On Asserting, Narrating and Educating

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Suppose the world consists of particulars, which occasionally form patterns. We can narrate them, but we can also assert something about them in order to develop a doctrine. Narration seems *prima facie* to focus on the specific, such as how and when something has appeared. Assertion, by contrast, is concerned with general patterns that concern many particulars. Narration can be personal: "I sat on this chair once many years ago." Assertions tend toward the impersonal form: "This chair is a Chesterfield from 1920." So at first glance there is no obvious connection between activities of asserting and narrating; they seem to run in parallel. In a simplifying, distorted image, asserting is expressed as a serious and rigorous activity, which serves the true knowledge of the world and the correct explanation of its phenomena. Narration, by contrast, is a rather relaxed pastime, one might think; one which comes after the rigidity of asserting and educating, relieves us of it, and which at the very most serves our moral instruction, provided we are dealing with stories which have a moral. The art of narration – we could say in this simplifying fiction following Horace – like all art, is occasionally morally useful in the sense of edifying, but for the most part it is merely a form of entertainment. Science, with its assertions, teaches the rigorous and sometimes unpleasant truth about the world. The art of narration distracts the mind from confrontation with the harshness of reality, regaling it with pleasant or exciting fictions. Social conditions also differ depending on whether one is in a teaching or a narrating situation. Someone who must acknowledge an assertion learns about something, is in the position of the learner, facing the teacher, who lays claim to the authority of being able to make an assertion. Someone receiving a narrative is being regaled; the narrator seems to serve her.

[1] In the sense of Verse 333 of Horace's *Ars poetica*: "*aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae.*" ("Poets aim either to benefit, or to amuse," trans. H. Rushton Fairclough). Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*: With an English Translation by H. Rushton Fairclough, London, W. Heinemann; New York, G. P. Putnam's sons, 1926.

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It has never been put quite so plainly and with such simplicity. But characterising disciplines such as physics or chemistry as "hard" sciences while referring to prose, theatre or poetry as "soft" activities, as is often the case in school or at university, would seem to suggest at least implicit assessments of these activities, leaning in the direction indicated above.

But the following is not concerned with asserting, narrating (and finally, educating) *in general;* rather these activities will be discussed *in the context of philosophy.* In doing so, a distinction is drawn between asserting or *doctrinal* philosophy, and *non-doctrinal* philosophy*.* Philosophers working in doctrinal philosophy want to educate other people with or on the basis of their assertions, to persuade them to *subscribe* to their assertions as a doctrine. Representatives of non-doctrinal philosophy try to claim either as little as possible or nothing at all. Their main intention, rather, is to find out and show the asserters themselves why they think they have to assert something and what consequences this has. Philosophical activities of this kind are occasionally narrated, for example in Plato's dialogue, where Socrates questions Theaetetus, who must still be educated. In *Theaetetus,* we are told the surprising story of how, as a result of Socrates's questioning, the young man to be educated gives up on making assertions. This is a pedagogical text which presents doctrinal philosophical activity in all its futility, but it is not simply an entertaining narrative about a philosopher; instead it is itself a canonised philosophical text. Given that, in this way, non-doctrinal philosophy sometimes provides a *narrative* about asserting and how someone is taught that it is better not to make claims about knowledge or virtue, the relationship between philosophy, education and narration to be addressed by this study is both complicated and unclear.

Educating with new concepts

The fact that claims are made in philosophy is obvious, and clearer than the fact that there is also a non-doctrinal form of philosophy. Aristotle claims that the world is eternal, whereas Aquinas claims that it was created. Descartes claims that there are two substances, while according to Spinoza there is only one. Kant claims that there is a clear difference between analytic and synthetic judgements, and Quine contests this assertion. The list could go on and on. Claims such as these are responses to the world – a world of particularities, as will be claimed in our critique of doctrinal philosophy (apparently paradoxically) later on. The way in which people respond to the world, when this does not occur spontaneously, depends on such factors as their education. This education is where people become acquainted with the *universal concepts* that they *ought to* use in their claims. The persons to be educated are taught what can and what cannot be claimed about the world. And sometimes, albeit a somewhat rare occurrence, they learn to react to the world through a narrative.

Philosophy has gone to great lengths to attend to these educational processes. For example, in Plato's *The Republic, paideia* is a potentially lifelong process which, for certain distinguished people, culminates in the knowledge of the idea of goodness as the decisive generality, and can only actually be controlled by the philosophers appointed to govern the state, who have perceived this generality and can apply it in judgements. (Rousseau's Cultural Criticism and Wittgenstein's Critique of Metaphysics are other well-known examples of educational philosophy. Their aim is to re-educate those who have been corrupted by culture or, in the case of Wittgenstein, to bring about a therapeutic philosophy as a way of educating those adults (with a background in philosophy) who are unaware of the multifarious workings of ordinary language and therefore invent new concepts or want to try and find the meaning of terms such as "understanding", "having pain", "wishing", and so on, which are allegedly difficult to fathom. Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy continues to be used as a way of educating adults in contemporary philosophy, first and foremost by Stanley Cavell. It also has roots in Kierkegaard's

existentialism, which is linked to Socratism[2]).

Philosophy deals with knowledge which can find its expression in assertions, but much like literature and in contrast to the empirical sciences, many of the so-called "great" doctrinal authors in philosophy also seem to conceptually "start from scratch", as it were. So in philosophy, knowledge does not simply build up in an increasingly differentiated terminology, and the process of engaging with a philosophical work that strives to achieve certain innovations of thought can be compared to an educational process. Philosophy cannot be learned in the same way that physics can. Once someone has acquired the concepts of mass, energy, force, electrical charge, acceleration and so on, she possesses a foundation of knowledge that she can rely upon. By contrast, someone who sets her wits to Spinoza or Whitehead after having studied Plato and Aristotle or Descartes and Kant must *relearn.* Such philosophers change the meaning of the terms they have assumed from their predecessors because they respond to the world in a different way to their predecessors or regard different experiences as exemplary to their thinking. If we try to find a name for this, they are *dissident speakers.* So at first, when a reader opens a work written by an author she is not yet familiar with, she cannot understand anything at all, even if she already has a philosophical background.

Philosophers also sometimes create new terms, i.e. they not only venture to give familiar words different meanings, using them in ways that deviate from current habit, but even coin new formations such as "affection", "thing in itself", "actual entity", "noematic correlate". This, in turn, makes the learning process particularly difficult for the reader. Finally, readers are recommended to "abandon" certain concepts, as occurs in the criticism of metaphysics with Nietzsche and other authors' treatment of the concepts of the "absolute" or "God" and those of "essence" or the "soul". In this case, readers not only have to relearn; they must also *learn* something new or *unlearn* something if they wish to understand the authors in question. Or, if they wish to make their way into the thinking of a philosopher they are unfamiliar with, they are *re-educated* by the texts in question. If concepts are regarded as differentiation habits,[3] then the aim of these educational processes is to establish new differentiation habits. The intention to expand philosophical knowledge is connected to the imposition of conceptual re-education, where only adults are involved, even if it is not referred to as such; a process which, if successful, leads to people speaking and thinking about the world in a different way, and perhaps even acting differently in it one day.

These processes of adult education through the appropriation of new conceptual tools are not generally reflected in philosophical thinking itself.[4]

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[2] Cf. Plato, *Politeia. Bd. 4 der Werke in acht Bänden*. Greek/German. Ed. by Gunter Eigler, Darmstadt 1971, 521c, p. 575. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou de l'éducation. Nouvelle édition, Livre I*, Paris 2008. *Emile, or On Education,* New York 1979; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford 1958, in particular §§ 109-138. Sören Kierkegaard, *Das Subjektivwerden. Abt. 16 der Gesammelten Werke. Abschließende unwissenschaftliche Nachschrift zu den Philosophischen Brocken*. Ed. by Emanuel Hirsch, Hajo Gerdes and Hans Martin Junghans, München 1959, pp.118-244. Sören Kierkegaard, *Über den Begriff der Ironie mit ständiger Rücksicht auf Sokrates. Bd. 21, Abt. 31. der Gesammelten Werke*. Gütersloh 1984. Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, Cambridge 1976, p. xxxix; and Stanley Cavell's recently published "pedagogical letters": Stanley Cavell, *Cities of Words. Pedagogical Letters on a Register of the Moral Life.* Harvard University Press, 2005.

[3] This follows Arno Ros, who addresses the meaning of capabilities and habits of differentiation at many points in his work. See his recent text: Arno Ros, "Über einige methodische Fehler bei der neueren Diskussion um philosophische Aspekte des Geist-Materie-Problems", in: *e-journal Philosophie der Psychologie* 16 (2012) (www.jp.philo.at), p.6 (last accessed on 9 August 2013).

[4] However, sometimes it is; for example in Plato's *Theaetetus* dialogue (as mentioned above) or in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* from 1806. Education and its theory, pedagogy, do of course play a very important role – both implicitly and explicitly – for authors

Narratives, however, can reflect on them. On the one hand, narratives can change the world view of their readers using tools other than those of conceptual variation; for example, it is accepted that literature can provide an emotional education for its readers (in an *éducation sentimentale*). But independently of this, it can also discuss the experience that brings about certain conceptual decisions and responses. It can show us what we must experience in order to view the use of specific universal concepts as the correct way in which to respond to the world, or why someone may reject a certain habit of differentiation that is suggested to her. Thus literature only *appears* to be nothing other than a programme of entertainment.

The focus on education is what makes the consideration of the relationship between doctrinal and non-doctrinal philosophy differ from the debate about scepticism. The non-doctrinal form of philosophy investigated here is certainly close to scepticism. Its primary concern, however, is not a dispute about the concept of knowledge or the question whether people are actually able to know anything at all. The question is rather: "What is the teaching of philosophy?"[5] Does philosophy even have something to teach? The presence of knowledge can indeed be viewed as a condition for teaching. But on the one hand, the sceptics also have something to teach, and there also exists a doctrine of ignorance, a *docta ignorantia.*[6] On the other hand, paying attention to teaching and education brings a political and social dimension of philosophy into play – one which is not present in the epistemological disputes about scepticism. "There is no revolutionary vision", it has been noted, "which does not include a new vision of education, and contrariwise."[7] Thus from a pragmatist perspective, the question of whether philosophy has something to teach us – and if so, what? – is far more relevant than a definition of the concept of knowledge and the problem of scepticism. These epistemological investigations only relate to doctrinal philosophy from within, and to the conditions of the possibility of science sought by certain philosophers. But the social role of the kind of philosophy (and science) that makes assertions is concerned with its *claim to* instruction, which – when successfully realised – influences the way people respond to the world.

An influence on the way in which human beings respond to the world, how they perceive it and act within it, is also exerted by poetic works. It is no news that texts from Sophocles to Beckett, Homer to Proust and Pindar to Celan create knowledge about and reflections on the world, and that like some philosophical discourses, they are associated with different ways of speaking. (One must "find one's way into" Beckett and Celan just as much as when reading Spinoza and Deleuze). And except for the formalities of the division of labour in academia, there is nothing to say that Sophocles, Beckett, Proust and Celan should not be referred to as philosophers. It is, however, an uncommon understanding that literary works are not only a form of entertainment, but as a narrative reflection of philosophical thought itself, can *also* manifest fundamental philosophical insights in a way that is philosophically relevant. This is precisely the issue at hand here. Only rarely does literature change perspectives on the world using new or reinterpreted terminology; instead it employs other tools to do so. The respective individual beginnings of philosophical thought and

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such as Rousseau, Kant and Cavell when one thinks of works such as *Emile*, Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* or Cavell's pedagogical letters *Cities of Words.*

[5] Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, p. xxxviii.

[6] "[…] desideramus scire nos ignorare. Hoc si ad plenum assequi poterimus, doctam ignoratiam assequemur. […] Et tanto quis doctor erit, quanto se sciverit magis ignorantem" "[…] assuredly we desire to know that we do not know. If we can fully attain unto this [knowledge of our ignorance], we will attain unto learned ignorance. […] The more he knows that he is unknowing, the more learned he will be." Nicolas of Cusa, *Nicholas of Cusa on Learned Ignorance: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Docta Ignorantia* by Jasper Hopkins. Banning 1985. Book I, ch. 1, p.6.

[7] Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, p. xxxix.

argumentation, or fundamental conceptual decisions, can no longer be discussed in an argument. But we can narrate them; it is possible to explain how someone has arrived at them by using a narrative to explicate the internal world of someone who perceives reality, speaks and acts in a particular way which is perhaps not open or very alien to us.[8] Narratives like these, such as the one created by John Maxwell Coetzee in his book *Elisabeth Costello* (which will be discussed in detail here) bring knowledge about the beginnings of philosophical thought to light through narration.

Narrative representations of this kind are the individualist mirror image of transcendental investigations. Transcendental philosophical investigation searches for the conditions of perceptions, assertions and actions; however, it searches for them in a general sense and starts from the premise of a general subjective or linguistic structure which is shared by all human beings. Human beings agree in some respects – for example, mathematics astonishingly works and is accepted in all cultures. Hence, according to the basic idea of transcendental philosophy, there must be something which unites human beings and leads them to arrive at these commonalities. Picking up from Kant here, *self-consciousness* is traditionally regarded as one such starting point. On the one hand, it is designed to make a non-empirical investigation of human generalities possible in the first place and is thus viewed as a general cognitive ability, while on the other hand, it is also intended to be the point of departure in terms of content from which philosophical researchers can proceed to the claims that are implicitly presupposed by – but not explicitly apparent to – all human beings who perceive, claim and act.[9]

Now, one of the notorious problems for these kinds of transcendental-philosophical investigations lies in justifying the very assumptions of a general cognitive instance (of a transcendental subject or a general discourse or language game) and the necessity of the alleged conditions for all perception, assertion, argumentation and action. The fate of the Euclideanity of spatial intuition is a prime example of these difficulties. While Kant regarded Euclidean space as a necessary form of intuition shared by all subjects, the non-Euclidean geometries of the 19th century – and most importantly the use of one such geometry in Einstein's general theory of relativity – show that either the assumption of this necessity is misguided or that there is no intuition in these geometries in physics, or that Einstein was dealing with a Euclidean space which had already been deformed by masses, or that the Kantian transcendental argument was intended in a far more general sense and does not strictly amount to Euclideanity.[10] Similar difficulties arise in terms of the alleged necessity of the category of causality in the contemplation and explanation of nature. If quantum mechanics changes something in our understanding of the fundamental nature of statistic explanations and random events, which had not been addressed by Kant, then this could also make us question the necessary and a priori status of the category of causality, something assumed for instance by Max Born.[11] Even

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[8] See for example Jonathan Littell, The Kindly Ones. English by Charlotte Mandell, London 2009 (French original 2006). The book explicates the internal perspective of the SS officer Max Aue.

[9] Cf. Johannes Haag, *Erfahrung und Gegenstand. Das Verhältnis von Sinnlichkeit und Verstand*, Frankfurt/M. 2007, Ch. 1; Derk Pereboom, "Kant on Justification in Transcendental Philosophy", in: *Synthese* 85

(1990), pp. 25-54; Derk Pereboom, "Kant's Transcendental Arguments", in: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-transcendental) last accessed on 21/04/2013, 2009; Robert Stern (ed.), *Transcendental Arguments*, Oxford 1999; Barry Stroud, "Transcendental Arguments", in: *The Journal of Philosophy* 65 (1968), pp. 241-256.

[10] Cf. Michael Wolff, "Geometrie und Anschauung. Kant und das Problem der objektiven Geltung der Euklidischen Geometrie", in: *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des 9. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses. Bd. 1*, Berlin 2001, pp. 209-232.

[11] Cf. Max Born, *Natural Philosophy of Cause and Chance*, New York 1949, p. 224 f. Eric Watkins, *Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality*, Oxford 2000.

the bivalence of logic, its commitment to the two truth values of "true" and "false", came under pressure from quantum logic as part of the interpretations of quantum mechanics. [12] Kant's adherents have, of course, responded to these objections. But the very existence of these objections shows that it is not so easy to draw a clear and conclusive distinction between extremely widespread empirical conditions of perception, assertion, inference and action – which are subject to a historical drift – and unchangeable, a priori conditions. The complexity of transcendental arguments, which is rarely truly transparent (particularly in the case of their founding father), their own presupposition of a uniform structure of subjectivity or discourse theory on the one hand and, on the other, the combination of the revolutionary scientific developments that have been occurring in mathematics and physics since the mid-19th century and the dominance of historicism ever since that time, have placed an enormous amount of pressure on transcendental philosophical methods as a promising project of philosophical explication.

But as soon as the general subjectivity of human beings is historicised – a process which began with Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and continues into our present history of knowledge – many transcendental arguments change and become historical narratives. [13] And the assumption that there exist historical generalities which form the conditions of our perceptions, assertions, inferences and actions is not too far removed from the assumption that individuals react to these general conditions during their time. The creative scientific thought that leads to a scientific revolution can be interpreted as an individual's reaction to things that have

been historically taken for granted in their "era" without ever being questioned. But if at this point, we have reached the individual reaction to historical generalities, then the historical narrative gives way to a narrative about individual beings and this quickly transitions into the novel. Transcendental philosophical argumentation, historical narration and relating the experiences and decisions of individuals are therefore not as far removed from each other as one might initially think in view of the argumentative rigour and strict attention to detail with which transcendental philosophy would like to dissociate itself from any form of literature.

The connection between life experience, education and argumentation produces a connection between the emergence of subjects and their public inferences and strategies of justification. Recent pragmatism has regarded this kind of connection as illogical. [14] But it is only possible to separate self-description, processing one's own life experience, and speaking publically where it is assumed that subjects "create themselves" in a kind of romantic genius. This seems implausible to me.[15] For subjects emerge out of worlds. The individual human being is formed from her genes, the nutrition, the perceptions, the affections and the language to which she is exposed. As soon as she is able to react to all of this,

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[12] Peter Mittelstaedt, *Quantum Logic*, Dodrecht, 1978.

[13] Hegel's work from 1806 bears the characteristics of a structured historical Bildungsroman; its dialectic represents stages of cultural development, which formally underpinned Hölderlin's *Hyperion* (1797-1799). On the connection between Hölderlin's *Hyperion* and Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit,* cf. Edward Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*, Oxford 1987, ch. 3.5 and ch. 4.

[14] Cf. Rorty, Richard, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity.* Cambridge. 1989, p.xiv f.

[15] In spite of the debt owed by the investigations carried out here to the thinking of Richard Rorty, particularly in the emphasis on the contingency of historical processes leading to specific languages and patterns of subjectivity, there is nevertheless a crucial difference in the meaning that is given to the educational processes and the desirable capability for dissociation here. There is no such thing as an a priori competence for self-creation. This is the myth of a reflexive subjectivity that has always had the capability for dissociation, a myth Rorty adopts from authors like Fichte. On this subject, see Michael Hampe, "Die Vervollkommnung des Einzelnen. Richard Rortys Metaphysikkritik und seine romantische Konzeption des Individuums", in his *Erkenntnis und Praxis. Zur Philosophie des Pragmatismus*, Frankfurt/M. 2006, pp. 155-181.

something *akin* to "self-creation" will perhaps come into effect. But the competence to do so must come first.

Philosophy even makes claims about the human mind where it is not transcendental in the sense of subjectivity or discourse theory. But this increases the competitive pressure it experiences from the empirical sciences even more so. What can philosophy assert about perceiving, speaking, thinking, inferring and acting without taking into account evidence from the empirical psychology and physiology of perception, from cognitive psychology, linguistics, proof theory and informatics, sociology and ethnology? Either its general assertions constitute a sort of propaedeutic heuristics and collection of hypotheses to the specific research in these sciences, or it evolves itself into empirical research, as certain philosophical representatives of the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of language concerned with consciousness, self-consciousness and the nature of concepts have meanwhile been striving to do in Germany.[16] Independent explanatory successes will not be celebrated by a doctrinal philosophy, unless it becomes an empirical science.

Where philosophy is not making assertions with the claim to offer explanations in the context of transcendental arguments and scientific heuristics, it is usually operating in a *descriptive* or *normative* way. Here, it finds itself in a reactive position vis-à-vis people's assertive activities. Where it is claimed that some belief or other is justified, philosophical epistemology asks whether the belief is really justified, and if so, whether it really *well* justified, and *according to which standards?* Likewise, if an action is described as good or just, practical philosophy asks by what standards and whether the claim about the action is really justified. In this way, it

participates in the ongoing debate on the norms of knowledge and action (and hopefully, for the sake of its own legitimation, with more consideration and a clearer historical consciousness of the well-established and failed interjections in normative discourse than the non-philosophical participants have achieved). So, unlike transcendental philosophy, which wants to explicate the conditions of possibility that *precede* a web of assertions, normative philosophy reacts to and thereby comes *after* doctrine; it *reacts* to claims or whole teachings as webs of claims.

These *descriptive* tendencies appear alongside normative tendencies in philosophy, and in more recent philosophy they are found first and foremost in phenomenology and the efforts to describe the phenomena of consciousness and language use following from Wittgenstein and Ryle. Here, too, philosophy competes with the empirical sciences: in empirical linguistics, descriptions of language use are of course also produced and justified by means of elaborate empirical procedures. Descriptions of the phenomena of consciousness also appear in the psychological sciences and neuroscience, which also refer to phenomenology in places.[17] But regarding language, the implicit interest of philosophical descriptions is probably largely to do with discovering its *paradigmatic* use, i.e., language use which is of normative significance, and thereby not at the forefront of all linguistic research. Here, common language usage is usually only described with the critical intention of *calling* those who deviate from this current language usage *to order* as they are not adhering to the (semantic) rules.

Where philosophy does not pursue explanatory aims but focuses on description ("perspicuous representation", or "übersichtliche Darstellung", as Wittgenstein puts it) it does also get closer to literature.[18] It has been suggested that

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[16] Here, I am thinking of Thomas Metzinger in Mainz and Albert Newen and Markus Werning in Bochum for instance. See also Joshua Knobe & Shaun Nichols, *Experimental Philosophy*, Oxford 2008. Additionally: Florian Cova, Julien Dutant, Edouard Machery, Joshua Knobe, Shaun Nichols, Eddie Nahmias, *La philosophie expérimentale*, Paris 2012.

[17] On this subject, cf. Shau Gallagher & Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, London 2012.

[18] "And we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything

Wittgenstein, Austin and Ryle narrate micro-stories.[19] And of course vice versa, assertions are made in literature in the context of descriptions. But unlike the descriptions found in experimental records, field studies, the results of phenomenological investigations of consciousness, or descriptions of everyday language, the real experiences in these descriptions are generally transformed within a fictional context and produced without any normative intentions.[20] We will return to this at a later point. Literature is not concerned with demonstrating what is supposedly the valid use of language so as to admonish those who deviate from the norm; rather it is concerned with demonstrating a

relationship between speech and life, or with putting those experiences for which the appropriate language has not yet been found into words. If, in searching for historical and experiential evidence of the beginnings of chains of beliefs and of actions, literature inherits transcendental philosophical tendencies (without their legitimating intentions), then by the same token, the descriptive philosophy of ordinary language and of consciousness moves "dangerously" close to the very advanced descriptive techniques found in literature. It is not harmless to ask whether we need an illuminating philosophy of ordinary language, of affectivity and of consciousness in addition to the descriptions of language usage, affective patterns and streams of consciousness found in literature (without the corresponding normative interests). For example, can a phenomenology of love or nature compete with the corresponding literature, for instance Tolstoy's Anna Karenina or John Muir's travelogue about the mountains of California, when it comes to the apprehension of descriptive concretion?[21] If the answer to this question is no, then philosophy is in somewhat of a predicament: as a project concerned with doctrines and explanations, it is difficult for it to find a place alongside the empirical sciences that have evolved from it. As a descriptive undertaking, it must assert itself beside literature. These considerations are intended to show that only the critical-normative projects in philosophy make a certain degree of autonomy possible alongside the individual scientific disciplines and literature. Philosophy that wishes to have doctrinal and explanatory success will evolve into empirical science. Philosophy that seeks to describe the concrete becomes literature. This is how natural philosophy gave rise to Newton's experimental philosophy, then finally to physics, and how Hume's research into the human condition gave rise to

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hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation*, and description alone must take its place. […] The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language. […] A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not *command a clear view* of the use of our words. – Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connexions'. […] The concept of a perspicuous representation is of fundamental significance for us." Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford 1958, § 109 and § 122, p. 47[e] and 49[e]. Cf. Krishna Jain, *Description in Philosophy. With a particular reference to Wittgenstein and Husserl*, New Delhi 1994.

[19] By Stanley Cavell, "Performative and Passionate Utterance", in his *Philosophy the Day after Tomorrow*, Cambridge/Mass., London 2005, p.157. *Nach der Philosophie. Essays*, Berlin 2001.

[20] This transformation can be more or less intense. Authors such as W. G. Sebald or Peter Kurzeck rely heavily on documentary description in their work. On Sebald, cf. Ruth Klüger, "Wanderer zwischen falschen Leben. Über W. G. Sebald", in: Heinz Ludwig Arnold (ed.), *Text und Kritik IV/03. Zeitschrift für Literatur. No. 158: W. G. Sebald*, Munich 2003, pp. 95-102. On Kurzeck see Beate Tröger, "Gehen um zu schreiben. Peter Kurzecks autobiographisches Romanprojekt", in: Hans Richard Brittnacher, Magnus Klaue (ed.), *Unterwegs. Zur Poetik des Vagabundentums im 20. Jahrhundert*, Cologne, Weimar and others. 2008, pp. 261-276.

[21] Cf. for instance Hermann Schmitz, *Die Liebe*, Bonn 1993. Ute Guzzoni, *Wasser. Das Meer und die Brunnen, die Flüsse und der Regen*, Berlin 2005. Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (various translations). John Muir, *The Mountains of California*, New York, Century 1894.

psychology and the social sciences. With Kierkegaard, Sartre or Camus, descriptions of the particular existential situation of human beings become literature, which is either provided by the philosophers themselves – for example, in the literary works by Sartre or Camus – or by others, for example in the Walker Percy novels that draw heavily on Kierkegaard's philosophy.[22]

The Pursuit of Concretion
An important issue for the relationship between poetry and philosophy becomes apparent here: the search for concretion. It is surely undisputed that literature outperforms philosophy when it comes to making the concrete particulars of the world a topic through the medium of language. But philosophy, too, has what is characterised as a "nominalist" conviction, namely that generalities are linguistic artefacts and non-linguistic reality is a world of particulars. Some philosophers even go so far as to claim that the world is a process of coming and going particularities. They want to take time seriously. But what cultural activity takes time more seriously than narration? Must a philosophy which regards the world as a coming and going of particularities not therefore give up on itself and pass the baton of knowledge to the art of narration, as suggested by the so-called "romantic" philosophy, which wanted to make poetry into an organon of philosophy?[23]

But narration also employs a language that uses universal concepts. The desire to evade in literary works the general habits of differentiation that threaten to conceal the newness of each experience is one which cannot be fulfilled. How can philosophy and literature discuss the concreteness of coming into being and passing away if language as a general conventional system of rules is not able to do so? The difficulty of answering this question can lead to a variety of curious and at times paradoxical situations and attitudes: it can lead to the claim of not knowing, the claim of an increasingly complex and self-correcting narrative memory, to the philosophical attitude according to which there can be no orienting general assertions about a reality which is a world made up of particulars, or it can lead to falling silent. But one would hardly want to refer to silence as a way of "discussing" reality, perhaps rather as a way of appearing in a reality which is understood in a certain way.

Because of the special relationship of philosophy to asserting, educating and narrating just outlined, the following reflections in the first section on the Socratic must begin with fundamental considerations which may at first seem like a textbook introduction to philosophy. But an introduction of the kind there are for physics or biology cannot exist for philosophy if the ideas set out in this investigation – which are intended as a critique of exclusively asserting or doctrinal philosophy – are to have any relevance. Furthermore, Socrates is not discussed as the beginning of philosophy in general here, but rather as the founder of the non-doctrinal form of philosophy which already responded to assertion. The "pure figure" of Socrates, in the words of Stanley Cavell,[24] displays all of the characteristics of non-assertive philosophical activity,:[25] the pedagogical

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[22] See in particular: Walker Percy, *The Moviegoer*, New York 1961.
[23] On the "concurrence" of science and art, cf. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, "Verhältnis der Kunst zur Wissenschaft", in his *System des transzendentalen Idealismus. Ausgewählte Werke. Schriften von 1799-1801*, Darmstadt 1975, p.623. "For in philosophy the way to science lies only through art, [...]", Friedrich Schlegel, "Athenaeum Fragments" in his *Lucinde and the Fragments, Translated with an Introduction by Peter Firchow*, Minneapolis 1971, p. 205.

[24] Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, p. xxxv.
Cavell refers to these characteristics in *Must We Mean What We Say?*, p. xxxv: "The pure figure of Socrates […] motivated to philosophy only by the assertions of others, himself making none; the philosopher who did not need to write. I should think every philosopher now has at least one philosophical companion whose philosophical ability *and accomplishment* he has the highest regard for, who seems unable to write philosophy. Were such a person content with silence he would merely be the latest instance of a figure always possible within philosophy, possible indeed nowhere else."

eros that appears without doctrine, being driven to philosophy by the assertions of others without oneself ever making such assertions, and the resulting lack of a tangible output which could conceivably have escalated into a definitive silence. All of this makes the activity of non-doctrinal philosophy differ not only from the assertiveness of science, but also from the narrative arts. For it is difficult to imagine a silent narrator, whereas it can be said of non-doctrinal philosophy that "if silence is always a threat in philosophy, it is also its highest promise."[26] This is something that will have to be made comprehensible at the end of our investigations.

Metaphysics
Although the distinction between doctrinal and non-doctrinal philosophy, which we will introduce here by drawing upon the philosophy of Socrates and his philosophical constellation, has a certain affinity with Strawson's distinction between descriptive and revisionary metaphysics and is also similar to the demarcation between pragmatism and metaphysics,[27] non-doctrinal philosophy is neither descriptive metaphysics nor pragmatism. For unlike Kant's descriptive metaphysics (in Strawson's view) or pragmatism, it ends in a paradox. Given that it starts from the *experience* that the world is a coming and going of particulars, but this experience cannot be established in assertions and by argument, it ends in the assertion that, ultimately, nothing can be asserted definitively, and that the concrete experience of the particularities of the world must remain beyond the reach of all linguistic expressions due to the universal concepts they employ. But this insight is nothing new. We recognise it as the Heraclitus's position in Platos' *Theaetetus*

or the figure of sense-certainty from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit.* [28] In these texts, however, it is not associated with the subject of silence, although the end of *Theaetetus* does come very close.

Rorty's distinction between philosophical efforts aimed at improving our lives on the one hand and, on the other hand, conceptual efforts of regimentation in which human beings are definitively told how to speak and above all how to describe themselves, was also important for understanding what is referred to as non-doctrinal philosophy here. But Rorty appears to be ultimately concerned with making an original self-description possible as a new form of romantic self-creation, something which will not play a role here. The considerations regarding developing the ability to respond to the world, which are addressed here following Dewey, are aimed at something different to the ability to become the original genius of one's own life:[29] they aim to maintain (or restore) a specific experience of particulars. The possibility of such an experience is regarded as a *condition of happiness.*

Nor does hypothetically speculative metaphysics such as that put forward by Whitehead – which does not try to escape the drift of the changes of meaning in everyday and scientific languages through ultimate definitions of meaning, but instead merely contributes to it by blurring the

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[26] Cf. Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?*, S. xxxv f: "It would make no sense to speak of someone as a gifted novelist who had never written a novel; nor of someone as a scientist who had made no contribution to science. […] If silence is always a threat in philosophy, it is also its highest promise."

[27] Peter F. Strawson, *Individuals. An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, London 1950. Richard Rorty, "Heidegger wider die Pragmatisten", in: *Neue Hefte für Philosophie* 23 (1984), pp. 1-22.

[28] The specific nature of the particular sensory experience admittedly disintegrates paradoxically into the universal with Hegel: "[...] Every consciousness itself supersedes such a truth, as e.g. *Here is a tree, or, Now is noon*, and proclaims the opposite: Here is *not* a tree, but a house; and similarly, it immediately again supersedes the assertion which set aside the first so far as it is also just such an assertion of a sensuous This. And what consciousness will learn from experience in all sense-certainty is, in truth, only what we have seen viz. the This as a *universal*, the very opposite of what that assertion affirmed to be universal experience." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit,* Translated by A.V. Miller with Analysis of the Text and Foreword by J.N. Findlay, Oxford 1977, p.65; *Phänomenologie des Geistes,* ed. by Johannes Hoffmeister, Hamburg [6] 1952, p. 87.

[29] Cf. Hampe, "Die Vervollkommnung des Einzelnen" (see footnote 16 above).

boundaries between doctrinal philosophy and narration as "conceptual literature"[30] – correspond to non-doctrinal philosophy in the sense understood here. Because in spite of its revisability, this metaphysics presupposes the possibility that a general conceptual scheme could be *adequate* for concrete experience and thus attempts to evade the considerations to be demonstrated here, which aim to bring about an understanding of the *inadequacy* of the asserting position. [31] Whitehead seeks a universal scheme of interpretation for all human experience.[32] Although this scheme of interpretation remains *hypothetical* and open to revision in the sense of Peirce's fallibilism[33] given that it can fail in its interpretation of an experience at any point, it aims for the *homogenisation of the interpretation* of experience. This homogenisation can be understood as an attempt to reconstruct the coherence of all experiences in a rational way. This objective leads to the search for a *system*. The need for a system arises when the particularities of the world are not coherent enough *on their own account,* or where this coherence seems unclear. The coherence strived for here is one which goes beyond the scope of the life history of the experiencing individual. But unlike the system of the physical standard model, for example, which aims to explain particular

experiences produced in experiments, this type of philosophical system is not an *explanatory* one; rather it is *interpretive*. Interpretive systems such as that put forward by Whitehead have two functions. First, they criticise the abstract nature of certain scientisms such as physicalism, biologism or sociologism, which want to take vocabularies that were developed solely for the purpose of recording specific (laboratory) experiences and apply them to all experience. The philosophical criticism of these 'isms' then calls experiences other than the corresponding "basic experiences" into play, such as religious, aesthetic or ethical experiences. [34] In a second step, a philosophy such as that put forward by Whitehead then attempts to systematize all of these experiences and do them justice with a uniform new terminology, creating a new, non-reductive "grand narrative". This is exactly where the question of the demarcation of narration arises. In what way does a general scheme of interpretation for human experience differ from a novel that combines a variety of human experiences, including those of different subjects of experience, in a constellation within its narrative? Take, for example, Musil's *The Man without Qualities,* which establishes a connection between the scientific, religious, erotic, ethical, political experiences of different human beings (and not only of Ulrich) at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century. Why should many subjects of experience interpret their experiences in the language of *Process and Reality?*

A Whiteheadian conceptual scheme is surely better equipped to level *criticism* at the generalisation of the scientific experience as the sole relevant experience for human life. The foreignness of the generalised philosophical terminologies to all of the everyday and technical languages can thus definitely perform a distancing, critical function. [35] Science may be more accepting of the

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[30] On this cf. Temilo van Zantwijk, „Begriffsdichtung. Schiller und Friedrich Albert Lange", in: Klaus Manger, Niklas Immer (ed.), *Der ganze Schiller. Programm ästhetischer Erziehung*, Heidelberg 2006, pp. 487-495.

[31] Cf. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality. An Essay in Cosmology*. Corrected Edition by David Griffin, Donald W. Sherburne, New York 1978 (orig. 1929), p.3. "[...] everything of which we are conscious, as enjoyed, perceived, willed, or thought, shall have the character of a particular instance of the general scheme. Thus the philosophical scheme should be [...] adequate." Speculation is therefore not merely an instrument used to reject the established modes of speaking in order to gain critical distance from them here.

[32] Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, Preface.

[33] Charles Sanders Peirce, "Pragmatism – the Logic of Abduction", in his *Lectures on Pragmatism/Vorlesungen über Pragmatismus*. English/German. Ed. by Elisabeth Walther, Hamburg 1973, pp. 263-277.

[34] Alfred North Whitehead, „Science and Philosophy", in his *Adventures of Ideas*, New York 1967, pp. 144-146.

[35] On this subject, see Hampe, *Erkenntnis und Praxis*, p.19.

hypothetical system form as a critical opponent than it is of a narrative. But what about the relevance of the corresponding philosophy for non-scientists? What meaning can terminology such as that used by Whitehead, which also wants to interpret religious and ethical experience, have for religious and moral life outside of academia? Can a philosophy such as that put forward by Whitehead teach us anything here?

William James, who, like Whitehead, developed a hypothetical, pluralistic metaphysics, which we will follow here with the weakest commitment possible, combined his metaphysics with a philosophy of common sense, which is much more accessible than his views about a universe composed of droplets of experience. [36] This is the model of an esoteric, hypothetical metaphysics and an exoteric popular philosophy which is intended to have an impact outside of academia. The plausibility of such a philosophical concept depends on the extent to which it succeeds in making the developments and consequences of a plurality of experiences exoterically comprehensible, i.e. making the fact that that others base their speech and actions on completely different experiences plausible. As is the case with philosophical phenomenology, which Jamesian philosophy is systematically close to,[37] we can also ask here whether, in terms of the task of explicating and interrelating inner perspectives of experience, discursive philosophical reasoning is not perhaps systematically inferior to a narration, which can draw on the possibility of fictional characters as centres of experience and figures of identification for the reader. Is a phenomenology of love still necessary when we already have *The New Sorrows of Young W.*? Can a philosophy of consciousness of the feeling of confinement replace or compete with Kafka's story *The Burrow?* Or is it a mistake to make philosophical discourse compete with literature here? But what function can philosophy have if, on the one hand, it does not explain anything, but on the other, it cannot surpass successful literature in terms of pithiness in explicating internal perspectives? Presumably all that remains here is the educational *stance* it demonstrates more obtrusively because doctrinal philosophy would like to create the connection between linguistic manifestations of various kinds of experience "from the top down" through a system or a theory of discourse, but cannot legitimise this educational stance with explanatory successes. The failure of doctrinal generalisation and the low level of acceptance of philosophical teachings is thus due to the strength of its explanatory and narrative alternatives in science and the arts, and not due to so-called "post-modernism".

Game theory instead of post-modernism
Despite what many have claimed following from Lyotard, the grand narratives have not disappeared. [38] But they no longer appear in philosophical systems, from which they have departed, and are now preserved and handed down elsewhere, and legitimated most of all in contexts outside of the philosophical academies. Their legitimation is no longer provided by emancipation movements, universal speculative theories and religious hopes of redemption, instead they are legitimated by their *mathematical* form and their application within a global *economy*. Thus the narratives of game theory – which can indeed be traced back to Hobbes' *Leviathan* with some justification, but are no longer recognised as elements of this philosophical work in its current forms – have been referred to by one of their most important representatives – Ariel Rubinstein – as a "collection of fables and proverbs" that are only useful for *interpreting* human behaviour, and not for *predicting* it.[39] But they are considered part

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[36] Cf. Felicitas Krämer, *Erfahrungsvielfalt und Wirklichkeit. Zu William James' Realitätsverständnis*, Göttingen 2006.
[37] James M. Edie, "William James and Phenomenology", in: *The Review of Metaphysics* 23/3 (1970), pp. 481-526.

[38] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis 1984 (French original: *La condition postmoderne*, Paris 1979).
[39] Robert Axelrod's, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York (1984) has become a classic on the subject of Hobbes and game

of a science which is supposedly successful at making predictions. The reason why models from game theory can be used to predict the markets is because trading occurs between machines which are programmed according to game theory, with the corresponding algorithms implemented as operative rules. These models cannot, however, be used to predict the behaviour of human beings who refuse to regard the models from game theory as paradigmatic for rationality. This dialectic of description and education, which only appears in the world of human beings, is important for prognostic success: the planets do not behave according to Newton's laws of motion if they are only described by them often enough. But human beings do behave according to specific paradigms if they are presented to them often enough, for example when "rational machines" portray them as "the reasonable" ones in trade relations. Where game theoretic models have gained predictive force, this can be traced back to their normative or

educational effect – an effect which, of course, remains implicit. So for example, when in a Yale introduction to game theory those who cooperate in the prisoner's dilemma are described as either nice or stupid whereas those who choose the dominant strategy are characterised as either evil or clever, this would appear to be an incidental pedagogical joke. But in fact, the connection that almost all lectures on game theory make between "rational", "predicting others", "being one step ahead", "maximising one's own benefits" on the one hand and "hoping for cooperation", "being nice", "being not too bright" on the other establishes an effective assessment scheme. The students are not just given an introduction into a descriptive and predictive theory; rather they are taught a specific meaning of "rational" and "being successful". Given that these norms are conveyed implicitly, it is particularly difficult to react to them – indeed, they are not even discussed.[40]

Game theory's initial scientific reputation comes from its mathematical formulation, and not from its empirical validity nor the implicit normative success which has made it possible.[41] It is the site of a number of small, influential narratives which, ever since Hobbes *Leviathan,* have been telling us that people behave *strategically* towards each other, that they normally *compete* with each other for resources and are in social *conflict situations,* in which winners and losers can be identified and human beings assess and chase one another. These narratives originally started off as the natural *state of war* with Hobbes and have drifted into almost all areas of secular societies in the form of interpretative patterns, entering into the markets, politics, the educational system, gender relations, and healthcare systems. The question of whether, in the sense of the post-modern fantasy, there

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theory, and more recently: Daniel Eggers, "Hobbes and Game theory revisited: zero-sum games in the state of nature", in: *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 49 (2011), pp. 193- 236. Don Ross establishes a link between the Platonic dialogues *Laches* and *Phaedo* and game theory, cf. Don Ross, "Game Theory", in: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2012 Edition)* (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/game-theory), last accessed on 06/08/2013. Ariel Rubinstein writes: "In my view, game theory is a collection of fables and proverbs. Implementing a model from game theory is just as likely as implementing a fable. A good fable enables us to see a situation in life from a new angle [...]. But it would be absurd to say that "The Emperor's New Clothes" predicts the path of Berlusconi," Ariel Rubinstein, "Kann die Spieltheorie die Probleme der Eurozone lösen und das iranische Atomprogramm aufhalten?" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27/03/2013. Translated into English as "How game theory will solve the problems of the Euro Bloc and stop Iranian nukes" on: http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/debatten/game-theory-how-game-theory-will-solve-the-problems-of-the-euro-bloc-and-stop-iranian-nukes-12130407.html (Last accessed on 12/12/2013). See also Ariel Rubinstein, *Economic Fables*, Cambridge 2012.

[40] An introduction to game theory from the University of Yale is available on YouTube at the following address: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nM3rTU927io. Last accessed on 2 August 2013.
[41] According to Rubinstein in "Kann die Spieltheorie die Probleme der Eurozone lösen und das iranische Atomprogramm aufhalten?": "[...] the formality creates an illusion that the theory is scientific."

were ever really any grand integrative narratives and systems which actually concerned all human areas in the same way as the narratives of competing utility maximisers do today remains to be answered. At any rate, the interpretative patterns from game theory are effectively ubiquitous, whatever their integrating force may be. In these narratives, human beings must constantly *assert* themselves against other human beings wherever they are. The grand narratives of human beings made in the image of a Creator and as rational beings were succeeded by one about human beings as market participants. It is the market that provides the universal metaphor for the life of the competitive human being, and not war, as was the case with Hobbes.

Markets really exist, and human beings do actually operate in them, but not always. If the other two grand narratives of human beings relate to transcendences that do not come and go (because God and the intelligible faculty of reason are thought of as eternal), the narrative of the competitive market-minded person gets by without transcendence, generalising and ennobling a particular possibility of human existence – that of competing with others for something – to make it into something that people allegedly always do and that constitutes their essence. The narrative of the competitive being in the market yields the new anthropological essentialism, which has come to dominate across almost all areas and has replaced the religious essentialism that regarded man as a rational being created by God, the Creator, in his own image. (In this regard, it has some similarities to the narrative of man as a *mortal* being. Death is also a non-transcendental reality and the final possibility of human life, but people do not die throughout their whole lives any more so than they compete everywhere and always throughout their whole lives. It is just as much of an exaggeration to interpret the whole of human life relative to death (existentialist essentialism) as it is to view the whole of human life in terms of competition.)

It is not just a coincidence that the lives of human beings who must assert themselves against each other are played out in a culture that is largely orientated by the *assertions* made by the explanatory sciences. These narratives, which centre on the competition for scarce resources and the need to assert oneself in game theory, are the grand narratives of the modern day. Global capitalism has made these interpretative patterns a reality. This possibility was predicted over a hundred years ago by Charles Sanders Peirce, who underlined the danger that human beings would come to interpret themselves solely as egotistical utility maximisers in competition with one another, thus ushering in a social reality to match this reality.[42]

The Bible also provides interpretative patterns for human feelings and actions in the Book of Job, the Judgement of Solomon on two women who both claimed

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[42] In his essay "Evolutionary Love" in 1893, Peirce analysed the so-called "greed-philosophy" according to a guide of political economy in which cruelty is deemed ineffective and side-lined as a result. Peirce predicts that "the economies" will wake up from their self-satisfaction when it is already too late. When it becomes apparent that their analyses of human behaviour are defective, the social reality will have already developed in accordance with their misguided image. "The twentieth century, in its latter half," writes Peirce, "shall surely see the deluge-tempest burst upon the social order, – to clear upon a world as deep in ruin as that greed-philosophy has long plunged it into guilt." Charles Sanders Peirce, "Evolutionary Love" in his *The Essential Peirce, Volume 1: Selected Philosophical Writings Volume 1 (1867 - 1893),* ed. by Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel, Indiana University Press 1992, p.356. In his book *Von Neumann, Morgenstern and the Creation of Game Theory* (Cambridge 2010), the economic historian Robert Leonard meticulously describes the history of game theory as a strategic theory of economic activity and its application in the Cold War. Frank Schirrmacher applies this theory effectively in his popular critical non-fiction book *Ego. Das Spiel des Lebens*, München 2013 (without making reference to Hobbes or Peirce in the process). Here, the social world has developed in the manner suggested by the dominant interpretative patterns of human behaviour in game theory, so human beings have become egotistical utility maximisers and we are now faced with a society of egotistical utility maximisers due to the dominance of these narratives. See in particular Schirrmacher 2013 (Part II).

to be the mother of the same child, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and many other narratives. These stories concern the issues of coping with pain, of justice, and compassion. Psychoanalysis believed to have found a very specific pattern for psycho-sexual life in the form of the Oedipus Myth. Likewise, generalizable interpretations of human life are also provided by the narratives from game theory, which all deal with strategic reasoning: the prisoner's dilemma, the game of cowards, the beauty contests, the ultimatum game or the diner's dilemma. All of these stories convey general interpretations of human behaviour. But these narratives are no more valid than those found in the Bible or Greek tragedy. [43] They specify situations that people can really find themselves in and promote them to a *paradigmatic status.* Neither Job, the Oedipus Myth, nor the prisoner's dilemma make for good predictions about actions because none of these cover the entire spectrum of human actions. The reason why things appear to be different when it comes to the fables of game theory is because where mathematical formalisms are used, this gives the impression that modern, empirically verified science is at work, and this really ought to be both successful at making predictions as well as universally valid. For what is allegedly more universally valid than a mathematical formula?

But the interpretive patterns from the stories from the Bible, Greek tragedy and game theory can *all* be applied to human life, even if they are not useful for predicting human behaviour universally. They merely emphasise and accentuate different aspects of this behaviour. If they become paradigmatic, being possible parts of human life, they come to represent this life as a whole. These kinds of paradigmatic emphases then feed back into the future behaviour of those who interpret themselves with the aid of this *pars pro toto* pattern. Someone who, in a scenario where assistance is required, tries to relate her behaviour to the Parable

of the Good Samaritan, therefore receiving this story as *paradigmatic*, will probably behave differently to a person who uses the prisoner's dilemma as her paradigm. Someone who is concerned about the prospects of her spiritual salvation if she helps or does not help is interpreting and assessing her own behaviour in a different way to someone who worries about the time and social resources available to her, asking what effect offering help will have on these resources. The reason why everything seems to be a scarce resource to human beings nowadays (just as once everything seemed either sinful or indicative of salvation) and something that they compete for with others – their education, work, sexual partners, their time – is due to the narratives they use to interpret themselves, which lead them to take certain aspects of their actions and the motivation behind their behaviour as paradigmatic for human actions in general.

Someone who interprets herself in a specific way for a while will behave according to these interpretations and acquire *habits* that make her into a human being who fits these interpretations.[44] This is how the fables from game theory influence culture and social life. By interpreting themselves as strategic agents in a competition for resources, people will, with time, become persons who act first and foremost strategically, viewing everything around them as a scarce resource. This influence is particularly noticeable in science. Many scientists have come to see themselves as people whose primary concern within the system of "mental capitalism" is to exchange the resources of attention and reputation, and accumulate them for themselves. [45] Other self-conceptions, by contrast – such as that of world spectators who hand their knowledge down to others as a gift – fade into oblivion.[46] This is

[43] Rubinstein, "Kann die Spieltheorie die Probleme der Eurozone lösen und das iranische Atomprogramm aufhalten?"

[44] Cf. Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* Translated and with a commentary by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins), Chicago 2011, Book II 1.

[45] This is how Georg Franck diagnoses the situation in his book *Ökonomie der Aufmerksamkeit*, Munich 1998.

[46] Inken Tegtmeyer provides a comparison of economic and gift exchange interpretations of

where the educational influence of these narratives lies; however the authors of these narratives by no means see themselves as narrative teachers and instead mistakenly conceive of themselves as scientists conducting predictive science. Lyotard simply overlooked these grand narratives because he was looking in the wrong places, in the formation of theories in doctrinal philosophy and not in the strategic sciences of war and the economy.

Ever since antiquity, non-doctrinal philosophy has criticised these kinds of grand narrative again and again, but it has never tried to replace them with other grand narratives. Its objective is to enable individuals to *react* to these narratives and make them capable of rejecting the suggestion that they should apply the universal concepts used in these narratives to themselves. Just as human beings who are homosexual, melancholic or deaf refuse to be described as "ill", people can reject the proposal that they should characterise their lifetime as a "scarce resource", their friends as a "network", their education as an "investment in the future" and a landscape as a "recreational area". But in order to do so they must be conscious of what it means to decide for or against using universal concepts, that is, they must generally be *conscious speakers*. To a conscious speaker, it is clear that "science" has not determined that human beings are competitors for resources, nor that friends and education are a means of social advancement, nor that landscapes are instruments of psychological regeneration; instead they know that scientific research operates using these terms in order to pursue specific explanatory projects (e.g. in the social sciences). People who do *not* pursue these explanatory projects are no more bound to their terminological applications than, for example, parents who say they cannot summons up force to raise a

seventh child are obliged to follow the way in which the term "force" is used by Newton.

We can see that non-doctrinal philosophy has nothing to do with post-modernism (which, if it involves the absence of grand narratives, never existed) because non-doctrinal philosophy already existed in the intellectual constellation that led to the birth of the explanatory sciences and philosophy in Europe. I am referring to the constellation that existed between Socrates and his intellectual predecessors. Socrates was the first traditional philosophical figure to attempt to make his dialogue partners take semantic responsibility and autonomy by asking what they actually meant by a specific term and whether or not they could see the consequence of using such a term.

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scientific productivity and reception in her dissertation *Wozu in der Philosophie wissenschaftliche Texte geschrieben werden* (Typoskript, Hildesheim 2013, Section 6 (5)). I also owe thanks to this paper for the reference to Georg Franck.