

Graham Priest profesor je filozofije na City University of New York i profesor emeritus na University of Melbourne. U svom radu bavi se logikom, filozofijom logike, poviješću filozofije, metafizikom i buddhističkom filozofijom.

What problems/topics initially got you interested in the field of logic?

Well, my undergraduate degree was mainly in mathematics. Of the bits of mathematics I studied, I found those concerning the foundations of mathematics most interesting (perhaps because they are the most philosophical). Hence, I was led to an interest in issues in which logic plays an essential role: set theory, paradoxes of self-reference, intuitionism.

What problems/topics still have a grip on you even after all these years (are there any such)?

All of them. I have acquired many new interests in my philosophical journey through life, but I have never lost an interest in any.

How do you motivate your students for the study of logic (given that it isn't the most popular subject in philosophy departments and their appeal)?

Well, some students are fascinated by technical problems, in the same way that some people are fascinated by world problems. One doesn't have to do much there. For students not of this kind, it often works to show how the issues are not mere technical matters, but

that they sink deep into philosophical questions. I tried to do something like this in my Logic: a Very Short Introduction.

Would you say that today's logician is more of a philosopher or a mathematician? Is it even possible for non-mathematicians to meaningfully participate in current community of mathematical logicians?

Logic is studied in philosophy departments, mathematics departments, computer science departments, and some linguistic departments. Typically, the interests of the people in the different departments will be somewhat different. There is a certain core of logical knowledge that all will need to know; but beyond that needs and problems are likely to be highly discipline-specific. Logic is still, however, an integral part of philosophy.

What would you say that are still open and fruitful questions in logic? Do you expect any breakthroughs in the 21st century?

Well, those who work in logic in the different disciplines would probably give different answers to the first question. I don't know enough about what goes on in logic in disciplines other than philosophy, so I cannot answer for these. As for philosophy, most of the exciting development over the last 40 years or so have been in non-classical logics. Some of these systems are now well understood; some still need a lot more work. There are also, clearly, many more systems still to be discovered and explored. Then, of course, there is the question of the possible applications of such systems. Again, many are well known, and many need much further investigation. I am sure that much will be learned about all these matters in the 21st century. I'm not sure what a breakthrough is supposed to be. I

guess something really fundamental. With there be such things? Who knows? These things cannot be predicated.

Kant (in)famously held that logic was completed science that cannot make a step forwards or backwards from the state Aristotle confined her in. Last century and a half witnessed previously unimaginable proliferation in plethora of different non-classical logical systems – do you believe there will ever again be such a unification (supposing there was ever one) and exhaustion of new possibilities in a grand general theory of logic?

Kant didn't know much about the history of logic. Many new important theories and techniques were discovered in Western Medieval logic. The truth is that the history of logic, from Ancient Greece onwards, has always been one of competing theories and ideas. What has happened in the last 100 years is pretty spectacular in that regard, but it is different from other periods in the history of logic only in degree, not in kind.

When did you start to waver away from the orthodoxy of classical logic?

Well, my doctorate (1974) was on classical mathematical logic. During this time, and pretty much independently, I was worrying about philosophical issues in the foundations of mathematics, turning round the significance of Goedel's incompleteness theorem. I came to the conclusion that one needed to face the possibility of inconsistency in mathematics. If this is so, one clearly needs a paraconsistent logic. In the year after my doctorate I invented (discovered) LP for this end.

Was your development of the LP system motivated by some metaphysical concerns or was the influence the other way around – i.e. mathematical possibility ignited a philosophical curiosity?

No, it was motivated by concerns in the philosophy of mathematics, and how, in particular, it could be the case that we are able to establish the truth of some things which cannot be proved in, say, Peano Arithmetic, by means that are, in some sense, clearly implicit in Peano Arithmetic itself.

9. How did you come to advocate (from a traditional point of view) such an outrageous idea as dialetheism?

By following argument where it seemed to lead.

Do you think paraconsistent, or even dialethist accounts of truth and reasoning will ever become the dominant paradigm in theories of logic, truth and rationality?

I have no idea. What I do think is that after some two and a half thousand years, the genie of inconsistency is finally out of the bottle, and it is not going to go back in quietly.

Given that you're a monist about logic, how do you see the pluralist positions on paraconsistency propounded by Greg Restall and J. C. Beall?

Logical pluralism is currently a hot topic in the philosophy of logic. The book by Beall and Restall certainly put it on the map, but there are many other forms, some much older than theirs. And I find some

*of these other forms much more plausible than that of Beall and Restall. I don't think this is the place to go into all this. The details of my views can be found in chapter 12 of *Doubt Truth to be a Liar*.*

Do you deem classical logic to be misguided in some aspects additional to the so called paradoxes of material implication and its principle of bivalence?

Well, I think those are the main ones. But rectifying them takes us into territory a long way beyond anything on the classical horizon.

Do you think that correctness or incorrectness of dialethic position concerns something more than semantic anomalies, that is, only logic from the theoretical perspective, with its concerns with details and nuances irrelevant for other scientific, or non-scientific endeavors?

No, I think that the importance of dialetheism is not merely about the paradoxes of self-reference (if I understand the question correctly). I think it can be used to shed light on matters of metaphysics, law and morality, phenomenology, and perhaps even in science itself. At present there are no accepted scientific theories according to which physical reality is contradictory; but once people's eyes are opened to the possibility of this, I do not see why there could not be. We now know that there are various paraconsistent pure mathematical theories (of algebra, topology, and so on). Scientist will help themselves to whatever bits of mathematics seem to do the required job. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that at some future stage, scientists might come to hold that a piece of paraconsistent mathematics is just what is required. In such a case, we might well be led to the view

that physical reality, perhaps “below the observable level”, is itself contradictory.

How broad are the boundaries of the set of legitimate dialetheias? Can they be formally enumerated on grounds of some principles explaining their behavior or they are to be individually hunted down and empirically validated?

No, I don't think that there is any a priori way of putting a bound on the range of possible dialetheias. It is impossible to tell, in advance, where rational inquiry may lead us.

Do you think that dialetheias you accept as real are dependent on your background metaphysical assumptions, or perhaps practical, psychological, or other such extra-logical motives and reasons?

Doubtless what views people actually do accept is determined by all kinds of factors, both objective and subjective. However, rational acceptability is, presumably, determined by purely objective factors. It is the evidence which counts. I don't think that the rational acceptability of dialetheias is any different in this regard from the rational acceptability of anything else.

Can there ever be a logical system fully independent from ontological presuppositions and commitments?

No, all logical systems have metaphysical assumptions built into them. And metaphysical systems normally make at least tacit logical assumptions.

What are some of the more intuitive applications of the paraconsistent calculi to everyday or specialized reasoning?

Well, there are important applications of paraconsistent logic for information processing systems. Such systems may well not just store and search data; they may make inferences from them. But data bases are often corrupt, due to input errors, multiple sources, etc, and so may end up inconsistent. And as is well known, there is no algorithm which will, in general, determine whether information is inconsistent. To draw information from an inconsistent data base using an explosive logic, is obviously not sensible. So a paraconsistent logic is required. More contentiously, nearly all our practical reasoning employs vague terms. And such terms are subject to sorites paradoxes, which allow one to infer conclusions that are manifestly incorrect, such as that a person of 83 is a child, since they were a child at age 1, and if they are a child at any age, they are a child one second later. Solutions to the sorites paradox are contentions, but a number of logicians now subscribe to a paraconsistent solution. Such reasoning breaks down because it makes consistency assumptions along the route. Finally, there is, as I mentioned, paraconsistent mathematics, which may in due course, find applications in science.

You engaged in reading, from a standard analytical perspective, some infamous philosophical figures like G. W. F. Hegel. What did you learn from studying him? How do you see the relationship between contemporary core analytical philosophy (logic, philosophy of science, language and epistemology) and recently emerged scholarship of Hegel, and other “continental” philosophers? Which other similar

historical thinkers inspire you? How do your peers respond to your valorization of such thinkers?

I think that Hegel's overall system of global idealism, driven by Geist, is crazy. However, as in the case of all great philosophers there is much to be learned from the insights he has on particular issues. For example, I think that Hegel is really on to something with his theory of motion. Of course, perhaps the most important thing for me is that Hegel is a clear dialetheist: the most important such between Aristotle and the present day. Naturally, many interpreters of Hegel have been scared off by the thought that their hero might violate the Principle of Non-Contradiction. One thing that they can learn from modern logic is that there is nothing to be scared of. Other "continental" philosophers: I don't see an important distinction between "analytic" and "continental" philosophy. Both are very often concerned with the same issues, and even have similar views. There are differences of styles and expression; but the history of philosophy shows that there are many of those. And of course there are good and bad philosophers on both sides of the so called divide. Anyone can learn from good philosophers, whatever tradition they come from (analytic or continental, Eastern or Western). The analytic/continental divide does not really exist before the 20th century. Which are the most interesting/important continental philosophers since then? Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer, Sartre, Foucault (if he is a philosopher). How do my peers respond to my work? I have many peers in many traditions of philosophy. Many of them are as interested in breaking down out-dated boundaries as I am. And those who are not, can just take anything they find to be of value in my work, and leave the rest.

What got you interested in the debate on logic of catuskoti? In the last one hundred years that western scholars started to explore and appreciate that formal aspect of madhyamika

(and early buddhist) thought, there weren't more than thirty people involved in efforts of tackling that problem. How do you feel about participating in such obscure, so to say "elite" club?

*I got interested in the philosophy of the Asian traditions in the mid-1990s when I met someone who knew something about them for the first time: Jay Garfield. Talking to Jay made me realise that there were large parts of philosophy I knew nothing about. I determined to learn. At first what interested me were the various systems of metaphysics, especially, though not exclusively, that of Madhyamaka Buddhism. It was somewhat later that I realised that the techniques of contemporary non-classical logic could be applied sometimes. My work on the *catuskoṭi* is one aspect of this. (My work on Jaina metaphysics in another.) Buddhist philosophy has been studied intensively by Western scholars, though it is only recently that Western philosophers (as opposed to those working in departments of philology, Asian studies, and comparative religion) have turned their attention to such matters. The number is still small, but growing rapidly. Very few of these philosophers are professional logicians, in the way that I am. So I can bring to the investigation something that they cannot. I cannot bring the scholarship and language skills that most of them can bring; but a collaborative investigation, of the kind I often now take part in, with a bunch of people with different skills and abilities, can be very rewarding. How do I feel about all this? Very happy.*

Do you think your engagement with *catuskoṭi* reached its end with your last book "The fifth corner of four"?

Who knows? Probably not.

What are your plans for future work in philosophy or logic?

I've always just done what engaged my interest next. Since my interests are many, I'm always working on a multitude of things. And where this can lead is a bit unpredictable. At present, the major book project is one on social philosophy. I want to bring together Marxist and Buddhist thought. As I write this, I am in Turin, teaching a course on the logic and metaphysics of nothingness. Perhaps that will result in a book too.

razgovor vodio Karlo Mikić