

Book Reviews / Buchbesprechungen / Comptes rendus de lecture

Albert Schweitzer

Out of My Life and Thought

An Autobiography

The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2009

The book presented here is not a recent one, not even under rather broad understanding of the term 'recent' in the field of philosophy. What is new is the edition, published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the first one. Out of My Life and Thought is most commonly considered to be an autobiography of Albert Schweitzer, which he wrote on the request of his German publisher in altogether no more than five months. It was the only book he completed while working in Africa, at the hospital he founded in Lambaréné. Somewhat uncommonly for a book subtitled "an autobiography", Schweitzer himself valued this work the most among many others he wrote - it gives an insight into the life of the legendary jungle doctor but above all it honours the idea of 'reverence for life'. Chronological recital of events in Schweitzer's life serves merely as a frame setting for the real autobiographical story - the development of the 'reverence for life' ethical system. Schweitzer's ambition was to create an ethical system that will be grounded in thought and all-embracing regarding subjects of moral consideration. He is highly critical towards ethical systems developed in philosophy, although he notes that Kantian ethics deserves some credits for being an almost successful one. Scopes of future ethical system developed by Schweitzer are therefore set high and it took him years to articulate basic principle in satisfactory way. His autobiography, with supplemented excerpts from other materials he had written till then, represents a concise overview of the evolution of his thought.

Out of My Life and Thought therefore is a book which could serve as a starting point for understanding how Schweitzer became Schweitzer: the theologian, the philosopher. the musician, the doctor, but also the antinuclear activist and the Nobel Peace Prize laureate - biographical notes dated years after this book was firstly published in 1949. To that line of denotations an additional one must be mentioned: Albert Schweitzer was also a bioethicist, although a not knowing one. The 60th anniversary of his book occurred in times which are strongly proving Schweitzer's words: "we like to imagine that Man is nature's goal; but facts do not support that belief" (first published in "The Ethics for Reverence for Life", Christendom 1 (1936), pp. 225-239), making his revival in the last years even more appropriate.

Beside the new "Foreword" by Lachlan Forrow, the book consists of the "Foreword" to the 1998 edition by the Nobel laureate and former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, "Preface" by Rhena Schweitzer Miller and Antje Bultmann Lemke (also from the 1998 edition), chronology of Albert Schweitzer's life, a selected list of his work and works about him, and Index.

First chapters are rather biographical ones. Schweitzer examines his early childhood and years of his education. He is giving a charming and sometimes emotional overview of his struggle with the demands of formal education, challenged even more by his slackness and dreamy character. Being raised in the family of a protestant priest with several members who were musicians, Schweitzer at very young age received basic knowledge on religion and music. During his years at the University of Strasbourg, Schweitzer pursued independent research on the Gospels and on the problem of the (historical) life of Jesus. Time in Paris was spent in music lessons he attended and in writing of philosophical dissertation on Kant's religious philosophy. While dissertation on Kant was published soon after receiving the doctorate in philosophy (1899), work in theology consumed Schweitzer further in subsequent years and finally resulted in publishing books The Quest of the Historical Jesus (1906) and The Mysticism of

Paul the Apostle (1930). On the demand of the Swedish publisher for a book describing life in West Africa, he wrote On the Edge of the Primeval Forest (1921) with including remarks on difficulties colonization was causing to native people. Schweitzer's intention to complete a history of the origin and early development of Christianity, the Last Supper, and baptism was interfered by his work on The Philosophy of Civilization (first two volumes were published in 1923). He was an accomplished organist, wrote a comprehensive book on Johann Sebastian Bach and edited Bach's complete works. Study on Bach appeared in French in 1905 and, in form of an expanded edition, in German in 1908. All Schweitzer's early works (on historical life of Jesus and the ones about the music) were received by public with enthusiasm and still, almost a century later, are highly respected in both general and professional public. But instead of pursuing a promising carrier of theologian, philosopher, music theoretician and/or organ player, Schweitzer decided to invest his upcoming years into a completely different field.

At the beginnings of his twenties, Schweitzer made a decision to devote himself to scholarship and the arts until he reaches 30. The plan for the years after was set rather broadly: devoting to serving humanity directly. Final decision on course of his humanitarian work was made on grounds provided by one newspaper article describing missionary work in Africa - Schweitzer found out that missionaries needed additional skilful help, especially of those trained in medical professions. He decided to study medicine for the purpose of going to Africa as a doctor, not to preach the religion of love, but to practice it (p. 92). Work in natural sciences, as a part of his medical studies, Schweitzer met with great enthusiasm - he felt that it had finally given him a firm ground for his further work in philosophy. Through the study of natural sciences, the mind educated in philosophy and theology developed high appreciation of the mystery force that lies behind diverse manifestations of being.

Shadows of the upcoming war were already on the horizon when in year 1913 Schweitzer and his wife Hélène Bresslau set on the voyage to Lambaréné, a mission field situated on the river Ogowé in today's Gabon. First years were spent in building the small hospital and establishing the relation of trust with local inhabitants. Yet, echoes of the First World War reached small jungle hospital. Schweitzer, among others, was informed he must consider himself as prisoner of war. Schweitzer used that time of less work in hospital for research needed for writing his *Philosophy of Civilization*. It subsequently led him to "the noble

and enthusiastic but not deep" thought (p. 152) that ethics and the affirmation of life are interdependent. Question of what they have in common occupied Schweitzer greatly but without results. Intellectual frustration made him feel as he "was pushing against an iron door that would not yield" (p. 154). At least it was that way till his famous meeting with a heard of hippopotamuses on the Ogowé river. In one of the most cited passages of Schweitzer's work, he gives a testimony on how "the path in the thicket" had become visible when, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase 'reverence for life' flashed upon his mind (p. 155). Schweitzer reached a conclusion that ethical acceptance of the world and of life has its foundation in thought. He introduces his ethics of 'reverence for life' in the Philosophy of Civilization (corresponding excerpts are included in Out of My Life and Thought). Starting point are arguments against Descartes. Contrary to Descartes who suggested that thought can be without content, Schweitzer seeks for the most immediate fact of man's consciousness and finds it in the assertion "I am life that wills to live in the midst of life that wills to live" (p. 156). From this, Schweitzer then advances to elaboration of 'reverence for life' principle. The will-to-live is in a constant tension between the urge for self-preservation and the fear of destruction. Therefore, the will-to-live could be seen in all living beings, and in cases where we cannot clearly see it, we must assume its existence. Key point of ethics based on the principle of 'reverence for life' is the recognition of the compulsion to show the same reverence to every will-to-live as one does to his/her own. This provides the basic principle of the morals: preserving, promoting, and developing all life is good; destroying, injuring, and repressing life is evil. Schweitzer underlines this principle by saying: "This is the absolute, fundamental principle of ethics, and it is a fundamental postulate of thought" (p. 157). Put in those terms, it is obvious that life has an intrinsic value or, how Schweitzer puts it all life is sacred

Second step in forming an ethical system is a question of responsibility based on previously given distinction between good and evil. On grounds of 'all life is sacred' premise, the question of responsibility is easily resolved: ethics is universal and it embeds responsibility for all that lives. But Schweitzer does not stop there. In the following stage of his argumentation he points out to the active element. Ethics based on the 'reverence for life' is more than just love for other living beings, devotion or compassion in suffering. Ethically developed man is devoted to life and

inspired by 'reverence for life'. He seeks the ways "to make progress of various kinds that will serve the material, spiritual, and ethical development of the individual and the mankind", as Schweitzer insists (p. 158). A man is truly ethical only when he obeys the compulsion to help all life which he is able to assist, and shrinks from injuring anything that lives. True ethics therefore can only be the 'living ethics'.

In his Philosophy of Civilization (only partially covered in Out of My Life and Thought) Schweitzer introduces the main characteristics which cannot be omitted whenever ethics of 'reverence for life' is in question. First, ethics of 'reverence for life' is rational, as Schweitzer persistently highlights: it was the thought which discovered the will-to-live, it was the thought which found it in all living beings, and finally it was the thought which on those grounds produced the entire ethical system. Second characteristic, arising from the inner compulsion, marks Schweitzer's ethics as an absolute one: his ethics is not concerned with problems regarding the success of its work or calculations regarding possible outcomes which will determine the act itself. Next characteristic is its universality which rests on the notion of value egalitarianism of all living beings. Finally, ethics with such a universal character, for Schweitzer also has a great spiritual significance. The last characteristic, which puts forward the notion of sanctity of life, challenges Schweitzer's theory the most. On that point, Schweitzer will more than easily be slipping into mysticism, especially when confronted with inconsistencies of his ethical system.

Schweitzer, as it is known, is not the first one to attribute the existence of Divine to all living beings, in other words to equalize sacredness with life. St. Francis of Assisi, to name just one, saw all parts of the nature as manifestations of God's love: everything created is proof of the existence of Divine, and therefore there is no difference in value between particular forms of creations – people, bees, trees, as well as water, Moon or Sun are equally loved by Creator. St. Francis of Assisi sees a clear line connecting Creator and all creations which should be respected to the best of our abilities. Humans are capable of the highest level of reasoning and thus bear the heaviest burden of responsibility. Schweitzer seemingly does not go as far as St. Francis, but observed more closely he reveals his notion of sanctity of life as more radical than the one of St. Francis. Sanctity of each and every life implies their equal worth and annihilates any ground for value-contributing according to, most often, human needs. And nature order is established precisely through fragile balance of preserving and destroying life. Humans are part of it, but part with the most power in their hands. For example, a young eagle that fell out of the nest must be fed by humans with fishes in order to survive. People taking care of the jungle hospital must lower the number of cats in order to improve quality of life of other, meaning human, inhabitants. Doctor must kill millions of bacteria in order to save just one human life. "One existence holds its own at the cost of another; one destroys another" (p. 158). Schweitzer is not ignorant to the fact that living in a respectful way of acknowledging ultimate sanctity and moral equality of all life is contrary to the laws of nature. How to appease natural laws and rationally grounded universal ethics? This conflict is even more intensified by Schweitzer's persistence on practical actions done in accordance with the 'reverence for life' principle, underlined with the notion of sanctity of all life. Schweitzer offers several solutions which will not be discussed on this occasion, except of giving our final remark on their success - certain form of mysticism poses as the easiest way out for Schweitzer, leaving his ethics, at least from the philosophical standpoint, somehow unfinished. As far as Out of My Life and Thought is concerned, the "Epilogue" allows us to glimpse the mysticism Schweitzer advocates for.

Schweitzer first public presentation of his thoughts on 'reverence for life' ethics was in lectures he gave in Uppsala, after he and his wife were released from prisoner-of-war camp and were trying to establish a normal life in post-war circumstances. He said he was so moved when talking for the first time about 'reverence for life' that he found it difficult to speak (p. 186). In the following years, spent in devoted work in Lambaréné hospital as well as in numerous travels across the world for fundraising, he has further established his 'reverence for life' ethics, both in theoretical and practical ways. His was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in year 1952 for his lifetime commitment to humanitarian work. It must also not to be forgotten that he invested much of his time, energy, and reputation in antinuclear activities in which he joined together with some of the most respectful intellectuals in the time after the Second World War.

Life and work of Albert Schweitzer are serving as an inspiration to many people dealing in one way or another with moral problems present in contemporary societies. He is meeting deep respect among scholars from different fields of academic research. But he is also coming to focus of a relatively new field of research, the one of bioethics. As stated

at the beginning – Albert Schweitzer was by all means a bioethicist, way before bioethics as such existed. He emphasizes life as the key issue, importance of which is never to be forgotten. Even though he is not consistent in elaboration of all implications of his theory, the theory itself could serve as a well-rounded bioethical concept that goes beyond boundaries of human–human relations and establishes human–all living beings relation. Moreover, his own life and biography prove that it is really possible to reach a certain level of 'lived ethics'.

Ivana Zagorac

James A. Marcum

An Introductory Philosophy of Medicine: Humanizing Modern Medicine

Springer, New York 2008

In the long lasting (and yet not finished!) debate concerning the nature (of philosophy) of medicine, the book of James A. Marcum is one of the best recent contributions to the problem, because, as the title itself says, it tries to introduce the reader into the realm of the philosophy of medicine. The title An Introductory Philosophy of Medicine and its subtitle Humanizing Modern Medicine are hiding important messages which the reader can reveal through reading the entire book. First, the aim of the book is to be *introductory* (not introduction), which means to be the one which introduces the reader into the philosophy of medicine. It is not just a compendium of different views and statements, but an attempt to bring them into a dialogue and, thus, to philosophize (about) medicine. Second, the author brings his own specific view on the aim of the philosophy of medicine which is coded in the subtitle: the core issue of every philosophical approach to medicine is to try to reflect and warn about the need of humanizing medicine, because the prevalence of biomedical model in developed countries is the cause of quality-of-care-crisis in modern

In the "Introduction", Marcum investigates the possibility of the philosophy of medicine. First, he analyses different approaches to the subject and critically examines the adequate relation between philosophy and medicine (whether it is philosophy and medicine, philosophy in medicine or philosophy of medicine). After the conclusion that the philosophy of medicine is the only adequate relation between the two disciplines, he further reflects about a possibility of such a new discipline. He states that the philosophy of medicine is "a subdiscipline of philosophy", and he defines it specifically as "the metaphysical and ontological, the epistemological, and the axiological and ethical analysis of different models for medical knowledge and practice" (p. 8). Finally, he explains that the biomedical model is prevalent in western and developed countries today and that this is the main reason of nowadays' quality-of-care-crisis. This is because in the biomedical model "the patient is reduced to a physical body composed of separate parts that occupy a machine-world" and "the physician's emotionally detached concern is to identify the patient's diseased body part and to treat it or replace it, using the latest scientific and technological advances in medical knowledge sanctioned by the medical community. (...) The loss of the patient as a person from the physician's clinical gaze has led to a quality-of-care-crisis", concludes Marcum (p. 10). In response to this crisis some authors proposed "over the past several decades humanistic modifications of the biomedical model, in order to reinstate the humanity of both the patient and the physician into medical knowledge and practice" (p. 11). This large attention given to the "Introduction" is needed because throughout the book James Marcum will try to analyse the boundaries of both models - biomedical and humanistic one - from the philosophical perspective.

The first part of the book, titled Metaphysics, deals with metaphysical boundaries of biomedical and humanistic models. "Medical Worldviews" is the title of the first chapter and the starting point for the Marcum's entire project. He discusses metaphysical positions (mechanistic monism, dualism and holism), metaphysical presuppositions (reductionism and emergentism) and ontological commitments (physicalism/materialism and organicism) which are embedded in both mentioned models. The second chapter, "Medical Causation and Realism" concerns two major metaphysical problems in medicine: the nature of medical causation and the problem of the existence of objects in medicine. The third chapter, "Patient as Body or Person", as it is indicated by its title brings in focus the debate about the nature of human being, specifically as a patient. Further two debates are brought in the next chapter - "Disease or Illness and

Health or Wellbeing". Marcum questions what should be the main goals of medical practitioners: to struggle with disease or with illness, and, parallel, to promote health or to promote wellbeing. The final chapter of the first part investigates "Diagnosis and Therapeutics" from metaphysical point of view, trying to reveal metaphysical presuppositions beneath the modern diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

The second part of the book, Epistemology, is concerned with the epistemology of medicine. Hence, the sixth chapter discusses the nature of "Medical thinking". Under the realm of objective thinking, Marcum investigates the medical rationalism and medical empiricism, but also the place of logical reasoning (frequentist and Bayesian statistics) in medicine. Under the realm of subjective thinking Marcum critically examines the place and the function of intuition, values, virtues and narrative reasoning in medicine. In chapter seven, Marcum is focused on "Clinical Judging and Decision Making" and he tries to provide answers to the questions: is clinical judging subjective or objective, is medicine art or science, which are the tacit dimensions of clinical judgment, should the phronetic or narrative reasoning be used and what is a good clinical judgment. As part of this chapter he also gives an analysis of the process of clinical decision making. The next chapter, "Medical Explanations", brings into focus one of the greatest epistemological problems in medicine: the nature of explanation in medicine. Marcum presents a few models of explanations (covering law, causal, inference to the best explanation, functional, narrative) critically discussing their scope in medicine. Probably the most demanding chapters are the following two, which include the discussion of the nature of medical knowledge. Chapter nine, "Diagnostic Knowledge", provides an overview of what diagnostic knowledge is, which are the main sorts of it and how the justification for every of them is provided. Chapter ten, "Therapeutic Knowledge", is an analysis of the character of biomedical research with special commentary about narrative therapeutics. In both chapters concerning the medical knowledge special attention is paid to the place and significance of biomedical technology.

The third part of the book, *Ethics*, is the largest one. In chapter eleven Marcum speaks about "Medical Axiology and Values", presenting the axiology as the "science of value" and giving brief overview of what is meant by the term "value". He, finally, provides an examination of medical axiology, focusing on two main values in medicine: health (in re-

lation to wellbeing) and disease (in relation to illness). Chapter twelve is an overview of "Origins of Bioethics and Normative Ethics". After a short presentation of the birth of bioethics, primarily seen in relation to medicine, Marcum gives an overview of the main ethical theories sorted in four groups: absolute ethical theories (deontological theories, divine command theory and natural law theory), relative ethical theories (ethical subjectivism, cultural ethical relativism and ethical egoism), consequentialism and situationism (utilitarianism and situation ethics), and alternative ethical theories (virtue ethics, evolutionary ethics). The whole thirteenth chapter, "Principlism and the Future and Bioethics" is dedicated to the explication of principlism and the enormous impact of Beauchamp and Childress' book (Principles of Biomedical Ethics) to bioethics. At the end of the chapter, in relation to the challenges posed by alternatives to principlism, Marcum gives a brief thought about the future development of bioethics. In chapter fourteen, "Emotionally Detached Concern or Emphatic Care", Marcum brings into discussion probably one of the greatest dilemmas in modern medical practice. After the critical assessment of the notion of emotionally detached concern, he examines the meaning of the emphatic care, elucidating two notions: empathy and caring, and presenting the idea of ethic of care. The final chapter discusses the "Patient-Physician Relationships" through three main categories: physician-centred models (authoritarian models and mechanistic models), patient-centred models (legal models and business models) and mutual models (partnership models, covenant model and friendship model).

Marcum finishes the book with section titled "Conclusion: What Is Medicine?". First, he examines the old dilemma: is medicine an art, or a science, or even some distinct intermediate discipline? Second, he presents and elaborates the new mode of this old dilemma presented through the following question: should medicine be evidence-based or patient-centred, or are there some alternatives (narrative-based and value-based medicine)? Finally, Marcum provides his own answer to the problem of the way of humanizing modern medicine, especially concerning quality-of-care-crisis as it is the one in American medicine today. For him the resolution is in the connection of medicine with its pathos: "For the underlying problem, especially for American medicine, it is that its logos (rationality) and ethos (character) are severed from its pathos (passion)." (p. 315) He gives a twofold answer to the question "how can rooting of logos and ethos in pathos affect change in the healthcare industry, from

a philosophical perspective?": "First, pathos can transform the logos of technique, facts, objective knowledge, and subjective information into wisdom, a complete or comprehensive wisdom that can discern the best and appropriate way of being and acting for both the patient and the physician. Second, pathos can transform the ethos of the biomedical physician's emotionally detached concern or even the humanistic physician's empathic care into a love that is both tender and unrestricted." (pp. 315–316) Till the end of the final section he explains the notion of pathos and its function in gaining wisdom and love as necessary conditions for humane medicine.

Marcum's book is an impressive presentation and elaboration of current prevalence of the biomedical model in theory and practice of medicine, but also painstaking enterprise of showing possible alternatives, achievements and efforts in the last three and more decades in humanizing medical theory and practice. Every chapter of the book starts with features (metaphysical, epistemological or ethical) of the biomedical model and finishes with the possible alternatives and forms of (more) humane models. At the end of the book, Marcum provides a fresh and original thought about the possible framework of resolution of so many different debates in the philosophy of medicine.

Every chapter gives an insightful, clear and analytically presented part of the vast horizon of philosophy of medicine. Thus, each of the chapters could be read as a rounded whole, but all of them together are engaged in a unique mode of introducing the reader in the variety of problems and efforts of their solving which architecture the philosophy of medicine as a special field of investigation. Every chapter also has a "Summary", but it is important to

notice that these summaries are not merely some technical and formal sketches, but the important additions, which bring many significant author's concluding remarks.

Finally, it is fair to mention some technical information. Marcum provided a very usable "Glossary" with 73 terms as an addition to the book. Moreover, he listed more than 830 (!) used references in the "Bibliography". At the end of the book he also gives an extensive general "Index" with main names, terms and problems. These "technical" additions to the book have made the book much more usable, especially for the readers who enter into the investigation of the philosophy of medicine.

Taking all together, it could be said without any doubt that Marcum's book is probably the best written handbook on the philosophy of medicine, but also an extremely usable textbook for teachers and students at the different faculties, but primarily on medical faculties. An additional reason for this claim is the clarity of the book which is inevitably achieved thanks to, at least partially, the author's specific education and training: James Marcum has, chronologically, gained B.S.Ed. in Biology, M.S. in Zoology, Ph.D. in Physiology, M.A.T.S. in Theology, M.A. in Philosophy and Ph.D. in Philosophy. An expert with wide interests both in philosophy and medicine is reflected in every chapter of the book.

This book is the 99th issue of the Series *Philosophy and Medicine* published by Springer, and it can be considered a crown of thirty years of intensive and dynamic discussion in the field. We are completely convinced that after its publication, it can be finally said that undoubtedly the philosophy of medicine exists as a special field of inquiry.

Igor Eterović

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- J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 120.
- H.L. Dreyfus, "The Current Relevance of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Embodiment", p. 38.

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- [für einen Sammelband] Hans Lenk (Hg.), Wissenschaft und Ethik, Reclam, Stuttgart 1991.
- [für einen Zeitschriftenartikel] Richard Wisser, "Hegel und Heidegger, oder: die Wende vom Denken des Denkens zum Seinsdenken", Synthesis philosophica 4 (2/1987), S. 301–326.
- [für einen Artikel aus einem Sammelband oder ein Buchkapitel] Vittorio Hösle, "Ontologie und Ethik bei Hans Jonas", in: Dietrich Böhler (Hg.), Ethik für die Zukunft. Im Diskurs mit Hans Jonas, Beck, München 1994, S. 105–125.
- [für E-Texte] Jürgen Mittelstraß, "Glanz und Elend der Geisteswissenschaften", http://docserver.bis.uni-oldenburg.de/publikationen/bisverlag/unireden/ur27/dokument.pdf. Eingesehen am 02, 03, 2008.

Sind Titel und Untertitel eines Buches oder eines Artikels nicht durch ein Satzzeichen getrennt, muss beim Zitieren nach dem Titel ein Punkt gesetzt und der Untertitel am Anfang mit einem Großbuchstaben begonnen werden:

- Hans-Georg Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik
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- E. Bloch, Geist der Utopie, S. 32.
- R. Wisser, "Hegel und Heidegger, oder: die Wende vom Denken des Denkens zum Seinsdenken", S. 304.

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- Ibid., S. 312.

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- [pour un livre] Simone de Beauvoir, Le Deuxième Sexe, Gallimard, Paris 1949, p. 78.
- [pour un recueil] Rada Iveković & Jacques Poulain (éds.), Europe Inde Post-modernité. Pensée orientale et pensée occidentale, Noël Blandin, Paris 1992.
- [pour l'article d'une revue] Manfred Frank, « Comment fonder une morale aujourd'hui ? », *Synthesis philosophica* 3 (1/1987), p. 69–86.
- [pour l'article d'un recueil ou le chapitre d'un livre] Chantal Zabus, « Encre blanche et Afrique originelle. Derrida et la postcolonialité », in : Michel Lisse (éd.),
 Passions de la literature. Avec Jacques Derrida, Galilée, Paris 1996, p. 261–274.
- [pour la littérature sous forme électronique] Michel Foucault, « Qu'est-ce que les Lumières? », http://foucault.info/documents/whatIsEnlightenment/foucault.questcequeLesLumieres.fr.html. Consultée le 14 février 2009.

Au cas où le titre et le sous-titre du livre ou de l'article ne seraient pas séparés par des signes de ponctuation, le sous-titre doit être séparé du titre par un point et commencer par une majuscule :

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- S. de Beauvoir, Le Deuxième Sexe, p. 237.
- M. Frank, « Comment fonder une morale aujourd'hui ? », p. 81.

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- Ibid., p. 84.

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