

the Croatian–Indian Society in Zagreb. In this section, they present very systematically essential information and interesting facts related to this book, its Croatian translation, and the two great individuals, Mahatma Gandhi and Stjepan Radić.

This rich overprint contains a great deal of important and interesting data, of which we have been able to quote only a minority in this review. However, the real purpose of the review is not to cover everything, but to present the main points that might persuade the future reader to reach for this edition. The fact that something that is very far away can be very close to us is fully confirmed by this piece. Stjepan Radić recognized this very well and offered his Croatian contemporaries the example of Mahatma Gandhi and

his non–violent movement. And even today, we could learn a lot both from Gandhi and Radić. However, to make that possible, we first need to understand our history, and this edition is the perfect tool for that.

References

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Summer School 2021 In and Out — Questioning the Philosophical Canon

Introduction

For several years in a row now, the Institute of Philosophy in Zagreb has organized Summer Schools. Last year’s Summer School took place from 27 June to 1 July 2021, under the name “In and Out — Questioning the Philosophical Canon.” Due to the COVID–19 pandemic, the Summer School was held using a distance learning format

with all the courses having been delivered through the MS Teams platform.

Depending on their areas of expertise and their specific interests, various esteemed and award–winning lecturers, with truly remarkable professional achievements, delivered high quality courses to the audience, mainly consisting of graduate and postgraduate students in philosophy and of diverse backgrounds. Throughout the Summer School, members of the audience had a chance to actively participate in lively discussions that developed from the very first course onwards. As was explained during the opening, an ever–growing discussion and at times dissatisfaction with the present philosophical canon served as the starting point for organizing the Summer School that thematizes the

philosophical canon by being open and giving voice to widely differing viewpoints. With those qualities, this Summer School's organizer is certainly worthy of commendation and sets forth a good example of extracurricular pursuit of knowledge for philosophy students. The following text will outline the topics discussed together with the main messages to be taken from the school.

Courses

The opening course of the Summer School was far from just an introductory lecture. It was given by Professor Ruth Hagengruber (University of Paderborn, Germany), a professor, philosopher, and editor with an impressive career, and whose emphasis is on the history of women philosophers and scientists, and philosophy of economics and information science. Hagengruber named her lecture for the Summer School "Fighting Philofolly! Rewriting the History of Philosophy," inviting to radically change the view on history of philosophy or risking it becoming an artefact of perpetuating mistakes from the past. Hagengruber presented arguments against the centuries-old practice of exclusion of women philosophers from the typical philosophical curriculum, and criticized Christine de Pisan for idolatrizing philosophers, who by solely quoting the authors they have read, instead of writing philosophy, write "philofolly" (a term coined by Hagengruber). Hagengruber argues that nowadays this faulty practice should be vigorously dismissed, given the not so difficult access to valuable sources which show that the history of women philosophers stretches back as far as the history of philosophy itself,

from Antiquity (Spatia, Diotima, Hypatia) up to the present.

During the course, interesting works of women philosophers were revealed to the audience, most of which may not be known to a common reader. The example of Émilie Du Châtelet, a physicist and philosopher who was a prominent intellectual of her time, inspired the author to study her life and works. Apparently, it was madame du Châtelet who first used the term Copernican turn in epistemology, well before Immanuel Kant had used the term. Furthermore, it was du Châtelet who was the first to overcome the divide between two substances of cartesian dualism, paving the way for Kant's later brilliant reconciliation of rationalism and empiricism. To support the claim of du Châtelet's priority over Kant's solution, it was demonstrated that Kant had been familiar with du Châtelet's work, as was testified in Kant's letter from 1747 in which he praises du Châtelet's extraordinary intellect.

Hagengruber also glanced at the critique of the Bible and delineated some books, among them a thousand-page Bible critique written by du Châtelet. Elisabeth of Bohemia was another famous figure of her time and a women philosopher presented by the author, together with Ann Conway, Laura Bassi, Christine of Sweden, Isotta Nogarola and other women philosophers. Great female saints and mystics, such as Edith Stein and Teresa of Avila were also mentioned during the course. Apart from criticizing the exclusion of these meritorious women from the philosophical canon, Hagengruber expressed additional concern over the lack of philosophers from other cultures, e.g., Chinese (although she

praises some of the Jesuit works who went to China). Hagengruber raises an important question of what philosophy truly is, across time and cultures, but eventually takes a universalist stance — despite Hagengruber's authentic concern over typical philosophical canon which does not properly include women philosophers, Hagengruber is not in favor of two separate canons (male and female) or a separation along any divide, nor is she in favor of the feminist history of philosophy per se. Rather, Hagengruber emphasizes the role of the history of women philosophers as a methodical approach to philosophy, which serves as means to widen philosophical insights and deepen our understanding of women's contribution in the history of science and philosophy. One must admit that Hagengruber leaves a stark impression on a listener, with her vibrant personality and expression being in excellent accord with the topics and characters presented.

The second lecture was given by Professor Peter Adamson (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany) who named his course “A Global Philosophy without Any Gaps”, similarly to the name Adamson uses for his successful podcast and book series *History of Philosophy without Any Gaps* (available at www.historyofphilosophy.net). Adamson's primary areas of interest are lesser-known parts of the history of European philosophy, late ancient philosophy, Indian, and Arabic philosophy. Academic, book editor and podcast host, Adamson shed light on what motivated him to develop the book series and explained the difficulty of drawing the boundaries of a truly “gap-free” history of philosophy. As Adamson noted, many philosophy

curricula jump from Aristotle to Aquinas, skipping large parts of philosophical development and neglecting some parts in favor of the other.

Nevertheless, as Adamson pointed out, resolving such perceived omissions or flaws turns out to be an enormously challenging task. Particularly challenging to decide is where to draw the line and how far should inclusivity stretch, often boiling down to a fundamental question of what constitutes philosophy and what does not. Moreover, it is often the case that, when evaluating the historical role of some ancient work, it becomes difficult to distinguish between philosophy, theology, science, and even literature. Vivid discussion followed Adamson's presentation, obviating the fact that such decisions are indeed demanding, and an effort to produce a truly gap-free history of philosophy is an arduous task.

Dr. Marie-Élise Zovko, employed at Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb, is another multifaceted researcher, lecturer, mentor, and editor, who obtained her graduate and postgraduate degrees in the USA and Germany, together with many prestigious awards and grants. Zovko's area of interest lies across ancient Greek philosophy, mysticism, German idealism, metaphysics, theory of mind, philosophizing with children/philosophizing in life contexts, and many other. During this Summer School, Zovko gave a lecture under the title “God and the Philosopher are Gender Non-conforming: How to Subvert Dogmatic Thinking about the Philosophical Canon. With examples from Plato, Spinoza and Kant.” As Zovko explained, the desire to know and to understand is native to humans. The author emphasized the

philosopher's need to explore not only the "what," but the "why" of things and beyond. To do so, there is a vital need for philosopher's autonomy, independence of thought, or "simply" freedom, but also the opportunity, resource, and skill to learn by means of exploring the mental world of those who sought answers to perennial philosophical questions before us. Hardly anyone would disagree with Zovko that delving into the works of philosophers of past times can be very rich and rewarding. Nevertheless, Zovko's view is that such endeavors are too often subordinate to prejudices or stereotypes of a specific school or movement, or even censorship to truly enjoy the depth and richness of the great philosophical minds of the past.

Therefore, Zovko explores different perspectives from that of following the classical and established philosophical canon, indicating feminist philosophy, gender, and postcolonial studies as tools by which previously stated barriers could be broken down. Zovko advocates an even more radical approach and seeks to identify and contextualize those philosophers, regardless of gender or descent, who dared to question the standards and stereotypes of their age.

Some of the prejudices, stereotypes, and prohibitions which determined the philosophical canon and its interpretation since the beginning of the 20th century were described during the course, including those propagated by logical positivism, empiricism, the phenomenological school, and analytic philosophy. Examples of stereotypical interpretations of Plato, Spinoza, and Kant were presented, together with suggestions on how to further explore these great philosophers.

A keynote speaker of the Summer School was Professor emerita Mary Ellen Waithe from Cleveland State University, USA, a widely renowned expert in the history of philosophy and author of the impressive four volume book series *A History of Women Philosophers* that started in 1987. This anthological book series with more than seventy female philosophers presented from 600 BC to the 20th century opened a new horizon for contemporary research into the role of women in the history of philosophy. For the first time, the books offered to an interested reader a comprehensive guide to names, texts, and interpretations of women philosophers in major areas of philosophy, although there were attempts to do this in the past by other authors.

In Waithe's lecture during this Summer School under title — "Sex, Lies and Bigotry: The History of Philosophy," Waithe gives methodological reflection on the reasons for an exclusive philosophical canon, indicating in the title what would later be elaborated during the lecture. Namely, Waithe holds that it is "either ineptness or simple bigotry that led most historians of philosophy to intentionally omit women's contributions from their histories and that such failure replicated itself in the university curricula of recent centuries."

Some drastic measures were considered by Waithe on how to remedy such historical malpractice, but Waithe finally opts for a reasonable alternative solution of expanding the length and number of courses in the philosophy curriculum to include discussion of women's contributions.

Waithe explored several other questions during the course: what it

means for the history of philosophy to retrieve the excluded women; what kind of methodology should be implied; whether excluded women philosophers have indeed been included and how; how feminist philosophy and the history of women philosophers are related, etc. Interestingly, when exploring whether there are any themes or arguments that are common to most women philosophers, it turns out that women philosophers wrote about similar topics to their male counterparts, covering major areas of philosophy.

The fifth course in the Summer School was authored by Dr. Boris Kožnjak from Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb, a physicist, and a philosopher. Under the intriguing title “First They Take Manhattan, then They Take Berlin: Cancel Culture in Philosophy and Science,” it was shown how today’s phenomenon of “cancel culture” follows on the earlier phenomena of “political correctness,” “safe spaces” and “trigger warnings,” albeit with more severe ideological and political engagement than before. The author admits to this phenomenon being too recent to be fully defined, let alone historically and critically appraised. Nevertheless, Kožnjak correctly points out that empirical results of the “cancel culture” can be found everywhere around us and should trigger serious warning signs to all. Namely, defaming, dethroning, and deplatforming via public backlash fueled by fierce media campaigns can affect anyone, from public figures and commentators, politicians, athletes, scientists, etc., to podcasts, names of the streets, statues, and even historical monuments. Such practices seem to instill fear and seek to punish rather than correct. Since re-

cently, philosophers and scientists are not spared of this phenomenon, leading to controversy around the philosophical canon, as well as “cancelling” some of their previously important parts if they don’t fit the specific mold.

During his lecture, Kožnjak shed light on what might be the roots and consequences of this phenomenon in philosophy and science and provided various perspectives through which this problem can be thematized: historical, social, political, ideological, psychological, and moral. The author also shared with the participants his personal testimony of totalitarian practices from the era of communism in Croatia, with apparent similarities to elements of today’s “cancel culture.”

Certainly, the author brought compelling evidence and food for thought as to why this relatively new, but in its essence old, phenomenon, may be counterproductive to the whole controversy around philosophical and scientific canons. As Kožnjak well noted at the beginning of his lecture, it was the case throughout the human history that the open exchange of ideas led to more progress. The message to be taken is that constructive and informed criticism should prevail over notorious “cancelling” when it comes to discussions around relevant questions.

In her course “Philosophical Canon and the Truth: Challenges from the No-Progress View of Philosophy,” Professor Iris Vidmar Jovanović (University of Rijeka) pondered over questions of what makes something or someone’s view timeless and worthy of the canonical status. Jovanović is an esteemed professor, editor, and investigator with an international career, whose research interests include philosophy of art and aesthetics, primar-

ily with respect to narrative art. She is currently finalizing her book on the philosophy of poetry; hence, her comparison of philosophy and literature. Namely, Jovanović draws an interesting parallel to literature, and notes literature excellence as that which is considered to give everlasting value to some literature works, we know and study in most parts of the world. Comparably, Jovanović poses a challenge to reconsider what constitutes a philosophical excellence, whether it is the development of a philosophical system, relevance for the humanity, or else. According to Jovanović, no one would seem to disagree that in texts from Plato and Aristotle, to Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, and Hegel, something of everlasting value and relevance can be found. Nevertheless, Jovanović asks herself what precisely the main criterion for inclusion into the philosophical canon should be if one is to single out such criterion. Although there is more than one aspect through which philosophical excellence is achieved, an obvious answer Jovanović offers is the possession of truth: philosophy has always been a quest for the truth, so put in other words — those philosophers who seemed to have found the truth deserve to be included into the philosophical canon, since they are considered to have achieved philosophical excellence.

However, this is easier said than done. Even this valid criterion can sometimes be overlooked, as Jovanović further explains. Jovanović describes many cases of great philosophers whose views on certain topics included what is at present not considered to be the truth. Among the examples Jovanović gives are Plato's concept

of the realm of ideas, Aristotle's belief in inherent inadequacy of women together with some of his views on slavery, Descartes' mind-body dualism, etc. By no means was Jovanović implying that these great philosophers should be removed from the canonical list, rather she uses these examples to show how complex the problem of establishing objective criteria for canonical inclusion is. Jovanović concluded that despite the possible mistakes in understanding the truth in some parts of their work, philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, and such, are nevertheless prime examples of philosophical greatness and deserve their place in the philosophical canon. One could deduce from this exposition that overall attainment of truth is to be valued, even if there are some parts where this may not be the case. This speaks in favor of not applying too narrow of a lens when evaluating great thinkers of the past.

Martino Rossi Monti (Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb) got his PhD at the University of Florence and conducted research at the University of Chicago and the University of Melbourne. Among his research interests are views on pain, suffering, and violence in the history of ideas, but also on grace and beauty between Late Antiquity and Renaissance. Monti also embraces interest in Plotinus and the Platonic tradition.

In the course delivered under the name "The Canon Wars and the Decline of the West," Monti spoke about the advent of mass culture and the effects of globalization as being among the reasons behind the crisis of the so-called "Western canon," which is often perceived as too elitist or "Eurocentric." On the other hand, the post-

modernist rejection of existence of an objective truth, its radical relativism, and a risk of hyper-inclusion with no established criteria nor a sense for meaningful differences might result in chaos rather than the desired enrichment of philosophical canon, Monti warns. Thus, the author contrasts different views on canon debates and places the debate in a broader cultural and historical context. Those who are debating about the canon revisions can be found anywhere on the emotional spectrum from fear of change to indignation and enthusiasm for the revision.

Monti touches on encountering assertions about the decline of the Western civilization, mostly originating from the twentieth-century cultural pessimism and narratives of civilizational decline. He also showed how the past, instead of being carefully analyzed in its complexity, often ends up being subjected to an overly simplified and distorted view with the aim of fitting into a preconceived ideological framework. As it often happens when such simplified views are considered, a sort of cultural war ignites too easily, in the place of what should be a critical and fair appraisal of the historical role and meaning of the Western civilization. Author mentions two typical opposing camps, one that considers itself the last line of defense against a cultural apocalypse that they envisage, and another that sees the revision or even dissolution of the canon as part of a necessary process of “dismantling” what they perceive as an oppressive society.

Since continuously we hear about the oppressive Western culture, mostly from members of that culture, and can witness the sometimes dramatic

ways of repudiating their own past, Monti poignantly remarks that such self-denigration can be a form of indirect self-glorification, while a view of believing one’s culture is responsible for all evil can just be yet another form of narcissism. Thereby, Monti’s lecture can be understood as a call to move away from one-sided interpretations and towards a more realistic and mature approach of assessing the past, with implications for future.

The closing lecture of the Summer School was given by Dr. Luka Boršić (Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb), who obtained his PhD twice, first with thesis on Socratic irony and a more philosophical than philosophical outlook, while the second time in philosophy, with the topic on emergence of modern science out of the Renaissance critique of Aristotle. Boršić’s dissatisfaction with existing philosophical canon, coupled with passion for discovering new, resulted in his ever-growing interest in women philosophers, an area in which he successfully runs a project named *Croatian Women Philosophers in the European Context*. Along those lines, Boršić held his course which he named “*Is Homo Unius Libri a Philosopher? An Example of Maria Gondola.*”

Maria Gondola (Maruša Gundulić) is not a widely known name, but for those who know it, that is mostly due to Gondola’s authorship of a 12-page letter published in 1584 and 1585, in which she defends women’s intellectual equality with men. Prior to publication of this letter, Maria Gondola’s name appears as one of the two fictive characters in two philosophical dialogues, published in 1581 by Maria’s husband, Nicolò Vito di Gozze (Nikola Vitkov Gučetić), “*Dialogue on Beauty*” and “*Dialogue on Love.*” The second

female protagonist of these dialogues was Fiore Zuzzori (Cvijeta Zuzorić), a famous figure of the then Dubrovnik Republic, a cultural center which, similarly to its Italian counterparts, experienced the revival of neo-platonic ideals together with flourishing of lyricism and giving rise to more female writers. Nonetheless, it was considered that Nicolò Vito di Gozze was the author of these texts, placing the two women in a fictional dialogue in his villa's garden in Dubrovnik.

However, during the lecture, Boršić showed that the above reading of these texts is reductive, to say the least. The Dialogues should be viewed and understood as a depiction of philosophical thoughts and arguments of the time, portrayed through two interesting female interlocutors. Then again, the author simply asks himself why to dismiss the obvious reality embedded in these texts — there are two women philosophizing in dialogue, and the encounter may well be understood in a platonic tradition, hypothesizing the difference between the “writer” and the “author”. Consequently, Boršić suggests that this approach may lead to discovering a unique woman philosopher who acts as a sort of a “female Socrates” in the two dialogues from 1581. Moreover, Boršić argues that there is no reason not to suppose Maria Gondola indeed authored the thoughts and arguments presented under her dialogue character. Feasibly, they were then written down by Nicolò Vito di Gozze, who signed his reputable name under the texts to mediate and promote the women's voice. This conceivable scenario thus unveils the possible path to other forgotten female philosophers, Boršić argues.

Finally, the above is only a shortened version of the highly interesting presentations and courses provided via the Summer School. It is beyond the scope of this text and might be rather challenging to capture all the interesting discussions that took place after each course. But to sum up, it is both from excellent lecturers, as well as from the fruitful discussions that took place, that attendees of this Summer School could benefit in terms of broadening and deepening their understanding of history of philosophy, and the ways in which it affects our lives in the present societies.

To conclude, the Summer School delivered a very high level of expertise and professional exchange of ideas in the area surrounding philosophical canon and women philosophers. It offered an excellent opportunity to deepen our understanding of the great contribution women philosophers made throughout the history of philosophy and science.

Mistakes from the past relating to philosophical canon stem from a multitude of historical and cultural circumstances but could now be remedied and overcome, in a way that would better serve the truth and corrects the historical injustice.

As it turns out, it is a worthwhile task to properly acknowledge the unjustly omitted women philosophers, or rather any philosopher who was unjustly overlooked, and form a canon in which everyone would have a place that he or she deserves. This means reaching a more inclusive history of philosophy, while at the same time avoiding the other extreme of hyper-inclusion and inclusivity as an absolute. It seems that only such a bal-

anced effort can lead to a just and harmonious result.

After all, pondering about and attaining the virtue of justice is one of the key principles in philosophy since

its origins in ancient times, and remains to be one of the most important human tasks to affirm, and face in concrete situations.

Ana Lebo
