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# Comments

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I wish to use this occasion to express gratitude to all the colleagues who participated at the *Jam Session* Conference, held in Rijeka on February 14th and 15th 2013. Since the occasion for the Conference was publication of my book, I feel obliged to comment these interesting and valuable works. In the following comments I will try to point out and comment the central claims of these papers, clarify my own views, and, to the extent it is possible, answer to critiques.

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## Nenad Miščević: "Colors of Life"

### *Absurd*

*"*Can we live with the absurd, as Camus and Nagel seem to want us to do? Unfortunately, [Berčić] offers little in the way of answer." That is right: I did not say much about the absurd. I thought it was for the obvious reason, but I did not say it. The reason is the following: meaninglessness seems to be a necessary condition for absurd. Absurd conceptually presupposes meaninglessness. Therefore, there is no point in discussing absurd before we settle the issue of meaninglessness. When is doing X absurd? When (1) X is meaningless, (2) we know that X is meaningless, (3) but nevertheless we do X. These three conditions might be taken as necessary and sufficient conditions for the absurd. Therefore, we should discuss absurd only if it turns out that our lives have no meaning, and that is the assumption that I do not accept. The question is what arguments that are supposed to show that our lives are meaningless really show. Do they really show that our lives are meaningless or they show that something goes wrong with our criteria of meaningfulness? Zeno's arguments do not really show that motion is impossible; they rather show that something is wrong with the way we think about the motion. Nevertheless, Camus and Nagel might be right about one thing: sometimes we do have a feeling that what we do is absurd. What to do with that feeling? How to explain that? Is that

feeling at least sometimes appropriate reaction? If it is, what does it stand for? What do we detect when we feel the absurd? This way of dealing with the absurd may fit very well Nenad's "response intentionalism". Of course, the feeling of absurd might be caused by something else: we can be just tired, we can find out that our plans were bad, we can discover that we slave to habits, etc. A guy who every morning gets up out of the same bad, takes the same bus, goes to the same office, does the same job, … is probably just tired, he need not be meaningless. We should not conflate a lack of meaning with the lack of immediate motivational force. We should be careful with Camus' and Nagel's examples. Nevertheless, maybe the feeling of absurd really stands for something, something philosophically and existentially important.

## *Coherentism*

Nenad raises very interesting point about coherentism. I do embrace coherentism in respect to practical rationality, for it seems that coherentism offers a better picture of the logical structure of our reasons for acting. Nenad says: "Berčić leaves open the issue of what kind of coherence is required". That is true, I did not offer and elaborated a theory but I had in mind the following points: (1) there is no such thing as *summum bonum*, (2) our actions can have both instrumental and intrinsic value, (3) as long as they are independently valuable, they can be mutually supporting. However, as Nenad rightly points out: "Coherentism points to connections between the items in the plurality, and derives justification of particular items from the coherence of the whole." This certainly is the central or at least one of the central tenets of coherentism. However, that was not what I had in mind. Some coherence is required in our life plans, there is no doubt about that, but some activities can be unconnected to others. For example, there is no need for a link between somebody's profession and hobby. Professional sailor can sail for fun as well just as he can climb mountains or play poker; engineer can fix cars for fun just as he can listen to opera. One philosopher listens music for fun *because* he already reads too much, another one runs *because* he needs a physical activity, a third one has a dog *because* he likes animals, etc. It is hard to say how coherence exactly works here. What *because* stands for? In first two cases there seems to be some link between profession and hobby, in the third one not. These days one might be tempted to say that coherence in fact amounts to the *narrative*: a certain activity would be justified iff it could be included into the single life-story. Of course, without further requirements such a criterion would be useless because anything can be a part of a single life-story. What we need is a normative criterion that would recommend some things and ban others. Nenad proposes "that the coherence can be achieved

through a unity of purpose; only one thing matters, and it colors the rest." Dedication to a single cause in a sense can provide coherence in one's life. However, in this context this is a surprising proposal because in its nature it is closer to foundationalism than it is to coherentism. Unity of purpose just is the *summum bonum* picture. The purpose is the ultimate answer that stops the Why? Why? Why? regress. Of course, we can build a hybrid picture where the purpose is not the only valuable thing but rather the most valuable thing among many other valuable things. However, there might a problem with a hybrid picture. I am afraid that once we allow other things in life to have some value, it will be hard to show that there is a single thing that overwhelms all others. I guess that coherentistic pluralistic model would rather lead us to the classical ancient picture of a good life where all aspects of personality are equally developed. Coherentism pluralism by its nature is not a good ground for unity of purpose model. Besides, there is a general objection to the unity of purpose model. Would you like that your daughter lives like Mother Theresa or that your son ends up like Ian Palach? And this is exactly Nenad's rhetorical question about Jimmy, at the beginning of his paper.

### *Normative and meta-ethical*

Nenad is right when he categorizes my analysis as normative, it is normative. However, it has very strong implication at the meta-level. In the picture that I presented, question about the meaning of life completely amounts to the question about the logical structure of our reasons for acting. If this is so, then something vague and mysterious as meaning of life is reduced to something more mundane and clear. One of the values, in my opinion the primary value, of Scanlon's Buck passing account is that he did get rid of occult entities like Plato's Idea of Good or Moore's Intrinsic Good. Due to Scanlon we have account of what Good is without any metaphysics. Though it is true that I do "not explicitly take a stance in favor of it."

### *Response Intentionalism*

In analogy with response-dependent analysis of secondary qualities, Nenad develops Response Intentionalism about meaningfulness: "Being meaningful in objective sense is being such as to cause the experiential response of meaningfulness in slightly idealized, suitably sensitive observers under suitable circumstances." Here we have a clear case of Eutyphro's dilemma: Is X a meaningful action because an emotionally and intellectually normal person would experience X as a meaningful action or an emotionally and intellectually normal person would experience X

as a meaningful action because X is a meaningful action? Nenad defends the first horn, I am skeptical about it. I am more inclined to the view that experience of meaningfulness is a *detection* rather than a *projection*. Assume, as a common starting point, that meaningful actions have meaningful-making-characteristics: action X is meaningful because it has characteristics A, B, and C. An emotionally and intellectually normal person, faced with X, has experience of meaningfulness. Now, the question is what makes X meaningful, the fact that normal person experiences X as meaningful or the fact that X has characteristics A, B, and C? Say that after a lunch we take a walk around the Bled lake. Is it a meaningful thing to do? Yes it is, the nature is very nice, the weather is fine, it is healthy to walk after a meal, at the conference we sit a whole day so we need a physical activity, we have nothing better to do until the afternoon session, we will have an excellent company because nice and friendly colleagues go as well, etc. Of course that emotionally and intellectually normal person would experience such a walk as a meaningful activity. But what makes the walk meaningful is not that fact that normal person would experience it as meaningful, what makes it meaningful is the fact that the nature is very nice, that we sit a whole day, etc. Experience of meaningfulness is *appropriate reaction* to objectively existing features, not something constitutive for meaningfulness. Also, there is a further disanalogy between color perception and experience of meaningfulness. In color perception there are no reasons while there are reasons in meaningfulness: we justify our actions to ourselves and to others, successfully or not. There is Why? in justification of action. In color perception there is no Why? there is only Look again! Meaningfulness of actions is a matter of justification, color perception is a matter of perception.

## Dušan Dožudić: "Realism, Probability, and the Best Explanation"

### *Two arguments*

Duško says that my defense of Realism is grounded in two arguments: first, that Realism is far more probable theory than Antirealism and, second, that although Antirealism offers some explanation of our experience, Realism is the best explanation of our experience. In fact, there is only one argument here. Duško quotes a paragraph (p.119, Vol.II) but in that paragraph I was rhetorically insisting on the high probability of Realism because I was presenting the position of the so called Critical Realism, as opposed to the Naive Realism. A Naive Realist takes our statements about the external world at face value; he takes them as obvious and unquestionable truths. On the other hand, a Critical Realist believes that they are not

true at face value but rather highly probable, veeeeeeeery likely true. For Critical Realist our beliefs about sticks and stones are empirical hypotheses, not unquestionable rock bottom of our knowledge. So, talk about high probability was not meant as a separate argument for realism, it was meant as a clarification of the thesis of Critical Realism. Two reconstructions of arguments that Duško offered are rather two ways of reconstructing one and the same argument.

## *Probability*

Probability obviously plays a crucial role in the argument for Realism. But why would we believe that Realism is more probable option? Although it would be very hard to calculate the exact probability of Realism we can rely on the folk wisdom "If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck." This folk wisdom is an obvious instance of Inference to the Best Explanation. The assumption that it really is a duck explains why it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck. The same holds for the world as a whole: if it looks real, tastes real, sounds real, … then it probably is real! It might be interesting to note that reliability of the Inference to the Best Explanation can depend on the environment. Different environments dictate different prior probabilities and therefore yield different degrees of the reliability of the inference. The duck-inference is more reliable in a national park than it is in a very advanced toy factory. For the same reason, BIV hypothesis has lower probability in the actual world than it would have in a world with tens of thousands of successfully manipulated brains in a vat. That's why (in the actual world) makes perfect sense to exclaim "Brain in vat? Oh, come on! Have you ever seen one of these? Where is the scientist who can successfully generate a complete picture of the reality?" That's why the BIV hypothesis is only theoretically possible, it is not really possible. And to say that is just to say that it has a veeeeery low probability. Polish prince in Calderon della Barca's *La vida es sueno* is a different story. His available evidence is such that he should take seriously the option that life is a dream. But our available evidence (in the actual world) is such that we should take Realism as a veeeeery likely hypothesis.

There exists another famous approach to the probability issue, the Molyneux's Problem. How come that different senses yield systematically consistent results? How come that the same object that we see as a cube we also touch as a cube? How come that sight and touch coincide? Realist offers the obvious answer: Because there really is a cube out there! Because there exists a mind independent physical object that we detect with our senses! On the other hand, the Antirealist is in trouble here: if there is no mind independent object out there, how come that our senses coincide?

Who tuned up our senses if there is no mind independent cube out there? The probability that our senses would coincide in the absence of mind independent cube is very low. On the other hand, in the presence of a mind independent cube the probability that our senses would coincide is very high. In that case, the coincidence of different senses is something to be expected. Again, we are dealing with the Inference to the Best Explanation: the assumption that there really is a mind independent cube out there is the best explanation of the fact that our senses systematically coincide.

### *Who begs the question?*

Duško argues, or at least some of his formulations suggest that he argues, that in the Realism/Antirealism debate we should not use usual patterns of reasoning like Inference to the Best Explanation or Probabilistic reasoning in general. He believes that these patterns of reasoning are valid within the empirical domain but not applicable when we stand outside of the empirical domain, that is, when we question the empirical domain as a whole. Therefore, the Realist is not allowed to rely on such usual patterns of reasoning in the context of the general metaphysical debate because he would beg the question against the Antirealist. In the same way, some people argued that Realist is not allowed to rely on the idea of causation because he would beg the question against the Antirealist who does not share that idea. According to this view, Realist is allowed to use Inference to the Best Explanation when he builds his theory, his world-view if you want, but he is not allowed to use it at the meta-level, when he tries to show that his theory is better than Antirealism. In other words, usual patterns of reasoning are allowed in building metaphysical theories, but are not allowed when we compare different metaphysical theories. This is certainly an interesting and intriguing idea, but in my opinion, it is completely wrong. If Inference to the Best Explanation and other "mundane" patterns of reasoning are good in physics, chemistry, criminal investigations, gardening, fixing cars and computers, … why wouldn't they be good in metaphysics? If they are good in other domains of life, why wouldn't they be good in metaphysical disputes as well? If somebody wants to restrict their validity to empirical domain, then he has to justify that restriction. He is the one who has the burden of proof. Also, what about deductive reasoning? Should we ban the deductive reasoning in metaphysical disputes? Some people do that. They claim that in metaphysical or theological discussions we should go "beyond truth" or "transcend truth", that is, that we should abandon logic. Of course, this would be the end of rational discussion, or any discussion at all. Duško does not want this, since he rejects Antirealism on grounds of internal inconsistency. After all, Realism/Antirealism dispute is *a factual dispute*: we want to know which features of the world are mind

independent and which are mind dependent, and that is a factual question. McTaggart's claim that space, time and matter are illusions and that the only things that really exist are spiritual entities that directly communicate is also a factual claim. Therefore, in judging different metaphysical theories we should use all the tools that we usually use in factual reasoning. In his argument, Duško appeals to Kuhn's thesis of incommensurability. Duško believes that metaphysical theories are radically incommensurable and completely underdetermined by empirical evidence. I doubt that; as we saw earlier, the Molyneux's Problem can be taken as *experimentum crucius*. Also, there is a huge evidence from cognitive science, and some results fit one general metaphysical theory better than another.

Along the lines of Duško's argument, one might argue that all possible evidence is irrelevant by assumption: since we want to explain evidence, we should not rely on it. That is what skeptic tries to do. However, there is no vicious circularity here: if we want to explain a particular piece of evidence $E_1$ then we should not rely on $E_1$ but we can rely on other pieces of evidence $E_2$, $E_3$, etc. Particular perception can be justified by appeal to the general reliability of one's perception. That is not circular. What about cases like BIV hypothesis or Evil Demon hypothesis where all of our experience is questioned at once? Can we justify our experience by appeal to our experience? Yes, we can, but not directly. Here we have to have in mind that there is a big difference between *being in accordance* with experience and *explaining* experience. BIV hypothesis and Evil Demon hypothesis are by assumption in accordance with our experience. However, we have right to reject them because they offer veeeery poor explanation of it. They are obviously *ad hoc* and we have a right to exclude any *ad hoc* hypothesis, no matter whether it is mundane or metaphysical.

## Luca Malatesti: "Zombies, Uniformity of Nature, and Contingent Physicalism"

### *Two arguments*

Luca argues that my "second defense of physicalism cannot be combined consistently with the first one". I think it can. The first one is that it is questionable whether zombies are really conceivable. The second one is that even if zombies were conceivable it would not matter because physicalism is an *a posteriori* contingent thesis. These two arguments, at least at the first glance, seem to be perfectly consistent. However, Luca argues that the first argument relies on the strong modal necessity of the principle of uniformity of nature and that such a necessity is not consistent with the view that physicalism is a contingent thesis. Still, the arguments are

consistent in the sense that if one does not work, the other one does, but if Luca is right, they are not consistent in the sense that they can both be true at the same time. However, it seems that they might be consistent in the second sense as well. Principle of uniformity of nature is *metaphysically* necessary while physicalism is *epistemically* contingent. When we say that same causes bring about same effects what we have in mind is that *it has to be so*. But when we say that mental states could have been non-physical what we have in mind is that *for all we knew* mental states could have been non-physical. In the same way, it is metaphysically necessary but epistemically contingent that water is $H_2O$. For all we knew, water could have been an element or had a different chemical formula.

## *Conceivability and Possibility*

Let me use this opportunity and say few more words about conceivability and possibility. Is conceivability a reliable guide to possibility? Many people assume that it is. We can conceive a golden mountain or a flying horse, therefore, they are possible. We cannot conceive a round square or a wooden iron, therefore, they are not possible. It seems that conceivability works in the following way. We have a concept A and a concept B. If we can join them without a contradiction, AB is possible. If we cannot join them without a contradiction, AB is not possible. As far as I can see, there are two problems with this picture:

(1) How much is included into concepts?

(2) Are there other *a priori* considerations that exclude the possibility?

My favorite example of the first problem is wooden MIG 29.[1] Did you know that Russians made a completely wooden jet airplane so that Americans could not see it on a radar? It is completely made of wood, everything is made of wood, electric installations, jet engine, guns, … everything. Is it conceivable that such a plain flies around? Is it conceptually impossible, physically impossible, or just technically impossible? Is wooden MIG a contradiction? Wood is insulator so no electrical installations can be made of it. But, is "being insulator" part of the concept "wood"? Jet engine cannot be made of wood because it would burn immediately. But is "burns at 350$^{o}$C" part of the concept of "wood" or just empirical truth about wood? I do not know how to give a conclusive answer to this question. Obviously, the answer depends on how much is included in concepts. If we take concepts "wood" and "jet engine" in their *thick* or *wide* sense, a wooden MIG is a contradiction. If we take these concepts in their *thin* or *narrow* sense, it is not a contradiction but merely a technical impossibility. In Croatian

[1] The example is given by Marin Biondić.

language, there is a saying "dry rag at the bottom of the sea" (suha krpa na dnu mora). It is used to express impossibility. But does it express a conceptual or a factual impossibility? Of course, the answer depends on whether absorbing liquid is a conceptual truth about textile. So, again, if we take concepts in a narrow sense, it expresses a factual impossibility. If we take concepts in a wide sense, it expresses a conceptual impossibility. Correspondingly, we can talk about *narrow* and *wide* conceivability. A wooden MIG and a dry rag at the bottom of the sea are narrowly conceivable but not widely conceivable. We can generalize these examples and conclude that narrow conceivability is a poor guide to the possibility while wide conceivability can provide insight into the possibility.

However, sometimes even if we can join A and B without contradiction at some superficial level, we cannot really join A and B. Take, for instance, a talking cow. It seems that we can join concepts of cow and of talking. After all, there are fables and we have no problems understanding them. But can you say that you spent a whole afternoon in a nice chat with a cow? You were in Little Café, had two cappuccinos, had sun, and discussed in detail sport, weather and politics. But was that really a cow? Does somebody who could say something like that really know what a word "cow" means? One could rightly say that our concept of cow is such that cows cannot talk.

It seems that the absence of a direct contradiction between A and B is not sufficient for the conceivability of AB. Other *a priori* principles and insights can show that AB is not conceivable. Take for instance time travel: concepts of time and of travel yield no immediate contradiction. Time travel seems to be equally consistent like space travel. *Prima facie,* there seems to be no problem with the conceivability of the time travel. We can talk about it, we can imagine ourselves to visit different times, we can watch films about it, etc. *Terminator* travels through time, in *Star Trek* they have time police, etc. However, the infamous paradox of patricide is supposed to show that time travel is not possible: if time travel were possible then one could travel back in time and kill one's father before he begat him, and that is paradoxical. This is a *reductio* argument: if assumption that $p$ is possible leads to the contradiction, $p$ is not possible. Sound or not, paradox of patricide is an *a priori* argument which shows that time travel is not conceivable. Philosophical discussion about the possibility of time-travel just is the discussion about its conceivability. Or, take the example of travel through different possible worlds. Philosophers know that it is not possible, but we have no problems watching and understanding *Mirror Mirror* episode of Star Trek. Does it show that travel through different possible worlds is conceivable and therefore possible? No! I think that the same holds for philosophical zombies.

## *Uniformity of Nature*

I am very glad that Luca pressed the point about the Uniformity of Nature because I think it is the strongest argument against the conceivability of zombies. For the conceivability of AB it is not sufficient that concepts of A and B do not yield an immediate contradiction. There are other *a priori* principles and insights that can exclude the conceivability and therefore the possibility of AB. In my opinion, one of them certainly is the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature. Luca offered three reconstructions of the argument. I like the third reconstruction, that is what I had in mind, and I doubt that I would work it out in a better way. According to Luca, in its third reconstruction "argument is valid and it is not question begging." I hope Luca is right about this. But let me try to clarify the problem with the first formulation. Luca claims about the first reconstruction that "argument is invalid because proposition 4 does not follow logically from 1 and 2 given that premises are *a posteriori* and they should be both *a priori*." Proposition 4 is "*A priori* we know that an instantiation *P* causes an instantiation of *Q* in the zombie world". I do not like 4 and I hope it does not have to be a part of the argument. We do not know *a priori* that P causes Q, we know that *a posteriori*. But what we know *a priori* is that:

If P causes Q then it is not possible that P and not-Q.

This is also a strong claim but it seems that nothing weaker can express the intuition behind the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature. As Luca noticed: "it is important to recognize that Berčić, in order to block the metaphysical possibility of zombies needs to state it in a quite strong modal form." Though, the claim seems to be plausible. Take the example of the BMW240td engine. We do not know *a priori* how many horse powers engine has, but we know *a priori* that it is not possible that one engine has 150 HP and that other perfectly similar has 109 HP. We know *a priori* that, if two engines are really exactly alike, they must either both have 150HP or both 109HP, they must have exactly the same strength. Rejecting premise 4, Luca claims that "there is *no a priori* accessible logical contradiction in thinking that *P* might not have caused *Q* or whichever of its effects." This is true, but it does not exclude the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature. It is logically possible that BMW240td engine could have had more or less HP's but it is not possible that two exactly same engines have a different number of HP's. It seems that we are dealing with two different notion of possibility here. First possibility is conceptual: our concepts do not tell us how strong the engine is. While the second possibility seems to be metaphysical: if P causes Q in the first case and if two cases are exactly alike then P has to cause Q in the second case as well. I

think the same holds for zombies. As far as our concepts are concerned, zombies are possible, but they are not possible if we take into considerations other *a priori* principles and insights. And since proper conceivability has to take into account other *a priori* principles and insights, we have to conclude that zombies are not conceivable.

## Tvrtko Jolić: "Moral Responsibility and Group Agents"

Tvrtko raised an interesting issue, the issue of collective responsibility. Although I have a relatively large chapter on moral responsibility, I did not mention collective responsibility at all. Tvrtko believes that not only individuals, but also collectives have moral responsibility. In a sense, this is obviously true. Philosophically interesting work is to explicate the criteria and underlying assumptions of collective responsibility. Since I did not work on the problem, I can only make a few nonqualified and general suggestions.

### *Groups*

First of all, when we should count a group of people as a group in a relevant sense? Groups with clear structures like army, corporation, state, etc. clearly are groups in a relevant sense. Tribes and gangs as well. However, the question is what is the minimal requirement for a group to be a group. People that just randomly happen to be at the same place at the same time do not form a group. They must meet a certain criterion to become a group. They must have either the same beliefs, or the same values, or the same intentions, … they must have something relevant in common to become a group. One might say that passengers of *United Airlines Flight 93* tragically but heroically became a group in a relevant sense when they tried to regain the control over their airplane. Probably not all of them fought the terrorists but it is reasonable to assume that in these moments they were all at the same side. That is to say that they had the same goal, the same aim, or the same intention. And that is what made them a group in a relevant sense. In this context, the following might be very interesting: if the same goal is what makes a bunch of people a group, then the same criterion that makes them a group makes them morally responsible. So, as soon as group comes into existence, it has moral responsibility. One might claim that groups are morally responsible by their very nature. This should not be so surprising since as soon as one is an agent, no matter whether individual or collective, one is morally responsible. And we may say that one is an agent as soon as one has an aim.

### *Methodological individualism*

On the one hand, there obviously are groups: there are military brigades, sport clubs, business companies, tribes, classes, gangs, ethnic groups, etc. They just seem to be a part of our ontic commitment. On the other hand, we do not want to have any mysterious entities over and above individual people and individual actions. So, the question is whether wholes are reducible without remainder to their parts. It is usually said that whole is more than the sum of its parts in the sense that whole has causal powers that its parts do not have. *Schell* can drill oil in the Nord Sea but tens of thousands of its employees cannot do that as tens of thousands of individual citizens. A criminal organization can racket shops in town but thirty individual criminals cannot do that. A trade union can press capitalist to increase wages but tens of thousands of individual workers cannot do that. Etc. So, one can say that in this sense groups are something over and above its individual members. Do we abandon the central tenet of methodological individualism here? I don't think so. But even if we do, so be it.

### *Assassin*

Assume that UDBA'a agent Jozo assassinated a political emigrant. Obviously, UDBA is responsible for the assassination but the question is on which criterion do we rely when we claim that. When is a collective responsible? The *prima facie* obvious criterion that Tvrtko relies on in his paper is *being replaceable*: if Jozo did not do it Jure would have done it, if Jure would not have done it Božo would had done it, etc. If Jozo did not want to do it they would have sent other guy. So it seems that the criterion for collective responsibility is the following:

> A collective C is responsible for its member's action X iff one of its members did not do it the other one would have done it.

However, this seems to be faulty. Assume that the only guy who was able to do it was Jozo. In the circumstances he was irreplaceable: other guys were not available, only he was skillful enough to do it, only he knew the victim, etc. But even if Jozo was irreplaceable in the circumstances, UDBA would still be equally responsible. It seems that it is irrelevant whether UDBA had only one guy capable of doing it or twenty five guys. They sent him and they are responsible because they sent him, not because they could have sent somebody else. Obviously, UDBA can be responsible for the assassination only if Jozo did not act on his own. The victim did not trespass Jozo's property, did not seduce his wife, did not offend him, etc. Therefore, the only reason why Jozo did it was that he was a member of UDBA. Otherwise, Jozo would not have killed the emigrant. He did

not even know the victim. So, we might propose the following criterion of collective responsibility:

> A collective C is responsible for its member's action X iff its member would not have done it if he was not its member.

This criterion might be better but I am afraid that one could find counterexamples to this criterion as well. Being a member probably is not enough. I guess we can find situations where the mere fact of the membership enters into the explanation of the action without the intention of the collective and this seems to be the necessary condition of the responsibility. So, we might propose the following:

> A collective C is responsible for its member's action X iff C intended X and its member did it because of its intention.

Probably here one could find counterexamples based upon deviant causal chain from collective intention and individual action. But in my opinion the core should be in the causal relation between collective's intention and its member's individual action.

### *Individual responsibility of the immediate executors*

At the end of his paper, Tvrtko claims that collective responsibility does not diminish or annihilate responsibility of individuals who perform the action. That is, individuals who perform the action, even if they act as a part of the collective, remain completely responsible for their actions. However, this claim is puzzling. Assume it is legally questionable whether a large construction company has a right to destroy an old house. In such circumstances, the boss orders to the bulldozer operator to destroy it and he destroys it. What would you say, who is responsible for the destruction, operator or the boss? I doubt anybody would say that the bulldozer operator has a complete responsibility for the destruction of the old house. The boss has a responsibility or a company as a whole. However, it seems that in some cases the responsibility is primarily on the immediate executor of the action. Assume further that there is a family in the house and that they refuse to leave it even at the cost of their own lives. In such circumstances boss orders operator to destroy the house and he does it killing everybody inside. Now we would blame the operator, not only him, but probably primarily him. In the first scenario, the operator could say "It's not up to me to decide. My boss told me to do it and I did it. Don't ask me, ask him!" Of course, in the second scenario that would not be a good answer, nothing would be a good answer. The operator would be guilty for the death of the family. Therefore, it seems that he is not responsible when the thing is questionable and that he is responsible when the thing is obviously wrong.

There seems to be an obvious answer here: There are things that nobody should do under any circumstances! The same holds for a soldier who killed civilians because his superior ordered him to do it. However, in the cases where the action is not obviously wrong it seems that responsibility is not or at least is not primarily on the immediate executor of the action.

## *Shared responsibility*

Tvrtko argues that usual criteria for individual moral responsibility (being reason responsive and being subject to reactive attitudes) are appropriate criteria for collective moral responsibility as well. This seems plausible: the same criterion we apply to a single individual we apply to a single group. However, in the case of groups it seems that members have additional responsibility just because they are members of groups. Even members who are not individually responsible for certain action share a kind of responsibility for actions of other members of their group. How to explain that fact? Imagine that a 20 years old guy joins a neo-Nazi group today. He cannot be responsible for the *Holocaust* because he did not participate in it; he was born 50 years later. Nevertheless, it seems that we can and should blame him. But how can we blame somebody for something he himself did not do? I guess the answer has to be something along the following lines: (1) he shares the same intention with those who really did it, (2) he has the same values as those who really did it, (3) he identifies with those who really did it, (4) he would do the same only if he could, etc. In any case, since he did not do anything himself, we cannot blame his deeds but his character or his dispositions. In this sense, a member of a group can share responsibility for actions done by other members of a group. Of course, actions have to be related to the common cause of a group, otherwise there can be no shared responsibility. If a bird watcher poisons his wife, other members of the group cannot share any responsibility for his action because his action is not related to the common cause of the group. What is of primary interest in this context is whether this surplus, shared responsibility is reducible without any remainder to the individual responsibility. Assume that our 20 years old guy who joins neo-Nazis has a moral Doppelganger in the next town. The Doppelganger has the same values, identifies with the same causes, etc. but he is not joining the neo-Nazis because they do not have a branch in his town or because he had a flew at the day when they were accepting new members. Although they would be equally blameworthy for their character, dispositions, values and aims, it seems that the first one would have some shared responsibility that his Doppelganger would not have. The act of joining the group somehow links the individual to the moral credit history of the group. This holds for

cases where one explicitly and consciously joins the group. The next question is whether this hold for cases where one just happens to be a member of a group, say, by birth. Can the mere fact that he is born as a Brazilian or as a Russian put him in a special relationship to the moral credit history of his nation? What sense does it make to claim that all Croats are proud on the successes of Blanka Vlašić and Sandra Perković? How can I be proud on something that somebody else did? How can one member of a large collective be proud on or ashamed of something that other member did? Only under the assumption that there is a collective moral credit history and that all members of the collective participate in it. This is a very strange assumption. It is not clear how it could be true, but people rely on it in their reasoning, or at least they say they do. This assumption may lead to the caricature. Today a 70 years old US mother in law asks her 40 years old Japanese son in law who spent more than a half of his life in US: "Tell me! Please tell me! How could you? How could you do something like that? How could you bomb Pearl Harbor?" He is generally very polite and he did not say anything. But if I have a reason to be proud on the success of Sandra Perković, then he has a reason to be ashamed of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Are there really such reasons?

## *Exculpation of a group*

Groups often exculpate themselves out of collective guilt by punishing their guilty members. By punishing soldiers who killed civilians, armies show that killing civilians was not their intention. Criminal organizations punish their members who interfere in the territory of other organizations in order to avoid conflict with these organizations. In the practice of blood revenge, the bloodshed starts only if families do not punish their guilty members. This practice of exculpation is interesting. First of all, it shows that groups are aware of their collective responsibility. They accept it and act in accordance with it. And this shows that collective responsibility exists, at least in some sense. If something has causal power then it exists and, as we saw, collective responsibility has causal powers in a sense that people act in accordance with it. Of course, this does not show that collective responsibility exists like a physical or a geographical fact; it shows that it exists as a fact of human practice. One could even say that it is a convention but conventions are also real. Conventions exist because we accept them. We believe that others accept them and others believe that we accept them. We believe that others believe that we accept them and others believe that we believe that they believe that we accept them. This is how convention comes into existence. Maybe collective responsibility is one of such conventions.

## Marin Biondić: "Rational Fear and the Fear of Death"

### *Reasons and Emotions*

Epicurus' and Lucretius' arguments against the fear of death are very interesting. Among other things, they are interesting because they are put forward as *arguments against fear*. They are supposed to influence our emotions. But how can any argument influence emotions? Arguments are supposed to influence our beliefs, not our emotions. Arguments are arguments for or against propositions, they are supposed to show that propositions are true or false, not that we should be happy or unhappy about them. What is argument? It is a set of two or more propositions such that one of them is entailed by others. How can something like that influence our emotions? The relationship between reason and emotion is very interesting; it reveals a deep and important fact about human nature. Two well-known antipode models in the philosophy are Plato's Charioteer and Hume's Slave. Ultimately, the question whether arguments *can* influence emotions is a factual question and psychology should give the answer. However, there is also a normative aspect of the question and that is whether arguments *should* influence our emotions. Of course, given the "ought implies can" principle, discussion about the normative question presupposes affirmative answer to the factual question. It is true that we evaluate emotions. We talk about appropriate and inappropriate emotions. Pride, shame, remorse, guilt, etc. can be appropriate or inappropriate. We say that people should feel this or that way. And it seems that the evaluation of emotions has a corrective function, we believe that our criticism can improve emotional reactions, of others as well as of ourselves. Therefore, it seems that at least in this sense we can talk about rational and irrational fear.

### *Two fears?*

Marin relies on Murphy's definition of rational fear and argues that fear of premature death is rational while fear of the necessary fact of mortality is irrational. Therefore, we should be afraid of premature death while we should not be afraid of the fact that we are mortal. This view is certainly plausible and it is also healthy. Of course that we should avoid dangers, but we should avoid lamentation over the inevitable finitude of our existence as well. In a philosophical perspective, this view excludes as irrational things like *Angst*, existential trembling, *Sein-zum-Tode*, etc. People who experience existential *Angst* are not better off because they experience it, they are worse off. They are not psychologically healthy individuals. This feeling is irrational and one should not have it. Especially one should not try to ground a philosophical theory in it. The feeling of *Angst* is just an emotional disturbance, not a deep and important fact about the human

nature, not something that makes us human. However, there seems to be some open questions with the view that Marin defends.

We use the word "fear" for the fear of the immediate danger just as we use it for the general fear of human finitude. But do we talk about one and the same emotion here? The first fear has to be intense and immediate to move us away from the danger while the second one should rather be something like a mood of unpleasant melancholic contemplation. The second one, if there is such a thing at all, cannot and need not induce the fight-or-flight response. So, against which fear are directed standard Epicurus' and Lucretius' arguments? It seems that, if they work at all, they work against both kinds of fear. Remember, in *De Rerum Natura* Lucretius' argument from the symmetry of the prenatal and the postmortem inexistence is given by a military commander in the speech he gives to the soldiers immediately before the battle. So, Lucretius' argument is not given against the existential *Angst*, it is given against the fear of the immediate danger that is supposed to induce the fight-or-flight response. To close this question, even if we are here dealing with two very different emotions, Marin's view can be defended consistently. Of course, under the general assumption that emotions can be assessed rationally.

## *Instrumental criterion*

The second potential problem for the Marin's view is that his judgment about the rationality of the fear, and the emotions in general, relies on the Senecian instrumental criterion for the rationality of emotion. The idea is that emotions are rational if they can contribute to the rational behavior; they are irrational if they cannot contribute to the rational behavior. If fear can help us avoid the danger, it is rational. If we feel it but it cannot induce any useful behavior, it is irrational. Murphy's example is the following. Imagine that we are in the same room with a hungry tiger. In that situation, fear would be completely rational because it would help us run away out of the room. Marin claims that, in the same way, the fear of the premature death is rational because there are things we can do to prevent it. On the other hand, the fear of the necessary fact of mortality is irrational because there is nothing we can do to prevent it. But the question is whether Senecian criterion is good. Imagine that we are locked in a room with a hungry tiger and that we are 100% sure that we cannot run away. I guess that we would be equally afraid. How could such a powerful, basic and probably hard-wired instinct as a fear for one's own life distinguish between situations that we can avoid and situations that we cannot avoid? It is plausible to suppose that such a mechanism works equally well in both kinds of situations. But even if equally intense in both cases, could we say that in

the second case the fear is irrational?[2] A Senecian answer would be that in the second case we would have no reason to be afraid because our fear would be useless. And this seems strange. It seems that in both cases the fear is justified by the danger that we face, not by the possibility or the impossibility of running away. Suppose the doctor tells you that you have an incurable lethal disease. Seneca would tell you that you have no reason for being afraid because there is no cure anyway. Since there is nothing you can do about it, you should not be afraid of it. However, this seems to be wrong. If something is bad for you then it is bad for you and you should be afraid of it, no matter whether you can prevent it or not. One might argue that the situation is even worse if you cannot prevent it and that you should be even more afraid. If this is so, then we should be equally, or even more, afraid of the necessary fact of our mortality than we are afraid of the premature death. Of course, the premature death is a tragedy while death at its natural time is not. It is certainly worse to go away before time than it is to go away in time. But the relevant point in the context of this discussion is that this judgment is probably grounded in different reasons, not in the Senecian instrumental criterion for the rationality of emotions.

## Iris Vidmar: "Philosophy and Literature on the World and People: The Same, Yet Not"

Iris wants to find out where is the borderline between philosophy and literature. In spite of the fact that they both have the same general subject matter—both are about man, world, and man's experience of the world—there seems to be a difference between the two. Iris wants to find out what this difference consists in. In order to do that, she goes through seven definitions of philosophy that I examine. However, it turns out that, at least to certain extent, literature satisfies any definition that philosophy satisfies. Hence, she concludes her paper with two claims: (1) philosophy is primarily about the *truth* of what is said while literature is primarily about *how* it is said, (2) the difference between philosophy and literature is a matter of degree and a sharp boundary between the two can be drawn only within the institutional framework. It is hard not to agree with Iris on

[2] In fact, we can say few things here. First, we can say, as Seneca would, that in the first case the fear is rational and that in the second one is irrational. Second, we can say that the fear is rational in both cases because it is in both cases induced by a reliable mechanism whose proper function is to enable quick behavioral reaction. So, according to this picture, a fear is rational iff it is induced by a generally reliable mechanism, no matter whether in the given circumstances we can or can not run away. Third, we can say that in such circumstances fear should not be judged as rational or irrational but rather as appropriate and inappropriate and claim that in both cases fear is appropriate and normal human reaction.

these two points. I doubt one could find a necessary and sufficient conditions or a *differentia specifica* for distinguishing philosophy and literature. In what follows I can only make a few points in favor of the view that Iris defends.

### *Philosophy in Literature and Literature in Philosophy*

On the one hand, in literature there are excellent philosophical insights. Robert Musil's *Der Mann ohne Eigenshaften*, Italo Svevo's *La coscienza di Zeno*, Luigi Pirandello's *Uno, nessuno e centomila* provide excellent insights into the nature of the self. Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* provides an excellent insight into the guilt and remorse. Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* and Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* contain argumentations from a theological seminar. On the other hand, philosophy sometimes has characteristics typical for the literature. Parmenides and Lucretius wrote poems. In principle, there is no reason why philosophy could not be done in a hexameter or in crowns of sonnets. Plato, Berkeley, Leibniz, Max Black and many other philosophers wrote in a form of a dialogue. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* can be seen as a narrative with a structure of a novel. Utopia can be seen as a literary genre. One might claim that Thomas More's *Utopia*, Tommaso Campanella's *La citta del Sole*, and Franjo Petrić's *Sretan grad* form a literary genre on its own. If somebody claimed that even a contemporary scientific article should be seen as a literary genre, I would not know how to contradict conclusively.

Good style is supposed to be a distinguishing mark of writers in literature, not of writers in philosophy. However, one can really enjoy the A.J. Ayer's style in his *Language, Truth, and Logic*, or Moritz Schlick's in his *Fragen der Ethik*, even Hans Reichenbach's style in *Experience and Prediction*. These guys were scientifically minded logical positivists but they knew how to write. Friedrich Nietzsche and Oscar Wilde both wrote in aphorisms although the first one belongs to philosophy while the second one belongs to literature.

Philosophy thought experiments can be very good plots for novels or films. We can easily imagine an action movie with Wesley Snipes or Jason Statham in the main role based upon the plot of Harry Frankfurt's thought experiment about Jones and Black, a famous counterexample to PAP in his 1969. paper "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility". We can easily imagine Robert Redford directing a socially engaged movie about the botanist Jim somewhere in the mountains of Latin America with a plot of Bernard Williams' thought experiment from his text "A Critique of Utilitarianism", from the 1973. book *Utilitarianism: For and Against*.

## *Cognitivism in Literature*

I believe that literature has a cognitive value. Although many people would take this position as *prima facie* obvious, it is not easy to specify what the cognitive value of literature exactly consists in. Talk about "expanding horizons", "deepening insights", or "developing sensitivity" seems to be appropriate and true, but is certainly not precise. Texts about cognitive value of literature often start with the question: "How can there be any truth in the literature when Sherlock Holmes, Akaky Akakievic, and others never existed?" I always had impression that the implicit assumption of this question is that the book with the highest cognitive value is a telephone book, for whatever is listed in it is true. Of course that fictious characters do not exist. But the cognitive value of literature certainly does not amount to the accurate description of the really existent people. The cognitive value of literary work is the same no matter whether protagonists really exist or not.[3] Shakespeare's *Schylock*, Molliere's *Harpagon*, or Držić's *Skup* do not describe really existent individuals, they describe really existing character trait. Of course, these characters are caricatures, but the augmented character trait is really existent. Abstraction is the capacity of considering one property independently of other properties and independently of the things that have this property. And this is how the knowledge gets off the ground. In this sense, chemistry is also about abstractions because in nature we rarely find chemically pure substances. Geometry is about abstractions because in nature there are no ideal geometrical figures. Physics as well, in nature there is no frictionless motion, there is no ideal gas or center of gravity. In the real world there is no ideally rational *homo economicus*. In sociology, Max Weber spoke about the ideal types. In psychology, C.G. Jung spoke about the archetypes. What else are *Schylock*, *Harpagon*, or *Skup* but the archetype of a miser? Causal powers of the character traits are revealed by the counterfactual reasoning about the archetype. In the same way, the cognitive value of fictious characters like *Raskolnikov*, *Captain Ahab* and *Emma Bovary* is not in describing really existing particular individuals. They are fictitious entities just as frictionless motion, ideal gas, or center of gravity. They are vehicles for counterfactual reasoning about different motives, outcomes of actions, reactions of others, different destinies if you want. Once we have a capacity of abstraction, it is irrelevant whether individuals are real or fictitious. And this is how literature can have a cognitive value. Now, the question is whether literature necessarily has a cognitive value, or at least, whether

[3] In a sense, there may be exceptions. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* describes a real event. And it seems that this fact gives it an additional value. A surplus value that documentary films have in respect to the played ones.

a good literature necessarily has a cognitive value. It is trivially true that a cognitive value of a literary work contributes to its overall value but the question is whether it contributes to its aesthetic value. One might claim that trivial literature has no cognitive value at all and that its only function is to entertain a reader. And this might be true. Story telling activity can have but need not have a cognitive value. After all, language has different functions. We can convey important truths. We can tell stories just for fun or for putting kids into the bed. But the relevant question here is whether trivial literature is trivial just because it lacks a cognitive value. Positive answer to this question implies that cognitive value is constitutive for a literary value, while a negative answer implies that it is only accidental.

## Miljana Milojević: "Functionally Extended Cognition"

Years ago Hintikka gave a lecture in Ljubljana. I think it was in the late 80s. Among other things, he claimed that he *knew* his friend's telephone number because he had the number written in his notebook and he always had his notebook in his pocket. (These days notebooks were still made of paper but an electronic device would do equally good for the purpose of this example.) He claimed that it is irrelevant whether he knew the number by hart or he had it in his notebook, in both cases he knew the number (*The Parity Principle*). It makes no difference whether the memory is in his brain or in his pocket, as soon as it is accessible within reasonable amount of time. Of course, the question was whether he would know Chinese as well if he had a good Chinese dictionary and grammar in his pocket. If I remember well, he did bite the bullet and said that, if he was skillful enough in using them and if they were available to him all the time, he would know Chinese. This idea is known as the hypothesis of *Extended Mind* or the hypothesis of *Extended Cognition*. I find the idea very intriguing. On the one hand, to have something in the mind and to have the same thing in the notebook cannot be the same thing. On the other hand, from a certain perspective, it really makes no difference whether the whole cognitive process is in the mind or there are parts that are external. In my opinion, the interesting job is to make that perspective explicit, that is, to find out in which sense our mind can be extended. Let me use Duško's example here, from his text on realism and antirealism in this volume: if a rock ends up within my head, it will not be within my head in the relevant sense.

### *Extended Cognition and Functionalism*

Miljana wants to find out whether the hypothesis of Extended Mind is compatible with Functionalism. She argues that "ExCog *can* be justified

as a *special* form of functionalism, that it is not trivial nor entailed by the known versions of functionalism, and that the accusation of it being too radical is unwarranted." The ExCog hypothesis really seems to fit well with Functionalism. For it makes no functional difference whether my friend's telephone number is in my mind or in my notebook, as long as I have my notebook with me. Physical instantiation is obviously different but the functional role seems to be the same. A wooden leg can play the same functional role as a normal leg, given that guy can walk reasonably well. This is why Functionalism seems to fit well with the hypothesis of the Extended Cognition. Further, a cognitive process is a causal process and whatever is a part of such a causal process is a part of the cognitive process itself. So, if notebooks, calculators, and iPhones have a causal role in the cognitive processes, then they are parts of the cognitive processes, they are parts of our minds. Although it is true that the general spirit of Functionalism fits well with the ExCog hypothesis, the question is what exactly we mean by functionalism. Miljana discusses this question in part 4 of her paper. She thinks that the role functionalism fits the best. I agree. However, I think that the crucial point here is who begs the question. If we understand functionalism as a means for individuating states that we already recognize as mental, then functionalism cannot be compatible with the ExCog hypothesis. But in that case, we would beg the question against the ExCog hypothesis. Also, if we understand functionalism as a means for individuating brain states that mental states are realized in, we again beg the question against the ExCog hypothesis. In both cases the decision about what is to be regarded as mental is prior of and independent of the decision to use a functional approach in individuating mental states and processes. Maybe we have good independent reasons for doing that; privileged access, direct awareness, unity of consciousness, functional wholes, etc. But these reasons are prior to and independent of the functional analysis of our cognitive processes. The functional analysis by itself seems to support the ExCog hypothesis: if notebooks, iPhones, etc. play roles in our cognitive processes, then they are literally parts of our minds. My impression is that all four arguments against the conjunction of Functionalism and the ExCog hypothesis in fact beg the question against it, they all seem to rely on independent intuitions.

## *Functional wholes*

The first point I want to make is that the ExCog hypothesis has its plausibility only if and only to extent that one makes a *functional whole* with its external devices. An old-fashioned paper notebook, a dictionary, an iPhone or the Internet can satisfy the Parity Principle only if they can

be regarded as parts of a functional whole with a person who is using them. Assume there are two objects, *a* and *b*. We can ask whether there is also a third object, a compound object *ab*. In my opinion, there is no *a priori* answer to this question. The answer depends on whether *a* and *b* hang together. If they systematically appear together, then there is a third object *ab*. The same holds for pairs of shoes, twin stars, or couples (boys and girls). We can say that kids who have their iPhones with them 24/7 became a functional wholes with their phones. But that is only a parent's lamentation, we do not really mean that. Perhaps it is sufficient that a person makes a functional whole with her external device during a single cognitive operation, not during longer periods of time. But in such cases the ExCog hypothesis seems rather like a metaphor. I am afraid that an external device must systematically have a functional role in a cognitive process in order to be regarded as a part of somebody's mind. If external devices only sporadically have a role in our cognitive processes, then it seems more appropriate to say that they are just devices that we use to ease our cognitive processes, not that they are literally parts of our minds.

## Danilo Šuster: "Tracking Without Concessions?"

"The second thing in the book which will impress those of us who are more cautious by nature is the number of exclamation marks scattered on the pages of book." Danilo is right. He is not exaggerating. There really are a lot of exclamation marks in the book. In the first volume, there are 873 exclamation marks, in the second volume, there are 551, and that makes 1424 exclamation marks in both volumes taken together. Danilo is critical of my exposition of Nozick's tracking analysis of knowledge and, I admit, he is right again. Although I offered a short explanation in a footnote 31, there is an element of oversimplification and unfairness in my exposition of Nozick's views. In fact, I lumped together two related but different problems. The first one is how to delineate relevant possible worlds for Nozick's analysis of knowledge. The second one is whether failure in a remote possible world can be relevant for the ascription of knowledge in the actual world.

### *Neighborhood* N

The question is how to specify the third condition in Nozick's definition. Should it be true in the (1) closest possible not-*p* world, (2) closest possible not-*p* worlds, or (3) not-*p* neighborhood of the actual world? Nozick himself is inclined to the third answer. Danilo is also inclined to the third answer. He believes the right definition of knowledge should be spelled out in terms of *modal stability*. What is modal stability? "A belief is mo-

dally stable if and only if it is sensitive in all of the worlds within neighborhood *N* of worlds not too far away from the actual world." Danilo is optimistic about the idea of modal stability because it "combines robustness (benefits of safety) with responsiveness to facts (benefits of sensitivity)." In fact, I share his optimism. Since systematic connection between truth and belief seems to be the very core of knowledge, modal stability or something similar to modal stability must grasp this core. In the idea of modal stability, Danilo combines safety and sensibility. I find this combination natural and plausible since safety and sensibility are just two sides of the same coin. Since conditions of safety and sensibility are supposed to rule out the possibilities of a lucky guess, they cannot be defined by appeal to a single possible world. They have to be defined by appeal to a relevant set or group of possible worlds. And this is why Danilo is right, we have to take into account a whole relevant neighborhood of the actual world.

Since I like Dretske-style examples, I would say that a good thermometer should be both safe and sensible. Or, take for example car commands: a gas pedal, a brake pedal, a steering wheel mechanism, etc. They are all good just in case they are both safe and sensible. However, although the idea is very appealing, the question is how to specify a neighborhood *N*. I doubt we will ever find out necessary and sufficient conditions for it, neither in terms of probability, nor in terms of closeness of possible world, nor in any other terms. Probably we will just have to rely on a good judgment. Consider the following knowledge puzzle: Do you know where your car is? Yes, you know where you have parked it. But do you know that you car is not stolen or towed away by the police? Hm! But if you do not know that your can is not stolen or towed away by the police, then you do not know where is your car! Now, the question is whether you know where your car is. And it seems that the answer might depend on how realistic these scenarios are. If you have left your car in a such neighborhood that theft or police removal are realistic possibilities (in a sense this is the Neighborhood *N*), then you do not know where your car is, even if it is exactly where you have parked it. If these scenarios are not realistic, then you know where your car is. Although there is always a theoretical possibility that your car is stolen or towed away by the police, merely theoretical possibility is not enough to disqualify your knowledge. What is needed to disqualify your knowledge is a realistic possibility. And this leads us to the second problem.

## *Concession*

Danilo wants tracking without concessions. In my exposition of Nozick's analysis of knowledge, I definitely made a concession to the skeptic. And

this is unfair to Nozick because Nozick himself does not make that concession. Partly I did it because I did not want to enter into the details of Nozick's theory, partly because I wanted to force reader to take skepticism seriously. Maybe both reasons are bad, but let me try to say something about the logic of the skeptical argument. In his argument skeptic relies on the closure principle. Roughly speaking, if one knows that $p$, and if one knows that $p \rightarrow q$, then one knows that $q$. So, if one knows that he/she has hands, then one knows that he/she is not brain in a vat. However, if one does not know that one is not brain in a vat, then one does not know that one has hands. The closure principle is essential to the skeptical argument. However, Nozick does not accept it. He asserts that the third condition of his definition (If $p$ were false, S would not believe it) holds for the closest possible not-$p$ worlds, or, as Danilo proposes, for the neighborhood $N$. What Danilo wants is *limited sensitivity*; however, skeptic wants *absolute sensitivity*. And this is the point of the skeptical argument: if you cannot exclude the possibility of being wrong in purely theoretical circumstances, you cannot know in the actual circumstances. And this is really annoying. How can a purely theoretical possibility of being wrong discredit knowledge in the actual situation? In other words, skeptic relies on the principle:

> One knows that $p$ in this world only if one knows that $p$ in all possible worlds.

This principle seems to be appropriate for the knowledge of necessary truths because they, by definition, hold in all possible worlds. This is Descartes' model of knowledge. But the question is whether we should apply this principle to contingent truths. It seems that we should not. Let me rely on two analogies here: a currency and a wrench. Assume that somebody argues that Croatian Kuna is not good in Croatia because it is not good in Patagonia or in Mongolia. If a currency is not good in a whole world, it is not good in any part of the world. And this is obviously a nonsense because Croatian Kuna is good in Croatia even if it is not good in Patagonia or Mongolia. Or, assume that somebody claims that a 17mm wrench is not good for 17mm bolts because it is not good for all the bolts. If a wrench is not good for all bolts, it is not good for any bolt. Obviously a nonsense, a 17mm wrench is good for 17mm bolts even if it is not good for 9mm bolts or 23mm bolts. Now, the question is whether knowledge has the same property as currencies and wrenches: it does not have to be good everywhere in order to be good somewhere. And this is exactly the insight of contextualism: the fact that we do not know $p$ is some circumstances does not affect the fact that we know $p$ in the actual circumstances. Perhaps one might try to justify the skeptic principle in the spirit of the virtue epistemology: just as a good car mechanic should be able to fix all the cars, and

just as a good musician should be able to play all the instruments, a good knower should know in all possible circumstances. These examples might have some intuitive appeal, but still, if a car mechanic can not fix all the cars it does not mean that he can not fix any car, if a musician can not play a flute it does not mean that he can not play a piano.

### *Do we beg the question against skeptic?*

Although Danilo is not ready to make concessions to the skeptic, it seem that nevertheless he does make a concession to the skeptic. Moreover, he makes it at the place where, in my opinion, he does not have to make it. We take radical skeptical scenarios as a mere theoretical possibilities, not as real possibilities. But, do we have right to do that? Danilo is worried that we beg the question against the skeptic here. "But the issue what is the actual world like is unresolved—we just *assume* that skeptical scenarios are not seriously possible." But we have to be careful here, we should not conflate two different things: one is that radical skeptical scenarios are *theoretically possible*, another one is that radical skeptical scenarios are *equally probable* as the real world hypothesis. For a scenario to be *theoretically possible* it is sufficient that it is not logically contradictory, for a scenario to be *equally probable* as the real world hypothesis much more is needed. I discuss the same problem in my answer to Duško, under the subtitle *Who begs the question?* To sum up the point. Our experience is by assumption equally compatible with the radical skeptical hypothesis as it is with the real world hypothesis. But to *be compatible with* is not the same as *explain*. And the relevant point here is not which hypothesis is compatible with our experience, they both are by assumption, the relevant point here is which hypothesis is a better explanation of our experience. Remember, evidence confirms a hypothesis in the degree in which hypothesis explains the evidence. As Danilo puts: "But why should ampliative inferences like induction and abduction (inference to the best explanation) not provide a sufficient basis for preferring certain beliefs over alternative hypotheses?" In my opinion these inferences do provide such a basis. As I said, being *theoretically possible* and being *equally probable* are not one and the same thing. It is one thing to claim that it is theoretically possible that ET lives in the forests of Gorski kotar, it is another thing to take that possibility seriously. It is certainly theoretically possible that there is a conspiracy against a person, but this fact does not show that a therapist begs the question against her when she takes that possibility seriously, a therapist tries to cure her.