальний аргумент для відповіді на питання, що уможливило різноманітність реально існуючих способів філософування. На основі реконструйованої кантівської моделі розуму розроблена концептуальна модель типів суб'єктів філософування. На основі цієї моделі обговорюються маргінальні та провідні типи суб'єктів філософування. До перших належать епігони та скептики, до других – догматичні метафізики, наукові раціоналісти, релятивісти та критичні раціоналісти. Моделювання типів філософів-новаторів залучає також ідею максималістського та мінімалістського типів філософії В. Татаркевича.

Ключові слова: *Кант, метафілософія, філософування, розум, критичний раціоналізм.*

BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE MIND: AN ATTEMPT TO CONCEPTUALIZE THE TYPES OF PHILOSOPHIZING SUBJECTS

(Research article)

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The article examines the metaphilosophical issue of the philosophizing subjects. The transcendental argument addresses the inquiry into what enables the variety of existing philosophizing practices. A conceptual model of philosophizing subjects is developed using the reconstructed Kantian model of the mind. Following this model, the article discusses marginal and mainstream types. The former comprises epigones and skeptics, while the latter encompasses dogmatic metaphysicians, scientific rationalists, relativists, and critical rationalists. In the modeling of philosopher-innovator types, the concept of maximalist and minimalist philosophies by Tatarkiewicz is also incorporated.

Key words: *Kant, metaphilosophy, philosophizing, mind, critical rationalism.*

“A philosopher is someone who has learned to philosophize”
Immanuel Kant *Logik Philippi*

Introduction

The history of philosophy is often depicted as a collection of portraits, showcasing influential philosophers

and their distinct doctrines, serving as a crucial link between past eras of intellectual progress and our present society. It is generally believed that the inner world, thoughts, and personalities of the philosophers, and the cultural environment in which they lived, were reflected in their doctrines. Adopting this method for studying the

history of philosophy provides insight into the stages of its development and enhances understanding of how certain concepts influenced subsequent social progress. But this is a view from the outside of what philosophers do and what their legacy is. This article offers to look behind the scenes of the philosophical mind and reflect on how philosophers think. It involves observing aspects that are typically hidden or elusive to outsiders when examining the vast array of philosophical texts and concepts. Nevertheless, one can try to change the focus and look at philosophizing subjects from the inside. This perspective involves emphasizing the different approaches, methods, and styles that philosophers use in researching, formulating and solving problems, articulating their philosophical stance, and related aspects. From this perspective, the inquiry becomes a metaphilosophical matter concerning the fundamental nature of philosophy.

Philosophers hold diverse views on the nature of philosophy, ranging from its identification with science to its being deemed a non-cognitive venture in general [An introduction 2013: 14, 24–44], from denying its academic status to advocating its ascription as an academic discipline [Kaeslin 2023]. Hence, the transcendental argument may be utilized, and the query can be framed in the Kantian style: “How are different kinds of philosophizing possible Moreover, this approach may offer a new perspective on the central metaphilosophical question”, “What is philosophy?” when viewed as prescriptive or apologetic¹. What intellectual pursuits should philosophers engage in to uphold the autonomy of philosophy and prevent its devolution into “lifestyle advice or political polemics, moralizing sermon or grammar lesson, godless religion or unreadable literature...” [Williamson 2018: 141]?

The purpose of this article is to construct a conceptual model for the categorization of philosophizing subjects on the basis of the reconstructed Kantian mind model. Kant regarded the mind not just in its systematic unity, but also as a dynamic and practical entity. In close connection with the ideas of the Enlightenment, Kant

was the first to analyze the possibilities and limitations of the human mind from different perspectives. For Kant, it functions both as an individual and as a universal entity, as a hierarchical system and as a dynamic process, capable of both adhering to and distancing itself from authorities, both closed and open to other possible points of view and arguments. Consequently, Kant analyzed the mind not only in terms of what exists, but also in terms of what is possible and what ought to be. Since philosophizing is primarily a mental activity, I suggest that Kant's grounded model of the mind can greatly enhance our understanding of how and why philosophers practice philosophy differently. In addition, this model can provide an effective explanatory framework for addressing the question of what philosophy ought to be as an autonomous entity within the structure of the symbolic-linguistic universe created by the human logos.

Kantian Model of the Mind as an Explanatory Framework

The reconstruction of the Kantian model of the mind is based on the idea that his entire critical philosophy is an Enlightenment project to justify a revolution in our way of thinking. First, Kant analyzed the mind's structure and identified three cognitive faculties at higher levels: theoretical understanding, reflective judgment, and practical reason. Second, according to Kant, the mind is an inherent human attribute that each individual must learn to use correctly. Finally, Kant formulated maxims for all cognitive faculties, from which the mind of each individual implements different thinking strategies. Hence, the Kantian model provides a conceptual framework for the path of rational freedom unfolding through three distinct stages involving higher levels of mind and increasingly sophisticated modes of thought. This path becomes possible for a person if he or she chooses the right maxims, and shows various options for rational unfreedom if the wrong ones are chosen.

At the level of understanding, individuals face a choice: whether to follow the maxim of imitating authorities or to engage in unprejudiced thinking. Kant noted that these authorities may be individuals, crowds, or the prevailing ideas of the era [Logic 1819: 109–113]. However, one can pursue an unprejudiced way of thinking by reflexively questioning both authorities and the prejudices formed by previous uncritical reliance on those authorities. It requires a conscious effort, showing courage and determination. Kant argued that the most appropriate maxim to apply at this level is the maxim of unprejudiced thinking [Kant 2000: 5: 294]. Anyone who dares to think for himself is faced with the choice of the right way to do it. It is a decision based on reflective judgment: choosing between narrow-minded and broadened

¹ A. Wood noted that questions regarding human traits, faculties, functions, or activities, such as “What is x?”, can be framed in two ways. It can be either analytical questions about the actual nature of x, or it can be normative or apologetic questions about what x ought to be. Answering the normative question does not reveal the actual state of affairs, rendering irrelevant objections regarding the inconsistency between current philosophical beliefs and these apologetic definitions [Wood 2001: 98]. Historians and sociologists can address the initial inquiries, whereas philosophers can respond to the latter by conducting reflective analyses of their own thought processes and those of notable figures within the philosophical tradition.

ways of thinking, between the way of logical egoism and the way of logical pluralism. As a logical egoist, individuals aim to advocate for their own positions by providing necessary and sufficient reasons to support them, without consideration for possible counterarguments. Overlooking one's own prejudices and even errors in reasoning and conclusions is natural for a human being.

Kant recommended following the maxim of broadened thinking to avoid the pitfalls that a logical egoist can fall into. Choosing this path requires recognizing the limitations of one's own cognitive capacities and innate tendency to be prejudiced, as well as making an effort to learn to mentally change different perspectives and arguments in their favor, guided by common sense [Kant 2000: 175]. Updating the philosophical tradition of the social contract, Kant emphasized distinctions between various models of public discussion based on the ways of thinking of those involved. The minds of people with narrow thinking are in a natural state. Therefore, debates among such individuals can become prolonged arguments that might lead to a temporary victory for one of the warring parties [Kant 1998: A 751/B 779]. Reason ought to establish accepted criteria and standards for the conduct of public discussion and the evaluation of arguments in order to promote civilized discourse. It should be guided by the maxim of consistent thinking, which means combining the maxims of unprejudiced and broadened thinking and making them automatic [Kant 2000: 5: 295]. Therefore, by following the course of rational freedom to its end, the mind can attain maturity, autonomy, and self-legislation².

Kant used legal metaphors extensively to explain the mind. Recognizing this aspect is the key to a deeper understanding of the nature of the Kantian model of the mind. Kant postulated a state of majority for understanding the choice of the maxim of unprejudiced thinking [Kant 1996: 8: 35]. In legal terms, this condition means that an individual has the ability to represent themselves independently in public, hold both rights and duties, and maintain an equal relationship with others. In his exploration of the power of judgment, Kant introduced the metaphor of a jury trial. According to this view, every rational being is a free and equal citizen, able to articulate and justify his position, including "reservations, even ... veto", without fear of punishment [Kant 1998: A 739/B 767]. Finally, Kant actualized the metaphor of a judge who has to render a just verdict based on existing

² This becomes clear when we consider Kant's consistent use of teleological terms to describe our cognitive faculties, especially the concept of interest. K. Schafer links this to Kant's continuation of the Aristotelian tradition, according to which a genuine faculty must in some sense be directed toward its own exercise or activity [Schafer 2019: 10].

law [Kant 1998: A 752/B 780] when he arrived at the analysis of (universal) reason. Similar to Themis, reason must detach itself from all aspects associated with the phenomenal world: individual experiences, socio-cultural contexts, personal inclinations and preferences. Only under these conditions will it be able to rely exclusively on universal legal norms common to all. Ultimately, Kant argued for the self-preservation of reason. This means adhering to those maxims that enable and secure its authority. Despite its limitations, reason remains potentially effective in a world where individuals recognize, make decisions, and interact as rational beings.

Model of Philosophizing Subject Types

1. Marginal Types

Guided by this reconstructed Kantian model of the mind, I will attempt to conceptualize different types of philosophizing subjects³ who exhibit different strategies of philosophical reasoning. One can engage in philosophy by adopting the maxim of imitating authorities. Such a person lacks the courage and determination to use his understanding publicly and thus remains immature and non-original as a thinker. The thoughtless parroting of the ideas of famous predecessors or contemporaries without independent reflection does not add anything meaningful to the existing philosophical tradition, nor does it further its development. That is why the teachings of these philosophers are not taught in university courses, their works are not studied, and they are not republished after decades or centuries. Those who interpret, represent, and popularize the concepts of prominent philosophers can therefore be called *epigones*. It is a marginal ideal type of philosophizing subject, of no particular interest to philosophy and its history. However, it is a common practice in philosophy to use labels that promote one's own ideas while criticizing the intellectual accomplishments of others, as noted by K. Twardowski. These labels include not only philosophical trends like idealist, realist,

³ I suggest viewing them as Weberian ideal types, which are non-contradictory mental constructs designed "to bring order into the chaos of those facts which we have drawn into the field circumscribed by our interest" [Weber 1949: 90, 105]. These exploratory constructs shape the perspective of understanding and provide a general framework for historical and philosophical research. They do not directly describe reality, but rather operate within the limits of possible experience. The ideal type, in Weber's view, is a possible perspective on cultural and historical objects in relation to a certain value. However, analyzing each philosopher's ideas necessitates careful attention to detail and a thorough evaluation of how closely the study object conforms to this mental construct.

dogmatist, and skeptic, but also names derived from philosophers whose teachings are considered true. Not without irony, Twardowski argued that “in philosophy, everyone must be a particular “-ian” or “-ist”” [Twardowski 2013: 458].

The epigone always remains on the periphery of philosophical discourse, despite Twardowski's observation of the state of affairs in current philosophy. He argued that philosophers, like scientists, need not adhere to particular frameworks or trends. Their main objective should be to search for truth and genuine justification while disregarding any accusations of eclecticism [Twardowski 2013: 466–477]. All philosophizing subjects who consciously adopt the maxim of unprejudiced thinking are *skeptics* because they dare to challenge established authorities.

Among skeptics, another marginal type of philosophizing subjects can be distinguished, though in a different sense than epigones: *refutationalists*. These philosophers challenged the authority of established thinkers, but stopped short of creating their own unique doctrines. Refutationalists may not be widely recognized by the philosophical community because of their critical attitude toward the leading philosophical schools and movements. Nevertheless, in retrospect, they are regarded as important and influential philosophers who played a crucial role in stimulating the development of philosophical thought. After all, their critical judgments have the potential to inspire other philosophers to formulate original concepts that offer alternative ways of thinking and solutions to philosophical problems. Philosophers like D. Hume, who is best known for his skepticism of the rationalist and empirical traditions, along with his critique of the reliability of scientific knowledge and objective cause-and-effect relationships, can be classified among such philosophers. Although Hume did not develop his own original doctrine, he did, according to Kant, awaken him from a “dogmatic slumber”. Such an awakening sparked a revolution in philosophical thinking, which Kant justified in his three *Critiques*.

2. Mainstream Types

In addition to the Kantian model of the mind, I update the classification of types of philosophy proposed by W. Tatarkiewicz and identify the types of philosophizing subjects that are original and most respected by philosophers themselves and by the general public. He distinguished between maximalism and minimalism, two extreme types of philosophy that have competed in the history of philosophy. These types of philosophy must also be seen as ideal. Their purpose is to orient the researcher of the history of philosophy and to promote understanding.

W. Tatarkiewicz differentiated between maximalist and minimalist philosophies, based on their intentions and outcomes. Maximalist philosophy endeavors to solve extensive problems authentically while minimalist philosophy is prudently restrained in this regard. The former's goal is primarily driven by its desired outcome, while the latter is driven by available resources. In terms of outcomes, minimalist philosophy proposes ideas relating to the physical properties of the world, the presence of separate entities, and the capacity to comprehend reality through experience, and the support of practical usefulness and individual well-being as essential values. On the contrary, maximalist philosophy acknowledges the spiritual, ideal, and supernatural realm, as well as transcendental, a priori, and intuitive truths. It also recognizes goals, aspirations, and non-utilitarian goods [Tatarkevych 1999: 9]. Maximalism is characterized by a desire to establish knowledge in a systematic philosophical structure, as well as embracing idealism, intellectualism, dogmatism, apriorism, essentialism, and the acknowledgement of intellectual intuition. Additionally, maximalism emphasizes realism concerning the existence of general concepts, including ethical ones, and is associated with absolutism and normativism. Minimalism is often linked with metaphysical indifferentism, specialization, and criticism. It focuses on testing philosophical theories and maintains skepticism regarding the subject's cognitive abilities. Minimalists are satisfied with incomplete knowledge of phenomena and frequently adhere to the principles of nominalism, reductionism, naturalism, relativism, sensualism, conventionalism, hedonism, and utilitarianism.

Plato, Plotinus, Aquinas, C. F. Wolff, and G. Hegel were inclined toward maximalism, whereas Pyrrho, W. of Ockham, J. Locke, encyclopedists, and positivists, particularly logical ones, favored minimalism. Tatarkiewicz noted that both maximalism and minimalism are extreme doctrines, not exhausting all philosophical possibilities. Some philosophers, like Aristotle and Kant, attempted to reconcile these opposing views by blending courage and caution in their philosophizing. The conflict between maximalist and minimalist philosophies held little significance prior to the Enlightenment. But with the growing role of modern science, it became increasingly difficult to reconcile them. Since the 19th century, philosophers have said: “either everything or nothing” [Tatarkevych 1999: 9].

Later, I will explore various types of philosophizing subjects who display skepticism toward authority while simultaneously acting as *innovators*, crafting unique doctrines. By combining Kant's differentiation of unprejudiced thinkers into logical egoists and logical pluralists with Tatarkiewicz's classification of

philosophers into maximalists and minimalists, four ideal types of philosophizing subjects can be derived. The logical egoist, who values personal inquiry and careful consideration, may gravitate towards either the ancient practice of contemplation (θεωρία) or the pursuit of accurate knowledge about the essential characteristics of the physical world. Therefore, two distinct types emerge; the *dogmatic metaphysician* who adopts a maximalist approach⁴, and the *scientific rationalist* who adopts a minimalist attitude⁵. Conversely, a logical pluralist who values practical philosophy and considers multiple perspectives may either acknowledge the legislative role of universal reason and general criteria or take a minimalist approach and reject them. The former can be called a *critical rationalist*⁶, the latter a *relativist*⁷.

All four types of philosophizing subjects as innovators embody diverse strategies of philosophical thinking, as well as varying conceptions of the essence and extent of philosophy. The dogmatic metaphysician and the scientific rationalist represent extreme approaches in

⁴ Hegel, for example, defined philosophy as “the thinking contemplation of objects”. Similar to religion, it is linked with truth “in the highest sense” – with God, as well as “with the realm of the finite, with nature and the human spirit, their relation to each other and to God as their truth” [Hegel 1989: 40–41].

⁵ Twardowski argued that “philosophy is also a science”. He believed that if philosophers are committed to its scientific mission, they will not be divided into particular schools or trends. They will collectively pursue the truth through conscientious research [Twardowski 2013: 467]. Carnap used logical analysis to evaluate metaphysical claims, considering them “utterly meaningless” because they transcend empirical observation. He deemed traditional metaphysics an inadequate means of conveying *Lebensgefühl*. In Carnap’s view, “scientific philosophy” ought to employ logical analysis as a method, whether by negatively eliminating meaningless words or affirmatively clarifying significant concepts and statements to establish the logical groundwork for authentic science and mathematics [Carnap 1931: 220, 237–239].

⁶ Kant argued that philosophy deals with ideas generated by *Vernunft*, which is separate from the phenomenal world. These ideas can serve as either regulative or constitutive, depending on the domain in which they are applied. According to Kant, the objective of philosophy is to explicate ideas and model possible worlds in the realm of nature, where causality operates, and in the realm of freedom, as the world produced by practical reason [Kant 1998: A 312–320/B 369–377; Kant 2000: 5: 174–176].

⁷ Nietzsche drew an analogy between philosophy and elite art, comparing the philosopher to a “martyr” who sacrifices themselves “for the sake of truth”, to a tragic actor, and to a hidden agitator. Philosophy can be a tragedy when a philosopher isolates themselves from others, and locks themselves in their own intellectual fortress, forgetting that they belong to the human race [Nietzsche 2002: 26–27].

the realist philosophy paradigm, which emphasizes theoretical philosophy. Thus, understandings of the nature of philosophy range from seeing it as the queen of the sciences to seeing it as the servant of science. Philosophy is considered the queen of sciences by all dogmatic metaphysicians from Plato to Hegel. The other extreme sees it as a servant of science in the tradition from Locke to the logical positivists, who insisted on eliminating metaphysics and transforming it into logical analysis of scientific language.

Alternatively, constructivism houses both relativist and critical rationalist philosophical approaches, the former emphasizing minimalism and the latter prioritizing maximalism. This paradigm heavily leans on practical philosophy, encompassing matters of mind in action, as well as interaction, conversation, dialogue, and dispute. The relativist focuses on individual, historical, and relative aspects, while rejecting the notion of developing a universal approach that indicates progress towards ultimate truth or objective knowledge in philosophy. Rorty articulated this vision of the nature of philosophy in the phrase “edifying conversation”, which implies an active dialogue and ongoing exchange of ideas among people [Overgaard, Gilbert, Burwood 2013: 44]. The relativist sees truth and knowledge as social and historical constructs influenced by convention and context. The critical rationalist emphasizes the potential for universal human reasoning and the possibility of participating in constructive, logical discourse to establish widely acknowledged criteria. In this sense, philosophy is largely the same as critical thinking, which involves the clarification of ideas and the modeling of possible worlds. It is crucial to note that relativists perceive ideas as subjective, whereas critical rationalists view them as part of the concept of a universal mind or the inhabitants of Popper’s Third World⁸.

Conclusions

By exploring the question of philosophizing subjects, we enter the realm of the primary metaphilosophical inquiry, “What is philosophy?”. The application of the transcendental argument and the reconstruction of Kantian mind model allow the development of a

⁸ The distinction between pluralism and relativism is valuable when broadening one’s own thought process, both as a professional philosopher and a researcher in the history of philosophy. M. Beaney emphasizes the need for broadening the philosophical canon in the context of institutional and professional closed-mindedness [Beaney 2023: 212]. However, it is important to balance the validity of this proposal by considering the criteria and nature specific to philosophical research.

conceptual framework for ideal types of subjects who engage in philosophy and understand its nature in different ways. This Kantian model is a valuable explanatory framework, enabling us to trace the path of rational freedom available to the human mind within its limitations and examine the nuances of the philosophical mind. Epigones and refutationists, as marginal types, are at the beginning of this path, while innovators move on to higher levels. Mainstream types include the dogmatic metaphysician, the scientific rationalist, the relativist, and the critical rationalist. These types differ in their selection of a guiding maxim for the power of judgment, as well as in their minimalist or maximalist interpretation of the tasks and possibilities of philosophy. Understanding the conditions that enable various methods of practicing philosophy can orient individuals in the diverse realm of contemporary philosophy and aid in forming their own philosophical identity through critical reflection on the normative inquiry into the nature of philosophy.

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