Croatian Journal of Philosophy

Vol. XVI · No. 48 · 2016

Croatian Journal of Philosophy

1333-1108 (Print)
1847-6139 (Online)

Co-published by
"Kruzak d.o.o."
Naserov trg 6, 10020 Zagreb, Croatia
fax: + 385 1 65 90 416, e-mail: kruzak@kruzak.hr
www.kruzak.hr

and

Institute of Philosophy
Ulica grada Vukovara 54/IV, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia
fax: + 385 1 61 50 338, e-mail: filozof@ifzg.hr
www.ifzg.hr

Available online at http://www.ceeol.com and www.pdcnet.org

CROATIAN
JOURNAL
OF PHILOSOPHY

Vol. XVI · No. 48 · 2016

Symposium on Themes from Work of Ilhan Inan

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Curiosity and Ignorance

ILHAN INAN
Department of Philosophy, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Though ignorance is rarely a bliss, awareness of ignorance almost always is. Had we not been able to develop this powerful skill, there would have been no philosophy or science, nor advanced forms of religion, art, and technology. Awareness of ignorance, however, is not a motivator; but when it arouses curiosity that is strong enough, it causes what may be called an "epistemic" desire; a desire to know, to understand, to learn or to gain new experiences, which is a basic motivator for inquiry. This makes the relationship between curiosity and awareness of ignorance all the more important. One can however find very little on this relationship within the philosophical literature. In this essay this is what I wish to explore. After a brief discussion of the question of whether awareness of ignorance is a precondition for curiosity, based on my earlier work (The Philosophy of Curiosity, Routledge, 2012) I attempt to show that corresponding to the two forms of curiosity that I call "objectual" and "propositional", there are also two forms of ignorance. This will refute the prejudice that awareness of ignorance must always have propositional content and therefore must always be about truth. I further argue that awareness of ignorance that does have propositional content can be of two different varieties: truth-ignorance versus fact-ignorance. One may simply be ignorant of whether a proposition is true or false (truth-ignorance); one may, on the other hand, know that a proposition is true but still be ignorant of the fact that makes it true (fact-ignorance). I then show that awareness of ignorance, whether it is objectual or propositional, can always be translated into what I shall call awareness of inostensibility. An important moral to be drawn from this discussion is that reaching truth, even when it is coupled with certainty, does not always eliminate one's ignorance and therefore cannot be the ultimate goal of inquiry.

Keywords: Curiosity, truth, knowledge, philosophy of curiosity, ignorance, sentence reference, facts, objectual knowledge.

I.

Ignorance is itself a lack, awareness of ignorance is not, rather it is the awareness of that very lack, and is therefore an achievement. If *being aware*, at least in this context, simply means *to know*, then awareness of ignorance must be taken to be a form of second-order knowledge. Knowledge of what though? This may appear to have a straight forward answer: a proposition. Being aware of your ignorance, on this received view, simply is the state of knowing that you do not know a particular proposition. Such an oversimplified account would imply that awareness of ignorance is always about truth. I wish to present two separate arguments that show that this received view is mistaken. Since both of them appeal to certain considerations concerning human curiosity, they may be called arguments-from-curiosity. Philosophers in general do take the concept of ignorance as being worthy of philosophical inquiry, but the same is unfortunately not the case for the concept of curiosity. Therefore I do hope that these arguments will convince some of my readers that curiosity is a notion which has philosophical significance. The first argument is based on the observation that curiosity does not always have propositional content, and the second one, which is perhaps the more controversial of the two, appeals to the premise that even when the content of one's curiosity is a proposition, it still may not be about truth.[1] If awareness of ignorance is a precondition for being curious, then we should expect to have different forms of ignorance as well, corresponding to these different forms of curiosity, neither of which are about truth.

As a preliminary let me first give a brief summary of the intentional-intensional model of curiosity that I developed recently, emphasizing the role of inostensible conceptualization. The term "curiosity" is used in different ways, and it is only one of these uses that this model tries to capture. This is the use we give to the term when we make utterances such as "Holmes is curious about who the murderer is", or "scientists are curious whether there is liquid water on Mars" etc. Such curiosity attributions can always be formulated in language in the form of a question: Holmes wishes to answer the question "who is the murderer?", scientists seek the answer to the question "is there liquid water on Mars?". Being curious, in this sense, does not refer to a character trait, or a drive, nor does it refer to a form of behavior. Rather it is a peculiar kind of mental state that all normal human beings enjoy, some more and some less, but regardless of their social and educational background no person is deprived of it.

Curiosity as a mental state is always about something, and in that sense it is an intentional state: Holmes is curious *about* who the murderer is, scientists are curious *about* whether there is liquid water on

[1] Though this paper is the first time I deal with the notion of ignorance in detail, some of the ideas I will appeal to have been discussed in my earlier published works, especially in Inan (2009, 2012 and 2014).

Mars. Such an intentional mental state has representational content, that is the curious mind represents the entity which he or she is curious about. This form of representation, at least for normal adults who have mastered a language, can be expressed in language, and thus has conceptual content. Let us put aside the issue of whether there can be another form of representation that is not conceptual and does not require the mastering of any language, or whether there can be conceptual curiosity that is ineffable. Being curious, when it can be put into words, may then be said to be intensional. After observing the dead body of Smith, if Holmes finds sufficient evidence that Smith must have been murdered singlehandedly, he would be in a position to construct a concept which can be expressed in terms of a definite description such as "the murderer of Smith" and come to realize that its referent is unknown to him. Such a term is inostensible for Holmes.[2] For every instance of curiosity that can be expressed in terms of a wh-question there will always be a singular term, mostly in the form of a definite description, that is inostensible for the curious agent. When one is curious about who someone is, then there will be a description that purports to refer to an unknown person; when one is curious about where something is there will be a description that refers to an unknown location; when one is curious about why something happened, there will be a description that refers to an unknown cause etc. This is objectual curiosity. There is then curiosity whose content is given by a full sentence which expresses a specific proposition in the appropriate context. This is what I call propositional curiosity. The typical form of it is captured by a whether-question. For scientists to be curious about whether there is liquid water on Mars, they must be in a position to construct a full proposition which can be expressed by a sentence such as "there is liquid water on Mars" and seek to know whether it expresses a truth or a falsity. Such a sentence would then be inostensible in their idiolects. Following Frege, if we take declarative sentences to be referring expressions whose referents are one of the two truth values, then we could conclude in this case that scientists do not know to which of these values the sentence refers. We may, on the other hand, countenance a different kind of referent for a declarative sentence, for instance a proposition, or a state of affairs, or a fact. We may also completely deny that sentences are referring expressions. For every such position we will have to give a different account of curiosity whose content is expressible by a full declarative sentence and therefore has propositional content. Regardless of what kind of semantic and

[2] The notion of "inostensible" is a made-up term. Though I usually refrain from giving a strict definition it, loosely we may say that a term is inostensible in the idiolect of a speaker just in case the subject does not know its referent; if the subject does know the referent then the term is ostensible. The distinction is one that admits of degrees: the more experience you have with the referent of a term, the more ostensible or the less inostensible that term will become, though if it still has the potential to arouse your curiosity, it would still be on the inostensible side of the scale.

syntactic account we adopt for sentences, the intentional-intensional model will work, though not in the same way. Suffice it to say for now that curiosity that has propositional content would involve a full declarative sentence which is inostensible for the curious agent, and that their curiosity is about something—making it intentional— and it has propositional content—making it intensional.

II.

How curiosity and ignorance relate to one another is a question that is not as easy as it may first appear. Perhaps the most basic question that can be raised concerning this is whether awareness of ignorance is a precondition for curiosity. If I were to ask you to give me an example of something that you are curious about now, it would be quite difficult, perhaps even impossible, for you to provide me with such an example while denying that your curiosity is caused by your awareness of ignorance. If Holmes is curious about who the murderer is, he must be aware of his ignorance about who the murderer is, and if scientists are curious about whether there is liquid water on Mars, then they must be aware that they do not know whether there is liquid water on Mars. Even if one denies that awareness of ignorance is always required to become curious, it seems that we can easily agree that in an overwhelming number of cases our curiosity is caused by our awareness of ignorance.

Now it should be obvious that awareness of ignorance does not always arouse curiosity. In other words, the simple entertainment of an inostensible concept or a full proposition in one's mind does not by itself arouse curiosity. As you read the daily newspaper for instance, there may be many inostensible terms that you come across. Suppose you notice that in the headlines on the front page it says "the head of UEFA under investigation"; now it may very well be the case that you do not know who the head of UEFA is, and you may at that instant become aware of your ignorance of this, that is you may come to realize that the term "the head of UEFA" is inostensible for you. You may further come to realize that you do not know what the head of UEFA is being charged of, what evidence there is for the charge, whether he is being framed, etc. There will be various inostensible terms whose inostensibility you can come to realize with little effort. If, however, you are not interested in sports politics, you may not be bothered to read the relevant article to find out who is being charged of what. For others who have more interest in such issues, that simple phrase in the headlines may arouse curiosity.

Awareness of insotensibility only when it is coupled with interest is what arouses curiosity. Curiosity, in this sense, is interest-relative. Curiosity in effect predominantly causes an epistemic desire. Now that epistemic desire, for objectual curiosity, may be expressed as a desire to know the referent of one's insotensible term, and it can never be ex-

pressed as a desire to know the truth value of a proposition. If you are curious as to who the head of UEFA is, then it should normally follow that you do not know the referent of the term "the head of UEFA"; it is your awareness of your ignorance of this plus your interest in the topic that arouses your curiosity. And if your curiosity is strong enough, then that may motivate you to develop a desire to turn the page to read the article. Here the epistemic desire caused by curiosity would always be expressible as a desire to find the referent of a definite description: the head of UEFA, the charge against the head of UEFA, the cause of the charge against the head of UEFA etc.

This of course does not imply that curiosity is always caused by awareness of ignorance. Whether there can be curiosity without awareness of ignorance is a question that is philosophically interesting since it relates to the more general question of whether a second-order epistemic attitude, such as awareness of ignorance, is a necessary condition for being curious. If it is, then it could turn out that we have been mistaken in attributing curiosity to animals and pre-language children. Despite the fact that they exhibit what appears to be inquisitive and exploratory behavior form the outside, on this view, it would not be correct to claim that animals and young children enjoy the mental state of being curious assuming that they do not have the capacity to form second-order epistemic attitudes. One reason for this may be that they do not possess higher-order concepts such as *knowledge* or *truth*.[3]

Perhaps an argument can be given on the other side. Consider a primitive caveman who has not mastered a language yet. Suppose he has produced a tool that we might today call an "axe". One day he loses his axe. Can he become curious where his axe is? Though he has no higher-order concepts such as *knowledge* or *truth*, he may have ways of representing his axe, perhaps not under a general artefactual kind concept, but simply as a particular, and he may also have the skills to represent locations. With some minimal syntax he may have acquired the means to combine them to form a representation such as *the location of Axe*. Given his interests within the particular context that he is in, the simple entertainment of such an inostensible notion may cause sufficient *mental irritation* for him to become curious and in effect to develop the motivation to find his axe. Such mental irritation need not

[3] Kvanvig (2003: 145–146) raises a similar question: if curiosity is a desire to know, then how can a being who does not have the concept of *knowledge* or *truth* be curious? Here the emphasis is on whether children and animals can have these concepts rather than whether they can become aware of their ignorance by forming second-order attitudes. Now it seems Kvanvig does not wish to give up the idea that children and animals are in fact curious beings, so he concludes that a curious being need not have the concept of *knowledge* or *truth*; all that is needed is to have the ability to desire to "ascertain that p or not-p". As I shall argue this cannot be the case for objectual curiosity, and can only be correct for only one form of propositional curiosity.

require him to reflect on his ignorance and to become aware of it.[4] If so, it would be wrong to attribute an epistemic desire to our primitive man. He is neither aware of his ignorance, nor does he seek knowledge. All that can be said is that he desires to find his axe. Some may prefer to call this "proto-curiosity". Animals and infants may have it too. As long as there is inostensible representation there can be curiosity at this primitive level without any awareness of ignorance. There is no doubt a lot more to be said on this issue but let us now concentrate solely on curiosity that is caused by our awareness of ignorance.

III.

To my knowledge within the scarce philosophical literature on curiosity the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity has been explicitly formulated only recently.[5] The fact that contemporary epistemology concentrates so much on propositional knowledge while sparing so little attention to objectual knowledge, or other such objectual epistemic verbs, is one good indicator that most philosophers tend to deplore the use of such objectual-talk. This strong trend appears to have dominated not just epistemology but other sub-disciplines within contemporary philosophy as well. In order to understand the nature of curiosity, I believe, we have to overcome our propositional-bias.

As I stressed being curious about whether such-and-such is the case, is different from being curious about who someone is, or where something is, or what something is etc. Only in the former type of curiosity can we isolate a full proposition whose truth value is being sought. Now one reason why it may appear as if curiosity as well as ignorance must always have propositional content is because it appears that what satisfies curiosity and eliminates ignorance can always result from the acquisition of some piece of propositional knowledge. If Jones is the murderer, and Holmes comes to know this, then Holmes' curiosity about who the murderer could be satisfied. Just because the acquisition of the knowledge of a proposition satisfies one's curiosity and eliminates one's ignorance, it does not follow that the curiosity and the ignorance

[4] Depending on what we take concepts to be, we may even wish to conclude that such a primitive form of representation is not conceptual.

[5] I discuss the distinction between propositional and objectual curiosity in Inan (2012). In earlier work Kvanvig (2003) addresses philosophical issues on curiosity (see footnote 3), but fails to makes this distinction despite the fact that he distinguishes between objectual and propositional knowledge as well as understanding. In later work Kvanvig (2012) appears to endorse the view that the goal of curiosity is objectual understanding. One of the early contributors to the literature on curiosity is Miščević (2007), who has just recently published an excellent article (Miščević 2016) in which he makes a taxonomy of the different forms of curiosity which include the propositional and objectual distinction. Though Russell never philosophized on curiosity, given the emphasis he gave on the distinction between *knowledge of things* and *knowledge of truths* (see Russell 1910) he had all the resources to distinguish between two corresponding forms of curiosity.

in question were also propositional. The acquisition of propositional knowledge, if it is rich enough, may satisfy various curiosities and ignorances. Had Holmes initially been curious about whether Jones is the murderer, then this curiosity of his would also have been satisfied, but quite obviously being curious about who the murderer is, is not the same thing as being curious about whether Jones is the murderer.

Now it should be expected that the content of one's curiosity and the content of one's ignorance are identical. This is a very commonsensical view, so much so that it may not even require any argument for it. Nonetheless it is important to have it on paper so that we can draw certain conclusions from it that may not be obvious at all. Now a further thesis that intuitively connects curiosity with ignorance is that they must be directed toward the same thing, that is if one is curious *about* something, then their ignorance of which they are aware that causes their curiosity must also be *about* the very same thing. From these innocent-looking truisms what follows is that if one's curiosity has propositional content then so does their ignorance, and if one's curiosity does not have propositional content then neither does their ignorance, and perhaps more importantly, if one's curiosity is not about truth then neither is their ignorance.

Going back to the Mars-example, if scientists are curious whether there is water on Mars, then they do not know whether there is water on Mars, and it is the awareness of their ignorance of this that (partially) causes them to be curious. Now one may think that when the content of curiosity is a proposition there is not much more interesting philosophy left. In fact there is. But before we get to that let us concentrate on the awareness of ignorance involved in objectual curiosity.

If Holmes is curious about who murdered Smith, and if his curiosity is (partially) caused by his awareness of ignorance, then it seems quite clear that he must have been aware of his ignorance about who murdered Smith. Now what appears to be a truism has an implication which is, by no means, a truism—based on the Russellian principle that what follows from what is obvious is not always obvious. The content of Holmes' curiosity in this case is not a proposition, and if not, neither is the content of his ignorance. Holmes' awareness of ignorance in this case simply translates into a second- order knowledge attribution: Holmes knows that he does not know who the murderer is. It is clear that there is no proposition here that can be singled out whose truth value Holmes is unaware of. This is why it is important to recognize that the inostensible term involved in such cases is always a definite description—rather than a full sentence—that refers to some unknown entity relative to the curious subject. This is the case for all instances of curiosity that can be posed by wh-questions. If I am curious about where my house keys are, what is unknown to me is captured by the definite description *the location of my house keys* which is exactly what makes this term inostensible. What I do not know is the referent of this term; it is not the truth value of a proposition. If we do not know why di-

nosaurs became extinct, then what is inostensible for us is the definite description *the cause of dinosaur's becoming extinct*; what is unknown is to what series of events to which this term refers, it is again not whether a proposition is true or false. Of course in each and every case in which there is awareness of objectual ignorance we will also come across instances of awareness of propositional ignorance. If you know that you do not know why dinosaurs became extinct, perhaps you also know that you do not know whether it was a meteorite that caused it, given that this is a popular hypothesis which you may have heard of. If you have a skeptical bent, you may even say that you do not know whether dinosaurs have in fact become extinct, or whether there have in fact ever lived a species as such. These will be examples of propositional ignorance, but none of them will be identical with the curiosity and your ignorance concerning why dinosaurs became extinct. Objectual ignorance can only be expressed in terms of an epistemic verb which is also objectual. In general, we report such ignorance—as I have been doing all along—by using the verb *to know* in its objectual form, usually followed by a question word: not *knowing who* someone is; not *knowing where* something is; not *knowing why* something happened; not *knowing when* something took place; not *knowing how* something happened; not *knowing what* something is. Now some may feel concerned about the fact that the ordinary use of such locutions such as *knowing-who* is context-sensitive. The fact that our common linguistic practice of using question-words is highly context-dependent should not be a worry for anything I say here. First as I have argued in length that what has led philosophers to claim that such notions are context-sensitive is because of the fact that it is common linguistic practice to use these notions elliptically for longer descriptions.

As Quine famously noted when you ask who someone is, sometimes you have the face and you want the name, and sometimes you have the name you want the face etc.[6] Granted that this is correct, the notion of *knowing-who* should have some *strict use* in which it is not elliptical for anything longer.[7] In any case even if *knowing-who* is always elliptical for something longer, in most of those cases when you spell it out you shall see that you do not get a full proposition. When you ask "who is that man?" and all that you wish to know is the guy's name, then what you are curious about is what the name of the man is, and what you are ignorant of is the name of the man. In fact, once we paraphrase the question so that it captures your intent, the question word "who" drops, and we are left only with "what"—which really is the queen of all question words. If, as the host of a party you see an uninvited guest, and ask "who is that man?", you may simply be expressing your curios-

[6] Quine in his classic piece (1956) emphasized the philosophical distinction between de re and de dicto attitudes, but later rejected it in his (1979) because of his conviction that notions such as *knowing who* are utterly context-dependent and interest-relative.

[7] For a more detailed discussion of this see Inan (2012: 45–46).

ity as to why he is at the party, or who invited him etc. For each and every such case, assuming that the speaker knows what he wants to ask, then we can always find a definite description whose referent he or she is seeking.

Perhaps a stronger reason why the context-sensitivity of the use of question words should not worry us is because they are in fact dispensable luxuries that can be eliminated from language without significant loss. Every wh-question can be translated into a definite description with a question mark at the end. "Who murdered Smith?" translates as "the murderer of Smith?", "where are my keys?" translates as "the location of my keys?" This is also the case even for what-questions. "What is the 98th prime number?" translates as "the 98th prime number?". For philosophical question such as "what is virtue?" the translation will depend on what it is we wish to ask. It could simply be "virtue?" if we take this term to be leaned towards the inostensible, otherwise it will be elliptical for something longer, such as "the necessary and sufficient condition for being virtuous?", or "the nature of virtue?", "the essence of virtue".[8] The same is true of reports of objectual ignorance. Rather than saying "I do not know where my keys are", I can say "I do not know the location of my keys". Similarly, "I do not know who the president of Rwanda is" translates as "I do not know the president of Rwanda"; "I do not know why dinosaurs became extinct" as "I do not know the cause of dinosaurs having become extinct"; "I do not know what virtue is" as "I do not know virtue" or "I do not know the nature of virtue" etc. In all these cases there is a definite description that is inostensible for the subject who is aware of his or her ignorance. If I do not know where my keys are, then "the location of my keys" is inostensible for me, given that I do not know its referent. As far as my ignorance goes it is irrelevant whether I have a hypothesis concerning what the referent of the term is. If, for instance, I entertain the idea that I may have left my keys in my office, then there is a full proposition whose truth value is unknown to me: my house keys are in my office. This proposition is also inostensible for me given that I do not know whether it is true or false, and thus I may be aware of my ignorance of it. This however is not the same ignorance as in the initial case. Being aware of my ignorance about where my keys are, is not the same thing as being aware of my ignorance about whether my keys are in my office. If I were to find out that my keys are not in my office, I would no longer be ignorant whether they are there, but that would not eliminate my ignorance about where the keys are. The proposition that my keys are in my office would then be ostensible, given that I would then know that it is false, but the description "the location of my keys" would still be inostensible. If, on the other hand, I were to find out that my keys are in fact in my office, then not only the proposition, but also the definite description

[8] See Inan (2012), Chapter 1: Meno's Paradox and Inostensible Conceptualization, especially p. 27–28

will become ostensible. The fact that by eliminating my propositional ignorance I thereby eliminate my objectual ignorance by no means implies that the two are identical.

Now another philosophical worry concerning epistemic verbs that are objectual is that they are in general fuzzy notions that do not have sharp boundaries. There is no strict criterion to determine what it takes to know someone, or to know a city, or to know the cause of something. This is exactly what makes such notions gradable, allowing for degrees. We may both know the same person, though you may know her better than I do. This is perhaps one reason why epistemologists have the propositional bias, since propositional knowledge does not appear to be gradable, and that may be taken to be an advantage. If this is the main reason why they think that, then we ought to refrain from using objectual epistemic verbs in doing philosophy as much as possible: we should ban not only the use of *knowledge* in its objectual sense, but also other epistemic notions such as *acquaintance, experience, understanding, familiarity,* which all have objectual uses. This will simply result in the impoverishment of language.

Furthermore, as I shall argue in the next section, the distinction between ostensible and inostensible propositional knowledge reveals that it could also come in degrees. Just like objectual curiosity we may now give an account of awareness of objectual ignorance by appealing to the notion of *inostensible reference*. Being aware your ignorance of *the F* is to be aware that you do not know *the F*, and in linguistic terms that simply implies that you are aware that you do not know the referent of "the F", in other words, "the F" is a term that is inostensible in your idiolect.

IV.

On the surface it may appear as if the awareness of ignorance, and the curiosity which it leads to, is a lot easier to deal with when they have propositional content. One may say that in such instances there is a full proposition in question, and the agent is aware of their ignorance of whether that proposition is true or false, and this causes them to become curious, and once they find out whether the proposition is true or false, then their curiosity is sated. In order to see that this is not the whole story, we need to deal with how our sentences, when they express truths, relate to reality. Given that *truth* is notoriously a difficult and controversial notion, it is not easy here to give an account of propositional ignorance and curiosity on neutral grounds. I will first, in very brief terms, sketch the theory of truth that I find to be most appealing. This will allow me to formulate a distinction between two forms of propositional curiosity and ignorance that will be central to my main thesis. The distinction however can be made on the basis of an alternative theory of truth, and so I am hoping that even if you find

my theory of truth to be problematic, you may nonetheless appreciate the distinction.[9]

Let us assume that Frege was right in his conviction that declarative sentences are referring expressions, but let us further suppose that Frege was wrong in his conviction that sentences refer to one of the two peculiar objects which he called *the True* and *the False*. A far more intuitive alternative is to take a sentence that expresses a truth to refer to a fact. For a simple sentence in the subject/predicate form *a is F*, when it expresses a truth, we may simply take it to refer to the fact of *a's being F* which may be said to be specifically the fact that makes the sentence true. When a sentence expresses a falsity, let us then assume that the sentence fails to refer to a fact. The sentence "the earth is round" expresses a truth in virtue of referring to the fact of the earth's being round. The sentence "the earth is flat" on the other hand, purports to refer to the fact of the earth's being flat, but given that there is no such fact, it fails to refer. Suppose that, contra Frege, we endorse such a theory which reduces truth to a form of reference and falsity to a form of failure of reference for sentences. If we were to further give an account of propositional truth and falsity, we could then say that a proposition in the form *a is F* is true just in case its referent is the fact of *a's being F*, and is false if there is no such fact. Now under this theory we can distinguish between two different ways in which a full sentence can be inostensible in the idiolect of a speaker.

To do this we should first raise the question what it means for a subject to know a proposition under this theory. The received view tells us that if a subject grasps a proposition and knows that it is true, then the subject knows the proposition. Now under the theory of truth that we are considering to know that a proposition is true is to have a sentence in one's idiolect that expresses that proposition, to be in position to grasp that proposition, and then to know that the sentence that expresses the proposition refers to a fact. Briefly knowing that a sentence expresses a truth, is to know that it refers. This by itself does not say what epistemic connection the subject has to the referent of the sentence. In particular knowing that a sentence expresses a truth does not necessarily imply that that the subject knows the fact to which it refers. So there appears to be a distinction between *knowing that a sentence refers to a fact* versus *knowing the fact to which a sentence refers*. This is a distinction that applies not just to sentences, but to all

[9] I discuss this theory in detail in my *Truth As Reference and Falsity As Failure* (unpublished manuscript under consideration). In the text I have given an extremely rough sketch of it, which may make it sound as if I am ignoring certain well-known problems concerning fact-ontology. Let me just note briefly that I deny that there are negative-facts, conditional-facts, disjunctive-facts, even existential-facts. Sentences involving such logical operators, when they express truths, refer to what I call content-states (which are not empirical facts.) I also do not presuppose that there are facts that are language and mind independent. For brevity's sake I do not go into any of this in the text.

referring expressions, which forms the basis of the distinction between ostensible versus insotensible reference. The philosophical significance of this distinction can perhaps best be appreciated when we consider how it applies to definite descriptions. There is a distinction between knowing that a definite description refers to an object versus knowing the object to which that definite description refers. You may for instance know that the definite description "the maternal grandfather of Socrates" refers to a person without knowing anything about that person except for whatever follows from the description. The point is that even when you know that a term refers, the term may still be inostensible for you. Now the question is whether the same can also happen in the case of full declarative sentences.

Sentential reference has its own peculiarities. There is an important difference between how a sentence relates to its referent, as opposed to how a definite description relates to its referent. The difference has to do with compositionality. The referent of a definite description is normally not an entity that is composed of the referents of the parts of the definite description. For instance, the description "the capital of Rwanda" refers to a city; the referents of the parts of the description includes a country (Rwanda) and a descriptional function (*the capital of x*), neither of which is a part of the city referred by the description. Under the theory of truth we are considering compositionality literally does apply to sentences. The sentence "the earth is round" refers to a fact that is composed of the earth—which is the referent of the subject term of the sentence—and the property of being round—which is the referent of the predicate term of the sentence. Only for some very special cases of definite descriptions can we get compositionality. The most obvious examples would be the nominalizations of sentences: "the earth's being round", for instance, refers to a fact whose constituents include the referents of the parts of that description. But normally definite descriptions do not abide with compositionality for reference. That is why we can easily make the distinction between a definite description being ostensible or inostensible in the idiolect of a speaker. When you grasp a definite description, and you know the referents of the parts of that description, this does not automatically put you in epistemic contact with the referent of that description. That is because the referent of the description is not an entity that is composed of the referents of its parts. Even if you are familiar with the referents of its parts, you may not be familiar with the referent of the whole description. Consider the description "the largest lake in Brussels"; now it may very well be the case that you do not know its referent, but that does not imply that there is a part of the description whose referent is unknown to you. Similarly, you may not know what the 98th prime number is, even if you know the referents of the parts of the description to refer to that unknown number. Given that compositionality holds for sentences, how could it be possible to grasp a sentence, know that it is

true, but still be ignorant of its referent? Now the typical way in which this could happen is when such a sentence contains a term that is inostensible for the subject. For instance, it would take little effort for you to know that Socrates' mother gave birth to Socrates. What do you know about Socrates' mother? If all that you know about her is whatever follows from the description you use to refer to her, together with what you can deduce from your background knowledge about mothers etc., then it should be very little. Now we have no problem grasping the proposition expressed by the sentence "Socrates' mother gave birth to Socrates", and we could easily come to know that it is true, however we may have very little knowledge of the fact to which it refers. That fact concerns a certain individual's having a certain property, it is the fact of *Socrates' mother having given birth to Socrates*. Such a fact may also be taken to be an event; the event of a certain female delivering a baby. If you have little knowledge of this female, then you have a very low degree of acquaintance with this event. On the epistemic scale your contact with this fact is on the far side of inostensibility, this however, does not prevent you from knowing that the fact exists. I call such knowledge inostensible; to gain ostensible knowledge of the same proposition you would need to become more acquainted with the fact that makes it true.

There are many truths we claim to know though we rarely find the motivation to reflect on our ignorance concerning the facts to which they correspond. Recently I read on the NASA website that they discovered a new earth-like planet. They named it "Kepler-186f". If NASA website is a reliable source of information, and if what they say is true, then I could now be said to know that Kepler-186f is a planet. This is a typical case of knowledge by testimony. But then I ask myself: what do I know about Kepler-186f? From the naming system NASA employs I can deduce that it is a planet that revolves around a star called "Kepler-186", and that it is the 6^{th} object discovered so far that revolves around it (hence the subscript "f"). I also know now that Kepler-186f is close in size to earth, and that is why its discovery made it into the headlines. Other than that I know close to nothing about this distant planet. I do not know where in our galaxy it is, what its sun is like, what kind of atmosphere it has, what the color of sky would look like on a sunny day, whether there are oceans on it, etc. My epistemic connection to this planet is remote enough to make the name inostensible in my idiolect. When I further consider my knowledge of the proposition that Kepler-186f is a planet, with little reflection I could come to realize how little I know the fact that makes it true; namely the fact of *Kepler-186f's being a planet*. Given that a part of the sentence that expresses the proposition leans towards the inostensible, then the same is also the case for the full sentence. I know that the sentence refers to a fact, but I have little acquaintance with that fact. I am not ignorant of the truth of the proposition, but I am

quite ignorant of the fact that makes it true. This is why my knowledge of the proposition in question is leaned towards the inostensible, allowing me to be curious about it.

At times not just the subject term, but also the predicate term in a sentence may be inostensible for one, even if they know the proposition expressed by it is true. Consider the following case, which is perhaps a bit artificial, but it makes the point. Suppose you meet a friend you haven't seen for a long time. At one point in the conversation you ask him "so are you seeing anyone?". He responds: "yes, and her eyes are so beautiful". You ask "what color are they?", to which he replies: "my favorite color". Now if you take his word for it, then you know a certain proposition: my friend's lover's eyes are is favorite color. But suppose you have no idea who his new lover is, nor his favorite color. Under this scenario though you would know that the sentence "my friend's lover's eyes are his favorite color" expresses a truth, you would not know the fact that makes it true. The sentence refers to a fact which involves a certain woman's eyes being a certain color. If Sue is the lover in question, and your friend's favorite color is brown, then the fact in question would be *Sue's eyes being brown*. You know that the sentence expresses a truth, but you do not know the fact to which it refers.

When you know a truth but you are ignorant about the fact that makes it true, this could at times arouse your curiosity. In the previous case for instance you may be curious about who your friend's lover is, or you may be curious about what your friend's favorite color is, but you could also be curious about the fact in question. Interestingly there is no standard way to pose your curiosity of a fact in the form of a question. Perhaps we may use something like the Spanish model to convert the full declarative sentence into an interrogative with a high pitch at the end (or by putting a question mark in written form): "your lover's eyes are your favorite color?" Here your intention is not to ask a whether-question given that you already know that the sentence expresses a truth. Though this way of asking a question sounds highly artificial, there are contexts in which we do raise such questions. Suppose your conversation with your friend continues like this:

> You: Who is your lover?
> Him: In fact, you know her.
> You: I know her?

Here your final utterance does not have to be an exclamation that expresses your surprise. It also does not have to be expressing doubt about whether what he says is true. It may be taken purely as a question expressing curiosity. Note that the sentence "I know her" contains a pronoun that is inostensible for you in this context given that you do not know the person referred to by it. The full sentence then expresses a truth, but what you are curious about is not whether it is true, but rather the fact that makes it true. Once again this would be a case in which

you have merely inostensible knowledge of a proposition; you would know that the sentence refers to a fact, but you would not know the fact.

So now we are in a position to distinguish between two kinds of propositional ignorance depending on which kind of propositional knowledge one lacks. If one lacks inostensible knowledge of a proposition, then one lacks knowledge period, and that is the typical kind of ignorance. Given that this is ignorance concerning the truth of a proposition let us call it "truth-ignorance". When one acquires knowledge of a proposition, then truth-ignorance is eliminated, (or at least reduced). One may however still be ignorant about the fact that makes the proposition true. Let us call this "fact-ignorance." When one acquires merely inostensible knowledge of a proposition, one is not truth-ignorant anymore, but one is still fact-ignorant.

The philosophical significance of distinguishing between these two types of ignorance becomes more evident when we come to realize that finding a correct answer to a wh-question does not always fully eliminate our ignorance. If you ask "who won the race?", and you get the reply "the fastest man on earth", you would not be satisfied if you do not know who the fastest man on earth is.[10] Though the answer may be a correct answer to the question, it will not eliminate your ignorance concerning the fact in question. Tough you would know a certain truth you would not know the fact that makes it true, if you do not know who the fastest man one earth is—which makes the description inostensible in your idiolect. When a part of a sentence is inostensible then the whole sentence will also be inostensible. Even if you know that the sentence expresses a truth, you would not know the fact to which it refers. You would know that the man who won the race is the fastest man on earth, though you would not know the fact which makes it true. If unbeknownst to you Bolt is the fastest man, then you would still be ignorant of the fact that he won the race. This does not imply that once you come to know the proposition that Bolt won the race your ignorance will be eliminated. If you know nothing about Bolt and have never even heard of his name before, then merely acquiring the knowledge that Bolt won the race does not put you in close epistemic contact with that fact. Consider the famous Unabomber-case. After several instances of explosions of bombs mailed to certain university and airline offices, the FBI gave the name "the Unabomber" (shorthand for *the university and airline bomber*) for the suspect. Before he was caught the Unabomber kept sending new bombs, and after each case the FBI was able to conclude from the peculiar ways in which the bombs were manufactured that it was the Unabomber who was responsible. In those cases, though the police knew that the Unabomber had sent the bomb, they did not know the fact that makes it true, given that they did not know who

[10] The example is due to Hand (1988). By appealing to Hintikka's notion of *epistemically relativized-rigidity* Hand argues that "the fastest man on earth" does not answer the question when it is not epistemically rigid for the asker. See my (2012: 114–116) for a discussion of why such an account fails.

the Unabomber was. When the name "the Unabomber" is inostensible, then every sentence in which it appears would be insotensible, even for ones who know that the sentence in questions expresses a truth. The police were not ignorant about the truth of the proposition in question, though they were ignorant of the fact that makes that proposition true.

You may know that the 98th prime is not divisible by 3, but that does not imply that you know what the 98th prime number is, and if you are ignorant of this, then you are ignorant of a certain mathematical fact.[11] If you introduced a name for this number, say "P98", you could claim to know that P98 is not divisible by 3, but that would not put you in epistemic contact with this fact. One reason why our ignorance of facts goes unnoticed is because at times when we learn the standard name of a person or a city, or some object as such, we get a false sense of acquaintance. If you ask "what is the capital of Rwanda?" and get the answer "it is Kigali", you could thereby eliminate your truth-ignorance, but if you still know nothing else about this city, you could still be ignorant of the fact of Kigali's being the capital of Rwanda. A Kigali native would certainly know this fact much better than you do given their acquaintance with this city. If Mary spends all her life in a black and white room, and learns many truths about the color blue, she may come to know that the sky on a clear sunny day is blue, though she would not know the fact that makes it true.[12] All her propositional knowledge about the color blue would be inostensible, that is why when she is released from her room and observes the sky for the first time she learns something new and eliminates her ignorance of this fact.

V.

The distinction between ostensible and inostensible knowledge is one that allows for degrees making propositional knowledge gradable, an idea that has not been welcomed by philosophers in general. For every case in which an agent knows a proposition we may talk about the degree of the agent's epistemic connection to the fact that makes the proposition true. Just like one's knowledge of an object may come in degrees, their knowledge of a fact concerning an object's having a certain property, or an object's having a certain relation to another object may also come in degrees.[13] At one end of the scale we may have complete

[11] The example is due to Keith Donnellan (1979) though he makes use of it for a different—though not completely unrelated—purpose. For a detailed critical discussion of Donnellan on the de re/de dicto distinction and his arguments against Kripke's (1972) contingent a priori argument see Inan (2012) especially Chapter 12: Limits of Curiosity and Its Satisfaction.

[12] As most readers would know this example is from a famous thought experiment due to Frank Jackson (1982), which he makes use of to argue against physicalism. Though I am inclined to believe that Jackson's argument is fallacious, his thought experiment is nonetheless philosophically interesting which could be used for purposes other than his own.

[13] For every term in our idiolect, including full sentences, we may talk about

ostensibilty, which would be the case when an agent has infallible justification for the truth of the proposition and is therefore certain that the fact in question exists, and also has complete acquaintance with all of its constituents. This is something we rarely achieve, first because our justification for the truth of a proposition seldom gives us the right to be certain about it, and secondly, it is almost never the case that we have full acquaintance with the constituents of the fact that makes a proposition true, even when we know with complete certainty that the proposition is true. The closer we are to the inostensible end of the scale, the more room there will be for curiosity. So it follows that knowing that you do not know whether a proposition is true is not the only form of awareness of ignorance, for your degree of acquaintance of the fact that makes that proposition true may be low enough for you to become aware that you are, to some extent, ignorant of that fact. *Awareness of ignorance* then is also a gradable notion. All along just to ease the discussion I have taken the liberty to talk about *the elimination of ignorance* as if it is an all or nothing affair. When we consider the facts about the world that we claim to know we shall soon realize that our knowledge of the constituent objects and properties of those facts is far from being complete. A complete elimination of our ignorance concerning a substantial fact rarely takes place, if at all. We should then admit that the more experience we gain about the facts of the world, our ignorance is reduced, but almost never completely eliminated. The best we can do is to attempt to make our propositions and the concepts within them to become more ostensible. Awareness of ignorance, whether it is objectual of propositional, can then always be translated into an *awareness of inostensibility*. For every instance of objectual ignorance there will always be a singular term, which is not a full sentence, whose referent is unknown to the agent making that singular term inostensible in the idiolect of the agent. Propositional ignorance comes in two different varieties, truth-ignorance and fact-ignorance. In the former case there is a full sentence *s* whose truth value is unknown to the agent, making it inostensible; awareness of this form ignorance then can always be translated into an awareness of the inostensibility of a definite description: "the truth-value of *s*". When an agent knows that a sentence expresses a truth but does not know the fact that makes it true, the sentence in question is again inostensible given that the agent does not know the fact to which the sentence refers. All in all, for every kind of awareness of ignorance there will always be a linguistic term whose inostensibility the agent is aware of. This goes to show that the acquisition of the knowledge of truths, even when it is accompanied with complete certainty, cannot be the ultimate goal of inquiry.

its "degree of ostensibility". See Inan (2014) for a more elaborate discussion of this notion.

Acknowledgments

I presented some of the ideas in this paper at Koç University and Şehir University both in April 2016. I thank Ipek A. Celik Rappas and Eylem Ozaltun for their invitation to Koç University, and to Sinem Elkatip and Manuel Knoll for their invitation to Şehir University, as well as Ishak Arslan, the Chair of the Philosophy Department, for his support. At Koç University I was honored to have the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities Ahmet İçduygu and his Associate Fuat Balcı at my talk; I am grateful for their enthusiastic support and the stimulating discussion we later had in the Dean's office. I would like to thank the audiences at both venues for valuable discussion; unfortunately, I cannot remember all who have made a contribution, but among the ones I can, I owe my gratitude to Harry Platanakis, Erhan Demircioglu, Zeynep Direk, Aran Arslan, Patrick Roney, Ipek A. Celik Rappas, Sinem Elkatip and Manuel Knoll. I am also indebted to my students Irem Günhan, and especially Safiye Yiğit for their feedback. Last but not least I am grateful to Nenad Miscevic for all his support of my work on curiosity, and for always sharing my enthusiasm of the topic. This work has been funded by *Scientific Research Fund* of Boğaziçi University; Title: *The Epistemic, Semantic, and Ethical Dimensions of Curiosity*; Code Number: BAP 12B02P3.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Inan on Objectual and Propositional Ignorance

ERHAN DEMİRCİOGLU
Department of Philosophy, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey

In this note, I would like to focus on the two central distinctions Inan draws between varieties of ignorance. One is the distinction between "objectual" and "propositional" ignorance, and the other is the distinction between "truth-ignorance" and "fact-ignorance," which is a distinction between two types of propositional ignorance. According to Inan, appreciating these distinctions allow us to see what is wrong with the "received view," according to which ignorance (or awareness of it) is "always about truth," and enables us to "overcome our [philosophers'] propositional-bias." I will argue for two theses. First, fact-ignorance appears to be a form of objectual ignorance; and, if this is so, there are no two distinctions but only one distinction that Inan in effect offers, which is between objectual and propositional ignorance. Second, what Inan calls "the received view" can raise some reasonable worries about objectual ignorance that are not taken into account by him.

Keywords: Curiosity, epistemic desire, ignorance, awareness of ignorance, Ilhan Inan.

Inan's paper (Inan 2016) raises many interesting issues about curiosity and its relation to (awareness of) ignorance. The nature of curiosity as a mental state and whether awareness of ignorance is required for that mental state are philosophically underexplored topics by any standards, an unfortunate fact which itself calls for some reflection. Along with his previous significant works,[1] Inan's this paper has the potential to be an important contribution to the unfairly limited philosophical literature on curiosity.

In this note, I would like to focus on the two central distinctions Inan draws between varieties of ignorance. One is the distinction between "objectual" and "propositional" ignorance, and the other is the distinction between "truth-ignorance" and "fact-ignorance," which is

[1] See for instance Inan (2010, 2012).

a distinction between two types of propositional ignorance. According to Inan, appreciating these distinctions allow us to see what is wrong with the "received view" (286),[2] according to which ignorance (or awareness of it) is "always about truth" (286), and enables us to "overcome our [philosophers'] propositional-bias" (290). I will argue for two theses. First, fact-ignorance appears to be a form of objectual ignorance; and, if this is so, there are no two distinctions but only one distinction that Inan in effect offers, which is between objectual and propositional ignorance. Second, what Inan calls "the received view" can raise some reasonable worries about objectual ignorance that are not taken into account by him.

In his attempt to establish the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance, Inan first proceeds by drawing a distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity. Inan writes:

> When one is curious about who someone is, there will be a description that purports to refer to an unknown person; when one is curious about where something is there will be a description that refers to an unknown location; when one is curious about why something happened, there will be a description that refers to an unknown cause etc. This is objectual curiosity. There is then curiosity whose content is given by a full sentence which expresses a proposition in the appropriate context. This is what I call propositional curiosity. (287)

Inan's "argument from curiosity" (286) for the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance relies on the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity. Inan argues that if there is a distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity along the lines specified above, then given that "the content of one's curiosity and the content of one's ignorance are identical" (291), then there must be a corresponding distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance, the former of which "arouses" (288) objectual curiosity and the latter of which propositional curiosity. According to Inan, since there are no good reasons to deny the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity (see 291 and 295), there are no good reasons to deny the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance.

I grant that Inan's argument from curiosity is valid, and I also grant the premise that the content of one's curiosity is the same as the content of one's ignorance. However, a worry I have about the argument from curiosity concerns the degree of its persuasiveness and circuitousness. Let me illustrate what I mean by "persuasiveness" and "circuitousness" by an example. Suppose that Jane wonders whether inflation rates will increase next year (call the content of Jane's wondering, *C*). And suppose that Jack gives her the following argument: inflation rates will neither decrease nor remain unchanged next year (call it *P*), therefore *C*. Now, assuming that Jack's argument (or at least a reconstruction of it supplemented by the obvious missing premise) is valid, it is not per-

[2] All page references are to Inan (2016), unless otherwise noted.

suasive for Jane. Jane would not have been wondering about whether *C*, if she already had some good reasons to believe that *P*. Since both the premise and the conclusion of Jack's argument are *equally* open to question for Jane, Jack's argument does not give her any good reasons to believe the conclusion, which renders it unpersuasive. Now, suppose that noticing that his argument does not have the persuasive power he thought it has, Jack adds some premises to that argument intended as support for *P*, ending up with a longer, extended argument for *C*. However, it now seems that those premises intended as support for *P* themselves might function as reasons for *C*, rendering the argument from those premises to *P* and then to *C* unnecessarily circuitous. Assuming that Jack's longer, extended argument establishes *C*, that conclusion could also have been established without going through the roundabout way appealing to *P*. So, Jack's argument for *C* either is unpersuasive (in the case of the original version) or is (or runs the risk of being) unnecessarily circuitous (in the case of the longer, extended version).

It seems to me that something similar is going on with Inan's argument from curiosity. The distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity appears to be *as problematic as* the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance (i.e., if one has some reason for doubting one of these distinctions, one thereby has the very same reason for doubting the other), and therefore the argument from the former (and the premise identifying the content of curiosity with that of ignorance) to the latter appears to be unpersuasive. Of course, Inan intends to provide support for the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity by attempting to undermine some doubts philosophers might have about it, and this might be thought of as an attempt to render that distinction *less* problematic than the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance, alleviating the worry regarding the persuasiveness of the argument from curiosity. However, the problem is that whatever reason Inan brings forth for doubting "the propositional-bias" in the case of curiosity (see especially 291) could have been easily formulated, with relevant terminological changes being made, as reason for doubting that bias in the case of ignorance, and this shows that the argument *from curiosity* for the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance is unnecessarily circuitous: assuming that the argument from curiosity establishes the conclusion that there is a distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance, that conclusion could also have been established without going through the roundabout way appealing to the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity.

My judgment is that Inan's argument from curiosity is unnecessarily circuitous. Of course, this does not by itself mean that Inan does not succeed in establishing the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity, nor does it mean that the argument from curiosity for

the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance is unsuccessful. I will take a closer look at Inan's reasons for the latter distinction later in the paper; but for now, I would like to assess Inan's distinction between two forms of propositional ignorance, truth-ignorance and fact-ignorance. According to Inan, "ignorance concerning the truth of a proposition" (299) is truth-ignorance. In the case of truth-ignorance, "there is a full sentence *s* whose truth-value is unknown to the agent" (301). However, "when an agent knows that a sentence expresses a truth but does not know the fact that makes it true" (301), what we have is fact-ignorance. According to Inan, knowing that a proposition is true does not entail knowing the fact that makes it true.

The distinction between truth-ignorance and fact-ignorance is confusing for the following reason. On a natural view, understanding a declarative sentence (or a proposition) requires knowing what needs to be the case (or, equivalently for present purposes, which fact needs to obtain) if that sentence (or proposition) is true. If this is so, then if one understands a declarative sentence and knows that that sentence is true, one cannot fail to know the fact that makes that sentence true. So, if understanding a sentence requires knowing which fact needs to obtain if that sentence is true, as it intuitively appears to be, then fact-ignorance defined as a form of *propositional* ignorance collapses into truth-ignorance: understanding a sentence allows me to know what needs to be the case if that sentence is true, and if this understanding is combined with my knowing that that sentence is true, then I thereby know the fact that makes that sentence true. Understanding a sentence bridges any gap that one might think there is between truth-ignorance and fact-ignorance as different types of *propositional* ignorance: one cannot fail to know the fact that makes the proposition that he understands and knows to be true.

I hold that Inan's distinction between truth-ignorance and fact-ignorance is best interpreted not as a distinction between two varieties of propositional ignorance but as (an attempt to reaffirm) the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance. One reason for this pertains to the consideration just adduced: we cannot plausibly take the distinction as a distinction between two forms of propositional ignorance given that understanding a sentence requires knowing what needs to be the case if that sentence is true, and understanding a sentence plausibly requires that. This interpretation gets further support from the answer Inan provides to the question "how can one know that a proposition is true while not knowing the fact that makes it true?" Inan writes: "Now the typical way in which this could happen is when a sentence contains a term that is inostensible for the subject [a term whose referent is unknown to the subject (see 287, fn. 2)]" (297). As for the possibility of fact-ignorance, Inan also notes: "When a part of a sentence is inostensible then the whole sentence will also be inostensible" (p. 23). Now, if failure to know the fact that makes a proposition true

(fact-ignorance), as Inan says, stems from one's failure to know the referent of a term or, more generally, one's failure to know the referent of a part of a sentence, then fact-ignorance cannot be propositional (simply because referents of parts of sentences are not propositions) but at most be objectual. In fact, Inan's "fact-ignorance" is best understood as "failure to know *the object* that is a constituent of the fact that makes a proposition true" and as such it falls within the rubric of Inan's *objectual* ignorance. So, the only form of propositional ignorance that we are left with is what Inan calls truth-ignorance.

This completes my defense of the idea that despite his own advertisement, there are no two distinctions but is only one distinction that Inan in effect offers, and that is between objectual and propositional ignorance. I will now articulate some ways in which *that* distinction can be challenged.

According to Inan, objectual ignorance is the sort of ignorance the content of which cannot be captured by a declarative sentence (or a whether-question) but which can be adequately captured by a definite description.[3] There is a particular objection Inan considers and provides replies to against the idea that there is such a thing as irreducibly objectual ignorance. Inan writes:

> In all…cases [of objectual ignorance] there is a definite description that is inostensible for the subject who is aware of his or her ignorance. If I do not know where my keys are, then "the location of my keys" is inostensible for me, given that I do not know its referent. As far as my ignorance goes it is irrelevant whether I have a hypothesis concerning what the referent of the term is. If, for instance, I entertain the idea that I may have left my keys in my office, then there is a full proposition whose truth value is unknown to me: my house keys are in my office. This proposition is also inostensible for me given that I do not know whether it is true or false, and thus I may be aware of my ignorance of it. This however is not the same ignorance as in the initial case. Being aware of my ignorance about where my keys are, is not the same thing as being aware of my ignorance about whether my keys are in my office. If I were to find out that my keys are not in my office, I would no longer be ignorant whether they are there, but that would not eliminate my ignorance about where the keys are…. If, on the other hand, I were to find out that my keys are in fact in my office, then not only the proposition, but also the definite description will become ostensible. The fact that by eliminating my propositional ignorance I thereby eliminate my objectual ignorance by no means implies that the two are identical. (293-294, see also 291)

Let us call the thesis that for every case of objectual ignorance, there is a case of propositional ignorance with which it can be identified *propositionalism about ignorance* (shortly, *PI*). If PI is true, then there is no such thing as irreducibly objectual ignorance. In the passage above, Inan argues for two distinct theses. First, he argues that one's objectu-

[3] In the case of objectual curiosity, there is, Inan writes, "always a definite description—rather than a full sentence—that refers to some unknown entity relative to the curious subject" (291).

al ignorance about, say, the whereabouts of an object, x, cannot be identified with one's propositional ignorance about whether x is in y, if x is not in y. This is, Inan maintains, because one can come to know that x is not in y and thereby remove one's propositional ignorance about whether x is in y while one's objectual ignorance about the whereabouts of x remains untouched. I take no issue with this argument and am inclined to think that it shows what it intends to show, *viz*. that PI cannot plausibly attempt to identify cases of objectual ignorance with cases in which propositions about the truth-values of which one is ignorant are *false*.

Second, Inan argues that one's objectual ignorance about, say, the whereabouts of an object, x, cannot be identified with one's propositional ignorance about whether x is in y, even if x is in y. Suppose that I am ignorant about the location of my keys, and suppose further that they are in the bathroom. Inan argues that my ignorance about the location of my keys cannot be identified by my being ignorant that they are in the bathroom. Inan admits that coming to know that they are in the bathroom, acquiring this piece of propositional knowledge, would eliminate my objectual ignorance in question; however, he maintains, as quoted in the passage above, that "by eliminating my propositional ignorance I thereby eliminate my objectual ignorance by no means implies that the two are identical."

I think the propositionalist about ignorance can rightly protest at this point. Let us call the thesis that for every case of objectual knowledge, there is a piece of propositional knowledge with which it can be identified *propositionalism about knowledge* (shortly, *PK*). The propositionalist about ignorance can now adopt the following strategy: firstly, show that PK is true, and secondly, move from PK to PI. The first step of the strategy can be plausibly based on the following sort of observation: I know where my keys are in virtue of knowing that they are in such-and-such place, say, in the bathroom. If I know that my keys are in the bathroom, that is, if I have that propositional knowledge, I also *thereby* have a piece of what Inan calls objectual knowledge about their whereabouts, *viz*. I know where my keys are. If this is so, then objectual knowledge about the location of an object is *not something extra* to propositional knowledge that they are in such-and-such place: it does not make sense to try to have objectual knowledge about the whereabouts of my keys if I already know that they are in the bathroom. (This is also true of other sorts of putatively objectual knowledge the content of which can be captured by other sorts of wh-questions. For instance, I know *when* the departmental meeting is in virtue of knowing *that* it is at 5 pm today.) This supports the thesis that talk of objectual knowledge is merely elliptical, a mere shorthand, for talk of propositional knowledge, which in turn supports PK.

Now, the move from PK to PI seems to be trivial: if objectual knowledge (about the whereabouts of my keys) is propositional knowledge

(that they are in such-and-such place), then lack of objectual knowledge (objectual ignorance) must be lack of propositional knowledge (propositional ignorance). I do not know where my keys are in virtue of not knowing that they are in such-and-such place. What I am ignorant of when I do not know the location of my keys is that they are in such-and-such place, and that they are in such-and-such place is a proposition. So, it appears that talk of objectual ignorance is merely elliptical, a mere shorthand, for talk of propositional ignorance and, accordingly, that PI is true.

According to Inan, there is irreducibly objectual ignorance, objectual ignorance whose content cannot be captured by a declarative sentence. I think Inan is right in insisting, for the very reasons he himself presents, that the content of objectual ignorance cannot be captured by *false* declarative sentences. However, I fail to see any good reasons why the content of objectual ignorance cannot be captured by some *true* declarative sentences. It seems obviously correct to say that failure to know where my keys are is failure to know that they are in the bathroom, if my keys are in the bathroom.

Inan is right that the fact that eliminating propositional ignorance eliminates objectual ignorance does not imply that objectual ignorance is the same as propositional ignorance. However, the question that calls for an answer is what it is that explains *that* fact: why does eliminating propositional ignorance eliminate objectual ignorance? The question receives a straightforward answer if PI is true. Inan's account, on the other hand, owes us an answer.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Comments on Inan's Notions of Objectual and Propositional Curiosity

MIRELA FUŠ*
Department of Philosophy, University of Oslo, Norway
Department of Philosophy, University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK

In this paper I comment on Inan's notions of propositional and objectual curiosity. Even though Inan offers an interesting and intuitive distinction between propositional and objectual curiosity, I want to question two aspects of his theory of curiosity. One aspect concerns his thesis that propositional curiosity is interdependent on epistemic attitudes such as belief, certainty and interest. Another aspect of his theory that I discuss is his thesis that objectual curiosity is not reducible to propositional curiosity. In more detail, in the first part, I start off by explaining what propositional curiosity is according to Inan and I bring up two worries that I call: (i) over-complexity as a result of subjectivity and (ii) over-complexity as a result of dynamics for the above mentioned epistemic attitudes. Both worries stress the problem of over-complexity of Inan's theory of propositional curiosity. In the second part, I argue that objectual curiosity is, contrary to Inan's hypothesis, reducible to propositional curiosity. I further argue that the object of wh- *questions that, according to Inan, express objectual curiosity can either be about the truth value of general or singular proposition. In addition, I suggest that only the reading where* wh- *questions express curiosity in a form of* de re *reading and have a singular proposition as their content is the one that is compatible with Inan's notion of objectual curiosity.*

Keywords: Propositional curiosity, objectual curiosity, *de re* belief, *de dicto* belief, general proposition, singular proposition.

*I am thankful for the feedback on earlier drafts of this paper that I have received from the participants of two conferences, i.e. *Philosophy and Curiosity* (Maribor, April 21–23, 2015), and *Mind, World and Action* (Dubrovnik, August 24–28, 2015). I am especially indebted to Prof. Ilhan Inan, Prof. Nenad Miščević, Prof. Berislav Žarnić, and Prof. Timothy Williamson for useful comments and critique.

> "The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing."
> — Albert Einstein

Introduction

What is a curiosity? "A desire to know" ("desire to understand"[1]) has been considered as a cursory definition or rather an abbreviation for curiosity. Apart from that, the history of philosophy did not have much to tell us about curiosity until recently.[2] On the other hand, notions such as belief, acquaintance, and knowledge have been discussed at great length and have earned their place within the philosophical fields of epistemology, philosophy of language and philosophy of mind.

Whereas the unknown is our starting point, curiosity is related to asking and answering of questioning or queries, and, thus, bringing us closer to either ignorance or knowledge. Inan (2014) argues that curiosity contributes to epistemic attitudes and achievements. Under the assumption that curiosity is an epistemic attitude as well as knowledge is, Inan is curious to discover the relation between curiosity and other epistemic attitudes; in particular, for propositional curiosity: a "*belief* that is uncertain," and for objectual curiosity: "partial *acquaintance* with an object." Furthermore, he seeks to find a place for curiosity within the existing philosophical tradition, and, by offering this distinction, he aims to clear up the possible misunderstandings.

The motivation for his theory he finds in a direct connection between curiosity and knowledge. Here I spell out a simple and intuitive argument Inan (2014) offers: (i) Knowing is (at least sometimes) an epistemic achievement. (ii) Curiosity is one of the basic motivators of knowing. (iii) Thus, curiosity is (related to) an epistemic achievement.

However, this becomes more complicated when one wants to show how exactly curiosity amounts to knowledge and knowledge related notions such as belief, acquaintance (ostensibility) and ignorance. In particular, Inan (2014: 143–144) tries to answer the following questions:

> "If knowledge is a propositional attitude, is curiosity so too?"
> "Is awareness of ignorance a precondition for curiosity?"
> "If all knowing is in fact knowing the answer to a question, does it then follow that knowledge always originates from curiosity?"
> "How does curiosity motivate inquiry into the unknown?"
> "How does curiosity relate to the holding of a belief that is uncertain and how does it relate to having partial acquaintance with an object?"

In this paper, I focus on Inan's notions of propositional and objectual curiosity as spelled out in his book *The Philosophy of Curiosity* (2012),

[1] See Descartes (1989).

[2] Nowadays, after a brief categorical search, one could classify curiosity under the scope of virtue epistemology.

and the ideas that he further developed in his recent paper "Curiosity, Belief and Acquaintance" (2014). Inan (2012, 2014) thus contrasts two types of curiosity: *propositional* (Aristotle's "whether" questions) and *objectual* ("what" questions) curiosity. Propositional curiosity is a propositional attitude for Inan and it takes the following form: "S is curious whether p" where "p" is a proposition. In cases such as "I am curious whether it will rain tomorrow," Inan argues that one is curious about the truth value of a proposition in question, namely "it will rain tomorrow." The object of propositional curiosity is thus an unknown truth value of a proposition. Propositional curiosity has a question form: "is it the case that s?" where "s" is a full declarative sentence that expresses a proposition. On the other hand, objectual curiosity, for Inan, takes the form of *wh-* questions, such as: "Who is the murderer of Smith?" For the objectual curiosity, Inan argues, does not involve curiosity in the truth of a proposition because there is no particular proposition one is curious about.

Even though Inan offers an interesting and intuitive distinction between propositional and objectual curiosity, I want to question two aspects of his theory of curiosity. One aspect concerns his thesis that propositional curiosity is interdependent on epistemic attitudes such as *belief*, *certainty* and *interest*. Another aspect of his theory that I discuss is his thesis that *objectual curiosity is not reducible to propositional curiosity*. In more detail, in the Part I, I start off by explaining what propositional curiosity is for Inan and I bring up two worries that I call: (i) *over-complexity as a result of subjectivity* and (ii) *over-complexity as a result of dynamics* for the above mentioned epistemic attitudes. Both worries stress the problem of over-complexity of a theory of propositional curiosity. In the Part II, I argue that *objectual curiosity is,* contrary to Inan's hypothesis*, reducible to propositional curiosity*. I will hopefully show the analysis under which his thesis comes up short and claim that objectual curiosity is, in fact, reducible to a propositional curiosity.

1. *Propositional Curiosity*

Propositional curiosity for Inan (2014) takes the following form: "S is curious whether p" where "p" is a proposition. In cases such as "I am curious whether it will rain tomorrow," one is curious about the truth value of a proposition in question, namely, the proposition "it will rain tomorrow." The object of propositional curiosity is thus an unknown truth value of a proposition.

Here are some further working assumptions. Inan thinks that a *belief* comes in degrees as well as curiosity. He further argues that belief and curiosity are inversely proportional. If one believes 100%, i.e. if she is completely certain in the truth value of the proposition in question, then she is not curious at all.

Certainty leaves no room for curiosity since: "Curiosity about whether a proposition is true or false can only take place under uncertainty"

(Inan 2014: 144). One can ask oneself whether a certain proposition is true or false only when one is uncertain. In brief, he thinks, dogmatics cannot be curious. Furthermore, certainty is taken here to be an epistemic attitude with respect to the truth of a proposition and Inan thinks of it as a subjective category, no matter whether the proposition is true or false objectively since: "People who are certain of their beliefs may not always have the right to be certain" (Inan 2014: 144). He also takes utterances such as: "I am certain that p, but I am still curious whether p" never to be true because one cannot be 100% certain and still be curious, i.e. one's curiosity is then 0%, which makes this conjunction false. On the other hand, one can claim: "I believe that p, but I am curious whether p" and sometimes be true because one can believe something but not be certain, and this opens a possibility for a curiosity, at least according to Inan.

Finally, there is another important parameter that also comes in degrees and that should be taken into consideration, namely our *interest* in the object of our curiosity. Inan argues that a relation between curiosity and interest is a proportional one. On the other hand, he believes that a relation between interest and belief is not an easy one, but rather a "peculiar" one, and he believes he cannot offer it without a further investigation. However, he believes that incorporating interest as a parameter should help to explain cases such as:

> Lack of certainty only when accompanied with interest motivates curiosity. This is why you may hold two separate beliefs having the same degree, though you may be curious about the truth of one, and not the other, or you may be curious about both, but with different degrees. (Inan 2014: 147)

To sum up, there are various parameters and epistemic attitudes Inan thinks that are at play together with propositional curiosity. Moreover, different relations among them are quite important. Inan admits that, without further investigation, he cannot tell for sure how those three parameters relate, i.e. belief, curiosity and interest. However, he argues that *they come in degree*s and are not independent epistemic attitudes, because if they were, then they would connect to curiosity in a more obvious way. He leaves us with a following conclusion:

> … for any subject and a proposition that that subject grasps, the degree of curiosity in the truth of that proposition will be *inversely proportional to the degree of belief* in the truth of that proposition, but it will be *directly proportional to the degree of interest* in the truth of that proposition. (Inan 2014: 147; italics mine)

In the remaining two subsections of this part of the paper, I will spell out my two worries related to Inan's notion of propositional curiosity. I proceed with the first worry that I call *Over-complexity as a Result of Subjectivity.*

1.1. *First Worry: Over-complexity as a Result of Subjectivity*

Let me give you the gist of this worry. Inan believes that: "Curiosity can only take place when we come to realize the fallibility of our beliefs" (Inan 2014, 145)[3]. As mentioned above, Inan talks about certainty or "a degree of belief" in a subjective sense. For the sake of argument, I would like to take into consideration another possible parameter that can influence our belief: namely *context sensitivity*. Context sensitivity can affect our belief in both objective and subjective sense, i.e. when *context switches* (objective sense) and as our *realization (or our failure to realize) that context has switched or could switch without us noticing it* (subjective sense). In other words, changes in context and our (failure of) tracking it can influence our degree of belief. Consequently, this would influence our degree of curiosity. It seems that our degree of curiosity can be changed because of the context sensitivity parameter either in objective or subjective sense (or both).

In particular, when taken as an objective parameter, context sensitivity can (but does not have to) influence a belief without a subject necessarily having to be directly aware of it, yet it still can affect subject's degree of belief. For example, how certain one is in the proposition that *it will rain tomorrow* depends also on the context. If context changed, e.g. if one saw more clouds, one would become less certain that it will rain tomorrow. On the other hand, when taken as a subjective parameter, i.e. our realization that context changed or could change and we would not detect it, can influence our degree of belief, in a similar way as our realization about fallibility of our beliefs that Inan mentions can change our degree of belief and influence curiosity. Thus, context sensitivity as a parameter could affect curiosity.

Moreover, we could explain a subjective context sensitivity as a parameter that is connected to the notion of our fallibility realization, which is also a subjective notion according to Inan. In this sense, our realization about our fallibility could also include a realization that all sorts of other parameters (context sensitivity included) can play a role in (a possible) change of our beliefs when things go wrong and when a change is not detected properly. These subjective realizations could, thus, motivate our curiosity.[4]

[3] Timothy Williamson (in personal discussions) pointed out that what is going completely astray with Inan's strategy is that he is focusing all the time on *belief* when the curiosity has to do with *knowledge*. For example, Williamson strongly disagrees with the above claim that "Curiosity can only take place when we come to realize the fallibility of our beliefs" (Inan 2014: 145). He believes that somebody who has no awareness of their own fallibility can also be curious, let's say, about what is inside of the box. For if you don't know what is inside the box, you can still have a desire to know what is inside the box. This is for Williamson a result of his commitment that curiosity acquires a desire to acquire knowledge. However, for the sake of argument, I will proceed with Inan's notion about one's realization of one's fallibility.

[4] The objective context sensitivity can still play a role, in sense that it could influence curiosity indirectly via our subjective realization that context has perhaps changed.

One could further argue that some other (sub)parameters and our subjective realization of their existence can affect our belief. In other words, once we allow the subjectivity into our account of a degree of belief, how do we know where to stop? For instance, allowing a subjective notion of certain parameters which includes our realization of the fallibility of our beliefs could leave us room to introduce numerous other subjective parameters that subject might have and that could consequently affect one's curiosity. This would make the interdependence between these parameters and curiosity even more peculiar. Consequently, explaining curiosity as relying on the other epistemic attitudes and parameters could become extremely complex.

Finally, I believe this could turn out problematic in two ways: (i) too complex for the subject to grasp, and (ii) too complex for a theory of propositional curiosity. First, it would presuppose either (a) subject's extremely high-order ability to grasp many real and also possible complex relations and parameters which can influence her curiosity, or, on the contrary, (b) subject's failure or incapacity to grasp (all or some of) these parameters. I think both cases seek further explanation. Second, a theory of curiosity that could possibly include so many parameters related to degree of one's belief, might turn out to be over-complex and metaphysically too rich. This sort of explanation of propositional curiosity puts a lot of weight on the subjective relations that might have influence on curiosity. There might be another, more simple, way of explaining curiosity, without using such a complex theory of explanation and putting so much demand on the subject's cognitive capacity.

1.2. *Second Worry: Over-complexity as a Result of Dynamics*

Inan assumes that in order to be uncertain about something and then become curious one has to have an object of her curiosity. In case of propositional curiosity, for him, this is a truth value of proposition. However, apart from being an object of *curiosity*, the truth value of proposition can also be taken as an object of a *belief* or an *interest* in the following forms (1)–(3):

(1) S *believes* that p
(2) S has *interest* in p
(3) S is *curious* about p

Since Inan admits that belief, interest and curiosity are related, and some of them, such as interest and belief are related in a "peculiar" way, I am wondering about the possibility of different inner dynamics of these epistemic attitudes. Is it a dynamic of a conjunctions or something else?

I offer some possible structures of complex epistemic attitudes and their dynamics: (a) *Vertical dynamics* (5), (b) *Horizontal dynamics* (6), (c) *Vertical-horizontal dynamics* (7), where (4) is a zero-order epistemic attitude.

(4) (0-order epistemic attitude) It will rain tomorrow. (T/F)

(a) *Vertical dynamics*

(5) (1st-order epistemic attitude) I *believe* that it will rain tomorrow.
(1st-order epistemic attitude) I have *interest* in whether it will rain tomorrow.
(1st-order epistemic attitude) I am *curious* whether it will rain tomorrow.

Vertical dynamics would presuppose dynamics between different first-order epistemic attitudes, i.e. belief, interest and curiosity, towards the same proposition, i.e "it will rain tomorrow." For example, one could at the same time hold a belief, have interest, and be curious whether it will rain tomorrow.

(b) *Horizontal dynamics*

(6) (3rd-order epistemic attitude) I am *curious* about my *interest* in my *belief* that it will rain tomorrow.

Horizontal dynamics would presuppose dynamics within one third-order epistemic attitude, i.e. belief, interest and curiosity, towards the same proposition, i.e "it will rain tomorrow." For example, one could be curious about one's interest in one's belief that it will rain tomorrow.

(c) *Vertical-horizontal dynamics*

(7) (1st-order epistemic attitude) I *believe* that it will rain tomorrow.
(2nd-order epistemic attitude) I am *curious* about my *belief* that it will rain tomorrow.
(3rd-order epistemic attitude) I am *curious* about my *interest* in my *belief* that it will rain tomorrow.

Vertical-horizontal dynamics presupposes dynamics that would be a combination of vertical and horizontal dynamics. For example, one could at the same time hold a belief, be curious about one's belief, and be curious about one's interest in one's belief that it will rain tomorrow.

Since, in examples (5)–(7), all the three parameters come in degree, they could also influence one another and one could become more or less curious depending on what is going on between these epistemic attitudes. If we also allow a horizontal and horizontal-vertical dynamics, things might get really fuzzy. Thus, I would be curious to know more about their inner dynamics.

The moral of the second worry is partly analogous with the first worry: if we allow some other epistemic attitudes into account, those relations might get really over-complicated to explain propositional curiosity.

2. *Objectual Curiosity*

Inan contrasts two types of curiosity: propositional (Aristotle's "whether" questions) with objectual ("what" questions). As explained in the Part 1, propositional curiosity has a question form: "is it the case that

s?" where "s" is a full declarative sentence that expresses a proposition. Object of it is an unknown truth value and he takes it to be a propositional attitude. On the other hand, according to Inan, objectual curiosity takes the form of *wh-* questions, such as: "Who is the murderer of Smith?" For the latter, namely, objectual curiosity, Inan argues that it does not involve curiosity in the truth of a proposition because:

> there is no particular proposition in the form [a is the murderer] of which Holmes is curious to know. So my hypothesis is that being curious who someone is, or being curious when or where or how or why some event took place need not involve curiosity in the truth of a proposition. (Inan 2014: 148)

Furthermore, Inan thinks that *a degree of belief* is not applicable for objectual curiosity. Instead, he introduces a new epistemic parameter to explain the objectual curiosity—*a degree of ostensibility*, which he gets out of the notion of acquaintance that he takes to be: "an extensional notion, whereas what we need is an intensional one, that is, we need a notion that is sensitive not only to the degree of acquaintance of the object of curiosity, but also to what concept you represent that object in your mind" (Inan 2014: 152). For Inan, curiosity requires a conceptualization or a representation of its object: "The degree of curiosity is then a function of the degree of ostensibility of that concept. The notion of acquaintance is still relevant, but in an indirect way. We may define the ostensibility of a concept for a subject in terms of the degree of acquaintance of the object (determined by that concept) *under that concept*" (Inan 2014: 153).

To sum up: for Inan, propositional curiosity is: "a function of [one's] degree of belief and [one's] degree of interest when there is a full proposition involved" (Inan 2014: 148). On the other hand, objectual curiosity is: "a function of two factors: degree of interest and degree of ostensibility. It is directly proportional to the former and inversely proportional to the latter" (Inan 2014: 152).

Even though I, in principle, find Inan's distinction intuitive, I want to focus on Inan's thesis that *objectual curiosity is not a propositional attitude*. Inan believes that there is a difference between: "the logical status of belief and objectual curiosity [that] reveals itself in surface grammar" (Inan 2014: 149). Inan further argues that when Holmes is curious about: "Who is the murderer of Smith?", the sentence has a form of: "S is curious about the F", namely (8) will expresses the truth.

(8) Holmes is curious about the murderer of Smith.

However, Inan thinks that if we switched from "is curious" to "believes" as in sentences (9) or (10) below, both (9) and (10) would be ungrammatical.

(9) Holmes believes about the murderer of Smith.
(10) Holmes believes the murderer.

He further argues that this kind of interrogative sentence does not contain a full proposition and, more importantly, that there is no proposition that can be singled out of which Holmes might want to know whether that proposition is true or false, as might be the case with propositional curiosity.

Furthermore, Inan rightly thinks that introducing a long disjunctive proposition, such as (11) below, and being curious which of these propositions is true cannot help in all cases because Holmes might not have any actual nor possible suspects, yet he could still be curious *who* the murderer is.

(11) Ralph is the murderer of Smith or Brown is the murderer of Smith or …

He also points out that: "being curious about who the murderer is, is not the same thing as being curious about which disjunct is true in a disjunction" (Inan 2014: 150). Even if we could formulate a very long disjunction with all the possible answers, one couldn't grasp this long proposition, he argues.

2.1. *Two Readings of Inan's Objectual Curiosity*

In the rest of this paper I would like to offer a different, yet familiar and somewhat neutral approach to this issue. I would like to argue that there is such a proposition Holmes believes when he becomes curious about the murderer of Smith. I believe that (8) can be translated into (12):

(12) Holmes believes that *somebody* is the murderer of Smith.

Thus, Holmes is curious about *somebody*. He thinks that *somebody* did it.

Let me qualify this a bit further. The two examples, (13) and (8), depict what Inan calls propositional curiosity (13), and objectual curiosity (8):

Propositional curiosity

(13) Holmes is curious if Jones is the murderer of Smith.

In (13) Holmes is curious about the truth value of (14), namely whether this proposition is true or false.

(14) Jones is the murderer of Smith.

Objectual curiosity

(8) Holmes is curious about the murderer of Smith.

In (8) Holmes is curious about who is the murderer of Smith.

The hard question is: if Holmes is curious about who killed Smith, what is the proposition that he has in mind? One can argue that it is already a background assumption that somebody killed Smith and that (13) is thus true by default, but that the real question is not whether someone killed Smith, but *who* did it? In other words, one can say that

the proposition saying that somebody killed Smith is presupposed and that is true, yet what we really want to know is *who* is the person that killed Smith. For this reason, I propose two possible readings of (12), i.e. reading (12a) and (12b) below:

Reading A

(12a) *Holmes believes that this is true: Somebody is the murderer of Smith.*

where (12a) represents *de dicto* (general) reading: it is who ever happens to kill Smith.

Reading B

(12b) *Somebody is such that Holmes believes that he is the murderer of Smith.*

where (12b) represents *de re* (singular) reading: the person who killed Smith. I also propose the reading of *somebody* from (12b) as Kaplan's (1989a, 1989b) indexical.[5]

I believe that (8) can be spelled grammatically in the manner of (12). Furthermore, I believe that (12) has two satisfactions, one is satisfied by *de dicto* reading, i.e. (12a), and another by *de re* reading, i.e. (12b).

Moreover, there is a distinction in the *scope* of the definite description *somebody is the murderer of Smith.* In the *Reading A*, the definite description has narrow scope, within the scope of 'believes'. In the *Reading B*, the definite description has wide scope, in effect "picking out" an individual and then ascribing to Holmes a belief about that individual. The *Reading A* is a *de dicto* ascription of belief (relating him to a *dictum*, a complete proposition), whereas the *Reading B* is a *de re* ascription of belief (relating him to an individual, a *res*, that his belief is about).

When one wants to say that certain beliefs are true or false one takes 'belief' to mean *thought-content* (see Boër 2007: 35). Depending on whether reading is *de dicto* or *de re*, belief-states that are reported will have different contents: "One who takes a belief-state to involve a relation to a proposition might then be tempted to suppose that the content of a *de dicto* belief is a wholly general proposition and the content of a *de re* belief is a singular proposition" (Boër 2007: 35).[6]

[5] Kripke's (1970/1980) modal argument has been used by Kaplan (1977/1989: 512–13) to argue that demonstratives refer directly and express singular propositions.

[6] Let me briefly explain a standard distinction between a general and a singular proposition. If one takes propositions to be structured objects and that they can contain objects and can contain properties, then some of the propositions are not going to contain any objects but just properties—namely, the *general* ones. Those are the ones that are about objects if they are about objects and only by way of properties, only qua possessors of properties, whereas the structured propositions that have objects right in them do not need to get these objects by way of properties, objects are already in there—those are the *singular* ones (see Fitch and Nelson 2013).

That would mean that *de dicto* reading of (12), namely (12a), takes a general proposition as its content, whereas *de re* reading of (12), namely (12b), takes a singular proposition as its content. Furthermore, when the content of belief-state that takes form of *wh-* questions is a singular proposition (as in 12b), a thought that is expressed in such a proposition is often called a singular thought.[7, 8]

From that we could say that examples that Inan classifies as the ones of "objectual curiosity" can have two readings, i.e. *de dicto* and *de re*. I claimed that both of these readings have propositions as its contents, yet different ones, i.e. one having a *general*, and another *singular* proposition as its content. In this sense what Inan calls objectual curiosity can be spelled out or is reducible to the propositional one in the sense that there is indeed a proposition that one has in mind. In (12a), i.e. in *de dicto* reading, the truth of the general proposition might as well be presupposed. However, this seems not to be the proposition Inan (2014) is interested in to call it objectual curiosity. In particular, I believe that (12) when read as (12a), or *de dicto*, would be compatible with "propositional curiosity" according to Inan's terminology, and only when read as (12b), or *de re*, (12) would be compatible with objectual curiosity according to Inan's terminology.[9]

Conclusion

My aim in this paper was to comment on two aspects of Inan's notions of curiosity: i.e. propositional and objectual curiosity. In the first part of this paper, I have expressed two worries concerning the epistemic attitudes and parameters that Inan takes to be relevant for propositional curiosity. Both worries that I bring up, namely the *over-complexity as*

[7] There are three dominant theories of singular thought, namely *Acquaintance Theory* of singular thought (see Burge 1977, Donnellan 1979, Lewis 1979, Evans 1982, Boer and Lycan 1986, Bach 1987/94, Salmon 1988, Brewer 1999, Recanati 1993, Soames 2003, Pryor 2007), *Semantic Instrumentalism* (see Harman 1977, Kaplan 1989a) and *Cognitive Authority* or *Cognitivism* (see Jeshion 2002, 2009, 2010). (See Fuš 2013a: 201; also see Fuš 2013b).

[8] As mentioned, there are different theories of singular thoughts and, at this point, I remain neutral, whether one could perhaps also accept the adopted version of Inan's (2010, 2012) theory of ostensibility to accommodate such belief-state.

[9] Timothy Williamson (in personal discussions) claims that curiosity is propositional because there is a desire for some x one knows that x is the murderer. Williamson finds *de re*/*de dicto* distinction I introduced relevant, because he thinks that in case when one is curious about who is the murderer of Smith, the knowledge that one wants to acquire is *de re knowledge* of somebody, namely the murderer. In other words, he thinks that *de re*/*de dicto* distinction I introduced is relevant because it is a desire for a certain sort of *de re knowledge*. However, he also rightly pointed out that a desire to have a *de re* attitude of a certain sort, isn't itself *de re*.

My quick reply to this worry is that precisely because (12) has two satisfactions, namely *de re* or *de dicto*, only when one's belief-state objectively satisfies *de re* reading (in which case one could also perhaps claim that one possesses *de re* knowledge), one is curious objectively (in Inan's terms).

a result of subjectivity and *the over-complexity as a result of dynamics*, point at the theoretical over-complexity as a result of Inan's theory of propositional curiosity. In the second part of this paper, I have focused on Inan's thesis that *objectual curiosity is not reducible to propositional curiosity* because there is no proposition in question one can be curious about. In other words, Inan argues that there is no proposition Holmes has in mind when he is curious about the murderer of Smith. My claim, against Inan's thesis, is that objectual curiosity also comes in a form of a proposition. I have argued that there is indeed a proposition that Holmes has in mind when he is curious about the murderer of Smith. I claimed that when Holmes does not have any actual nor possible suspects to point at or call by name, he can still be curious who the suspect is, and that does not mean he does not have any proposition on his mind. I have argued that the object of *wh-* questions that express curiosity can either be about the truth value of general or singular proposition. In addition, I have suggested that only the reading where *wh-* questions express curiosity in a form of *de re* reading and have a singular proposition as their content is the one that is compatible with Inan's notion of objectual curiosity.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Curiosity about Curiosity

DANILO ŠUSTER
Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia

Ilhan Inan's (2012) approach to curiosity is based on the following central theses: (i) for every question asked out of curiosity there is a corresponding term (definite description) that is inostensible for the asker (its reference is unknown) and that has the function of uniquely identifying an object; (ii) the satisfaction of curiosity is always in the form of coming to know an object as falling under a concept. This model primarily covers curiosity as our search for empirical objectual knowledge. In my critical reflections, I explore some phenomena of non-objectual curiosity which are left out or at least not sufficiently explored by Inan: curiosity as the search for explanation and understanding, and meta-curiosity—curiosity about the very representations, i.e. how to conceptualize a certain problem, and what definite descriptions to use in the first place.

Keywords: Inan, curiosity, inostensible reference, understanding, meta-curiosity.

1.

The Renaissance *curiosity* cabinets ("wunderkammer") were collections of rare, valuable, historically important or unusual objects, compiled for study and entertainment. It is not easy to find the unifying element in these collections of oddities. Nowadays, curiosity has become a topic of serious philosophical and psychological research. Ilhan Inan's book (2012) is an impressive attempt to unify and conceptualize the phenomena of curiosity in terms of our ability to *describe* what is unknown. To be curious about something we need to be able to conceptualize it; we need the ability to represent the unknown.

Definite descriptions turn out to be the main linguistic vehicles of curiosity. We inquire about "the smallest inhabited island on earth," seek "the element that is causing the bright yellow light in the spectrum," wonder about "the location of the book that was on my table," look for "the reason the book that was on my table was taken," etc.

Inan's main thesis is that curiosity expressed in language always involves an *inostensible* term—a term that refers to an object that is unknown for the speaker, where "object" is taken in the widest logical sense (entities, locations, but also reasons, causes, etc.). To quote Inan:

> My first central claim is that for every question asked out of curiosity there is a corresponding term that is inostensible for the asker that has the function of uniquely identifying an object (Inan 2012: 42).
>
> …
>
> So my second main thesis is that every instance of curiosity involves the conceptualization of an unknown object, a particular, a property, a universal, a kind, or what have you that could be expressed by a definite description. Simply anything that can be referred to by a definite description can be an object of curiosity (Inan 2012: 130).

So, we proceed by throwing our conceptual nets expressed in terms of definite descriptions, hoping to catch their referents or the lack thereof. Our aptitude for curiosity is based on our ability to describe what is unknown (inostensible descriptions). Our curiosity is then satisfied when we are able to convert an inostensible term with an unknown referent into an ostensible one (for instance, getting to know the referent of 'Neptune' or "the planet perturbing the orbit Uranus" or else establishing that there is, for instance, no Vulcan; the definite description "the unique planet perturbing the orbit of Mercury" lacks reference). Our curiosity is satisfied when we gain *objectual* knowledge: "The satisfaction of curiosity then is always in the form of coming to know an object as falling under a concept" (Inan 2012: 136).

At first sight it might look that this theory is almost trivial, so obviously true. Compare—question: Who killed the victim? Answer: The murderer. Question: What does it mean to be curious about X? Answer: The object of curiosity about X is the unknown referent of the term 'X'. However, the task of putting some flesh on this proposal is not trivial at all and the interplay between questions of knowledge and questions of language in Inan's book is both insightful and fruitful.

Still, problems remain. According to W. Pauli there are three grades of criticism: Wrong. Completely wrong. Not even wrong. Although Inan does a masterful job of defending his view, I will try to show that there are cases in which his theory is informative since, according to the above Popperian criterion of non-triviality, it escapes the disastrous third grade of criticism. It might be wrong, or better, in need of further development. Inan mainly works with a relatively "flat" conception of objectual knowledge (and the corresponding ignorance), coming to know an object as falling under a concept is based on causal connection, sense experience, testimony ..., of the object in question. Yet there are other forms of curiosity and other ways of satisfying curiosity, or so I will try to argue.

2.

Let me start with some typical (recently heard or read) questions asked out of everyday and professional curiosity:

> Why did she use that phrase?
> How did this problem arise?
> I am really curious about how to make the story of Arya Stark in the city of Pentos consistent (said a friend of mine after seeing the sixth season of the *Game of the Thrones* TV series).
> Why did the U.K. vote against the E.U.?
> Heredity—how does it work?
> Why, within Eurasia, was it Europeans who conquered the world and colonized other people, rather than the Chinese or the people of India or the Middle East? (Diamond 2016)

We are curious about reasons, causes, consistency ... We look for contrastive explanations (Diamond), and sometimes we describe our state of curiosity just as: "I was simply curious to see what would happen." Sometimes our curiosity is motivated by a plain and vague desire "to get to the bottom of the matter". An example might be a quote from Galileo (*Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, cited in Lambie 2014: 46):

> ... considering that everyone who followed the opinion of Copernicus had at first held the opposite, and was very well informed concerning the arguments of Aristotle and Ptolemy, and that on the other hand none of the followers of Ptolemy and Aristotle had been formerly of the Copernican opinion... I commenced to believe that one who forsakes an opinion which he imbibed with his mother's milk and which is supported by multitudes, to take up another that has few followers ... must of necessity be moved ... by the most effective arguments. *This made me very curious to get to the bottom of the matter*.

It is not easy to subsume all of these cases under the search for the object falling under a certain inostensible concept. Let me add a description of curiosity from a recent book on developmental psychology:

> We exhibit something few other species do—the urge to know about things that have no obvious or utilitarian function. We experience epistemic curiosity. This leads to the truly astonishing breadth of stimuli, topics, and events that seems to trigger the human appetite for information. We not only want to know how to get from here to there, what might be scary on the pathway home, or whether the plant matter before us is edible (all things any decent rodent would also want to know), but we also want to know what happened before we were on earth, how people we've never met are living their lives, how a given building or machine was put together, what caused a friend to behave the way she did, and why a certain novelist stopped writing. (Engel 2015: 9)

Engel draws ours attention to different types of curiosity. According to Miščević:

> One can be curious about some skill ("How does one ride a bicycle?") or about more propositional and objectual matters. The first kind of target is

> knowledge how; let us call the other "knowledge wh-", to encompass both knowledge what, whether and why (plus some surrounding sub- kinds, like when). (Miščević 2016: 148)

We express curiosity by asking a question but also by taking something apart (how does *that* work?). Inan is preoccupied with the first type of curiosity ("knowledge wh-"); his approach seems best suited for objectual curiosity (and resultant knowledge) expressed by typical "Who dunnit?" questions (*Who* is the person knocking on my door? *What* object is perturbing the orbit Uranus?). But it seems to me that "why?" in many of its variations is one of the main linguistic vehicles of our curiosity (perhaps even more so than the "who?" or "what?" preferred by Inan). We typically look for reasons and causes—how does Inan's approach cover them? Well, by making them *referents* of inostensible terms—"why" abbreviates "what reason" or "what cause":

> And when I ask, "Why was the book that was on my table taken?", I wish to find out the referent of "the reason the book that was on my table was taken" or, in some contexts, "the cause the book that was on my table was taken". … I may also ask, "How was the book that was on my table taken?" by being curious about the referent of "the way in which the book that was on my table was taken." (Inan 2012: 44—the *only* place where this topic is addressed)

Well, *reasons*, *causes* and *ways* make for strange referents. First of all, what kinds of *entities* are we talking about? Inan says nothing about the referents of terms for reasons and causes. So let me try with a plausible hypothesis.

When asking for reasons and causes we typically look for explanation and understanding, and *facts* are often invoked as ontological grounding of explanation. We usually accept: "the fact that the table was cleaned by the housecleaner *explains* the fact that the book on my table was taken away," some would also accept facts as the causal *relata* (Mellor 1995, among others). So perhaps we can adopt Inan's position with respect to direct questions that admit of a simple "yes" or "no" as an answer ("Is there any life on Jupiter's moon?"). According to Inan, the object of our curiosity in asking a direct empirical question is a fact, an empirical object that is to be found in the world. A true sentence refers to a fact, and a false one fails to refer (Inan 2012: 52). Similarly, we might try to postulate *facts* as candidate referents for inostensible terms referring to unknown reasons and causes.

Inan (2012: 191, fn. 14) is well aware that this account "is based on the rather controversial claim that truth is a form of reference, namely, reference to a fact (or what I prefer to call a "state"), and falsity is simply failure of reference. … it requires a lot more elaboration." Even more so if facts are to serve as potential referents for reasons and causes. There is a familiar conundrum in the area of truthmakers—are there distinct kinds of facts corresponding to logically complex truths, such as negations, disjunctions, generalities? Are there *negative* facts, such as the fact that there is no life on Jupiter's moon—presumably

the answer to the question: "Is there any life on Jupiter's moon?" Also, causes and reasons are often disjunctive: why did the accident happen? Because Fred omitted to take precautions. What kind of empirical object (fact) is to be found in the world as the referent for Fred's omission? Omissions are wildly disjunctive.

Consider, as a further example, the Columbia space shuttle disaster in 2003—the shuttle broke apart while reentering the atmosphere, killing all seven crew members on board. *Why* did the accident happen? A piece of foam insulation broke off from the shuttle's propellant tank and damaged the edge of the shuttle's left wing. How could this happen? Strict security procedures were apparently omitted by NASA. How so? There were cuts in the funding of the space program. Why? Well, after the end of the Cold War space technology lost its strategic importance for USA governments.

This story illustrates several problems with the simple idea that "what constitutes an answer for one who curiously asks a question is the apprehension of an ostensible concept that the asker comes to know to determine the same object as the inostensible concept that gives rise to the question" (Inan 2012: 64). First of all, the structure of causes and reasons is often disjunctive, general or even more complex—the inostensible concept that gives rise to the question is correlated with ontologically ill-behaved entities. Take Diamond's question and his reply: Why was it Europeans who conquered the world rather than the Chinese? It turns out that Europe had an optimal intermediate degree of fragmentation (a too-unified society is a disadvantage, and a too-fragmented society is also a disadvantage). Difficult to pin this down as "the object of the inostensible concept."

Also, as the Columbia disaster story shows, the satisfaction of curiosity might be context dependent in more than one way; it is not just that the verb "to know" is context-sensitive for objectual knowledge (Inan 2012: 151). According to van Fraassen (1980), an *explanation* offered to satisfy our curiosity is an answer to a why-question. Why P? P is the case, as opposed to Q, R, S, ..., because X. The questioner assumes a set of possible, although not actualized, alternative states {Q, R, S, ...}, which together with P are called the contrast class (Why did the shuttle break apart in 2003 and not earlier?). We do not just ask why P, but why P rather than Q? Diamond (2016) is also a typical example of this pragmatics of explanation: "Why, within Eurasia, was it Europeans who conquered the world, rather than the Chinese?" The answer, X, must be true and *relevant* to the question. A relevance relation between the question and the answer will typically vary with the context (the breaking of a piece of foam insulation is relevant in certain contexts; the end of the cold war in certain broader geo-political contexts).

Of course, there is always an inostensible description available for any "Why X?" question. A simple "the reason for X" or, even more general, "the explanation of X" can be postulated as the unknown referent,

whatever that might be. But this is just like saying that the "epistemic file" on X has been opened, but there is nothing in it, or that a file has been created without any descriptive content. The very posing of the "why?" question does this job. The usual synonyms for "why" are precisely: For what? For what reason, cause, or purpose? The content of the epistemic "file" might be sometimes difficult to specify but the theory should provide at least some structure of the "file" in order to escape triviality. Will at least the most general "object" do—"the satisfaction of curiosity is always in the form of coming to know an object as falling under a concept" (Inan 2012: 136)?

When asking questions out of curiosity we typically look for *explanation* and *understanding*. Consider some standard models of scientific explanation. According to Hempel, scientists explain phenomena by showing that they are logical consequences of general laws. For Salmon, events are explained by showing how they fit into the physical patterns found in the world. The aim of functional explanation analyses is to show how the item contributes to the functioning of the system as a whole. The model of *unification* is based on the idea that successful explanatory theories unify phenomena. It is not just the simple objectual knowledge (What is the cause?); we seek connections, general patterns, unifications and understanding. There is surprisingly little in Inan's book on the topic of understanding and "grand-scale" curiosity. For Miščević, this is the central kind of curiosity:

> … on the one hand there is curiosity focusing on a simple propositional target, on the other, connections-focused curiosity, aiming at understanding of connections and reasons and causes, expressed by appropriate why-questions. Curiosity has often been described as a desire for knowledge and understanding, and I think this may be the central kind of curiosity. While we are examining the target(s) of curiosity it is also worth noting the contrast of scope: depth vs. width. Again, one can go wide, in a disconnected, slightly chaotic manner, or in search of connections and unification; the latter option is more germane to understanding, and more valuable. (Miščević 2016: 149)

There are various accounts of the nature of understanding but they all seem to transcend the level of simple objectual knowledge. For Zagzebski (2001: 241), for instance, "understanding is the state of comprehension of nonpropositional structures of reality". Elgin (2007: 35) in a similar way states that "understanding is primarily a cognitive relation to a fairly comprehensive, coherent body of information."[1] Our deep quest for understanding the world was strangely reflected already in the very idea of a *curiosity* cabinet[2]:

> Renaissance wunderkammer were private spaces, created and formed around a deeply held belief that all things were linked to one another through either visible or invisible similarities. People believed that by de-

[1] Quotes are form McCain (2016: 144–154).

[2] Tate Britain. "History of the Wunderkammern (Cabinet of Curiosities)." http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/mark-dion-tate-thames-dig/wunderkammen (accessed September 7, 2016).

> tecting those visible and invisible signs and by recognizing the similarities between objects, they would be brought to an understanding of how the world functioned, and what humanity's place in it was.

Cognitive contact with reality can be established on different levels: by knowing who or what, by knowing reasons and causes and finally, by understanding. I do not think that all questions of curiosity can be reduced to the quest for objectual knowledge so masterfully covered in Inan's book. "Why?" of causes, reasons and explanations cannot be (easily) accommodated in this model, even less so our desire for understanding. True, one can always coin inostensible descriptions like: "the explanation of this strange fact." But, in this case, inostensible reference seems to be just the name of the problem and not the proper solution.

3.

Can we also be curious about something we are at the time unable to conceptualize, to describe with an inostensible term? According to Inan (2012: 65), "if we cannot express our curiosity by a definite description, then we really have not expressed a precise question that captures our curiosity." This sounds plausible—the inability to conceptualize one's inquiries is often a sign of confusion and one's search in the dark. But not always. We are able to ascend to higher levels and ask meaningful questions about curiosity itself. We can be curious about the very conditions for the cognitive contact with reality: What representations to use? How to conceptualize a certain problem? What definite descriptions to use? Why should these questions not be allowed as the proper focus of curiosity? One way to understand Galileo's "This made me very curious to get to the bottom of the matter" is precisely as a question of meta-curiosity: how to approach a certain problem and what concepts to use?

Let me illustrate some of these points with the help of a science fiction novel, *His Master's Voice* (HMV), by Stanislaw Lem (published in 1968, English translation 1984). Its main topic, I would say, is *scientific curiosity*—scientists are trying to decode, translate and understand what *seems* to be a message from extraterrestials (specifically, a beam of neutrinos with regularities from the *Canis Minor* constellation). The story could easily serve as a thought experiment about possible SETI scenarios (the current scientific search for intelligent extraterrestrial life is actually monitoring electromagnetic radiation for signs of transmissions from civilizations on other worlds).

By the time the project has ended, the scientists are no surer than they were in the beginning about whether the signal was an attempt at communication that humanity failed to decipher, or just a poorly understood natural phenomenon. The neutrino signal seems to have had the effect of increasing the likelihood that life would develop and some speculated that the life-producing property of that communica-

tion could not be the work of chance. But there were many other hypotheses. Some speculated that the letter was not meant for humanity, and that by pure chance we lay in the path of its transmission between two "conversing" civilizations. Also, the signal might have been a mathematical description of an object (possibly a molecule), and the scientists were able to use part of the data to synthesize a substance with unusual properties. The "form of representation" itself was the object of investigation: the letter could be "written" in some declarative-transactional language operating with units of meaning; it could be a system of "modeling" signals, such as television; or it could represent a "recipe", that is, a set of instructions necessary for the production of a certain object (in the opinion of the Pentagon the message from the stars was a kind of blueprint for a super bomb) or a description of a particular "thing" in a code that referred only to certain constants in the natural world.

Two years of intensive curiosity were mostly spent on formulating the proper questions for inquiry—how to conceptualize the strange phenomenon, what kind of inostensible terms to use. The initial question, I suppose, was just—what is *this*? And then the focus shifted to the hypothesis that the observed regularities constitute a message. This was just a provisional, hypothetical conceptualization, typical, I would say, for certain foundational scientific investigations. Inan might say that the main question of curiosity was: "What is the meaning of the signal?" with "the meaning of the signal" as the inostensible term, standing for … what, exactly? Meanings make for very strange objects, even more so than facts (just consider the eternal search for "the meaning of life"). In the scenario by Lem, this question comes very close to the question of meta-curiosity: "How to represent the strange phenomenon?" We might try with a direct question "Does the transmission constitute a message?" If *yes*, is then the object of curiosity a fact, an empirical object that is to be found in the world? Recall the hypotheses under investigation: declarative-transactional language OR a system of "modeling" signals, such as television OR a "recipe", OR … a wildly disjunctive "entity", difficult to understand as the uniquely identified object of an inostensible term. Also, due to Lem's mastery, there is an ambiguity between the researcher's expectations *de dicto* (a message saying that so and so is the case) and the possibility *de re*—the signal itself being the object with the life-enhancing properties or both (not to mention the Pentagon super-weapon speculations).

What appears to be a first contact SF story is not a typical novel: it lacks an adventure plot, there is almost no dialogue and no action. The bulk of the novel is densely philosophical pessimistic reflections of the main protagonist (mathematician Hogarth). The following is a typical quote:

> In my opinion, the stellar code denoted neither a plasmic brain nor an informational machine nor an organism nor a spore, because the object it des-

> ignated simply did not figure in the categories of our conceptualizations. It was the plan of a cathedral sent to australopithecines, a library opened to Neanderthals. In my opinion, the code was not intended for a civilization as low on the ladder of development as ours, and consequently we would not succeed in doing anything meaningful with it. (Lem 1984: 93)

This final pessimism about the human predicament is in harmony with Inan's "rule of thumb"—no precise representation (definite description), no curiosity. But must we really always "know" what we are looking for in terms of precise representations in order to be curious? HMV depicts cognitive puzzlements which are much more common than we might initially think.

There is an old joke about a drunkard, searching under a lamppost for his house key, which he has dropped some distance away. Asked why he didn't look where he dropped it, he replied "It's lighter here!". This methodological procedure has been dubbed "the principle of the drunkard's search" (Abraham Kaplan) and also "streetlight effect"[3]. The story sometimes functions as an illustration of observational bias where people only look for whatever they are searching for by looking where it is easiest. We look for explanatory factors for a given phenomenon in a place where the light is already shining and the territory is well illuminated by our familiar conceptions. But sometimes a crucial methodological issue involves precisely "meta-curiosity"—the very identification of the dimensions of the search.

The story also functions as parable for breaking with the old ways of thinking. Inan's (2012: 153): "... there cannot be curiosity without the ability to represent the unknown" can be interpreted as implying that we always search under the light of familiar inostensible terms. But consider Thomas Kuhn's conception of normal science—there are puzzles, anomalies, "curiosities" to be solved under the "light" of the reigning scientific paradigm. When anomalies and inconsistent details significantly threaten a paradigm, a crisis occurs and scientists reexamine the conceptual foundations of their science and invent new questions. The main object of their curiosity is precisely the accepted conceptions and representations of reality.

You might disagree with Kuhn's model of scientific progress—many do. Still, I think he is right to stress the importance of scientific meta-curiosity, a search for new representations and new conceptions, when open-mindedness and other intellectual virtues usually associated with curiosity flourish. On the more down to earth level of everyday scientific activities, there has recently been some discussion about the methodology of "fishing expedition". In legal contexts this term stands for any inquiry carried out without any clearly defined plan or purpose in the hope of discovering useful information. Very often this is synonymous with pure "curiosity-driven" research when this term is used in a derogatory manner (similar to Inan 2012, 65: "if we cannot express our

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Streetlight_effect (accessed September 7, 2016).

curiosity by a definite description, then we really have not expressed a precise question that captures our curiosity"). The search for Neptune, one of Inan's main examples of *de re* curiosity, was clearly *hypothesis* driven: look for the planet perturbing the orbit of Uranus. But in the opposition between maverick "curiosity-driven" research versus precise "hypothesis-driven" research, the stakes are often on the former, as Firestein vividly depicts the position of a scientist:

> Anyone who thinks we aren't all on a fishing expedition is just kidding himself. The trick is to have some idea about where to fish (e.g., stay out of polluted waters, go where there are lots of other fishermen catching lots of fish—or avoid them since the fish are now all gone from there) and some sense of what's likely to be tasty and what not. I'm not sure you can hope to know much more than that. (Firestein 2012: 80)

Scientists are curious beings; that is what makes them scientists. But it is difficult to capture all forms of their curiosity as having a concept expressed by an inostensible term in the form of a definite description and in search of its referent. A "fishing expedition" is also an important manifestation of scientific curiosity!

True, one has to be careful; these are muddy waters. If we do not have any precise definite description to express our curiosity, then we are easily confused about what we are curious about, if anything, as Inan rightly points out. As my final example, which nicely illustrates these dangerous waters, consider the notorious statement made by U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld five months after 9/11 and a year before the invasion of Iraq (in 2003). Intelligence "reports" suggested the absence of a link between Saddam Hussein's regime and terrorists seeking weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Rumsfeld responded:

> Reports that say something hasn't happened are always interesting to me because as we know, there are known knowns: there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns: that is to say we know there are some things [we know] we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tends to be the difficult one. (Rumsfeld 2011: xiii)

Known unknowns are gaps in our knowledge, but we are aware of them, we know where to look—the majority of Inan's examples fall into this category (the 98th prime, the space object responsible for the extinction of dinosaurs, the shortest spy, etc.). We can potentially fill the gaps in our knowledge, eventually making them a known known. The category of unknown unknowns encompasses the gaps in our knowledge that we don't know exist. Not only may we not have all the evidence we know would be relevant, there may be evidence we don't have that we don't even realize is relevant.

In 2002 Rumsfeld's unknown unknowns won the *Plain English Campaign's annual prize* for the "most baffling remark made by a public figure". It is hard to deny that this was the case of curiosity of utmost (life and death for many) importance. For some, Rumsfeld's re-

mark was a typical politician's reply (how to avoid answering the direct question about evidence for WMD), others dismissed it as "a little bit of amateur philosophizing," while some actually still agree that WMD really existed (relocated in a neighboring country). From the philosophical point of view, at least one epistemologist took seriously the idea of the "unknown unknowns":

> To assess how good the evidence was that, e.g., Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, U.S. intelligence services needed to know not only where the available evidence (the "knowns") pointed, and how secure it was, but also how comprehensive it was; and to do that, they needed to know what relevant evidence there might be that they didn't have (the "unknowns"). Unfortunately, though they knew what some of the relevant evidence was that they needed but didn't have (the "known unknowns"), they didn't realize that other evidence, evidence they also didn't have, was also relevant (the "unknown unknowns"). (Haack 2011: 12–13)

I am inclined to agree with Haack's diagnosis—there are genuine epistemological worries about the potential of incomplete evidence to mislead. Is the evidence comprehensive is a legitimate question. But note that this is a question of meta-curiosity: *What* to look for? How to frame our curiosity? What representations and definite descriptions to use?

The dire consequences of the above reasoning dramatically illustrate the important issue of the *satisfaction* of curiosity. We are less prone to admire the epistemological subtleties of the "unknown unknowns" when we hear that:

> There's another way to phrase that and that is that the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. It is basically saying the same thing in a different way. Simply because you do not have evidence that something exists does not mean that you have evidence that it doesn't exist. (Rumsfeld 2002, NATO press conference)[4]

Well, "the absence of evidence is *not* evidence of absence" has also been used to support the possibility of alien abductions and various UFO claims, past life experiences and other pseudo-scientific hypotheses. Can the absence of evidence about X satisfy our curiosity about X? In opposition to Rumsfeld, Inan allows, so it seems, given his discussion on Vulcan, for the validity of "absent evidence reasoning." Leverrier believed that there was a unique planet perturbing the orbit of Mercury; he called it "Vulcan." The search gave no results, so in this case the fact that there was no evidence that anything fell under the concept of "the planet perturbing the orbit of Mercury" ended the inquiry. Rightly so, sometimes the absence of evidence for a hypothesis amounts to real evidence against it. If the hypothesis were true (the planet existed), some evidence favoring it would have been observed.

I think that the evaluation of this last conditional (or, in probabilistic terms, the likelihood of the probability of observing the missing evidence for H on the assumption that H is true) is crucial for the

[4] http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020606g.htm (accessed September 7, 2016).

evaluation of the cogency of "absent evidence reasoning" as satisfaction of our curiosity. The probability of observing at least some evidence of UFO abductions is high, so the absence of trustworthy evidence is really the evidence of absence (falsity of this strange hypothesis). Compare this to the typical creationist argument: if evolution happened, where have all the intermediate forms gone? No evidence for evolution, so the theory must be false? But in the case of the fossil record, the likelihood of finding the missing fossils is low with respect to evolutionary theory because of the conditions that lead to fossilization. In this case the absence of evidence is really *not* evidence of absence (cf. Boudry et al. 2015). How about Iraq and weapons of mass destruction? Should we compare the case to the one of Vulcan (no evidence for WMD so no WMD), or to the one of evolutionary theory, where the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence? The issue is still a matter of some curiosity (in 2016), although the verdict is more on the side of the *validity* of absent evidence reasoning (some evidence for WMD was expected to be found; so, no evidence …).

4.

According to Inan (2012: 137), under *normal* circumstances curiosity is satisfied when one is able to convert an inostensible term into an ostensible one. Yet the conditions for the satisfaction of curiosity are sometimes even less straightforward and relative than he is prepared to admit. According to Sextus Empiricos, the Ancient skeptics were the only ones who genuinely inquired. Their curiosity led them into extensive investigations into things until they found that they could always come up with a suitably plausible alternative hypothesis. Their inquiry ended in suspension of judgement. The Pyrrhonists, who described themselves as investigators ("skeptikôs"), were some of the most curious human beings in our intellectual history. Yet they were not looking for objectual knowledge; their investigations repeatedly and predictably led them to suspension of judgment as the final stage of their curiosity.

Well, Phyronnians are perhaps philosophical curiosities in themselves and not really *normal*. But are we not, as philosophers, often in the position so vividly described in Lem's novel? To be curious about something, you have to conceptualize it, but sometimes the proper conceptualization itself is the object of curiosity. When investigating a certain phenomenon, philosophers exhibit meta-curiosity: they are curious about how to formulate the questions, what representations and what terms to use. I was puzzled by the following remark on epistemology by Inan:

> If an epistemologist does not have any precise definite description to express his curiosity when he asks "what is knowledge?", then we should take him to be confused about what question he is trying to answer and, more importantly, what he is curious about, if anything. (Inan 2012: 65)

It is precisely meta-curiosity that is the important part of *philosophical* curiosity about knowledge: the question of how to approach the subject, and what definite descriptions to use to express our curiosity. Should we look at the epistemic quality of the subject's beliefs (reliable source? luck-excluding properties?), or should we begin with the subject herself and assess her epistemic virtues and vices? Should we approach the problem *apriori*, from the philosopher's armchair, or should we situate epistemology within the natural sciences and cognitive psychology in particular? Before we introduce precise inostensible terms as our fish-hooks, and then try to catch something, we are genuinely curious, in the same way as the scientists in Lem's novel, about what concepts to introduce in the first place.

In the end one has to agree with Inan on the importance of conceptualizations and precise descriptions for curiosity. I have argued for a relatively modest proposal. It is not true that for *every* question asked out of curiosity there is a corresponding term that is inostensible for the asker that has the function of uniquely identifying an object. I have tried to draw attention to certain kinds of curiosity which are left out or at least not sufficiently explored by Inan—our search for explanation and understanding and meta-curiosity. Both are perhaps the deepest, "grand-scale" types of curiosity surpassing the level of simple objectual knowledge. Can we speak about uniquely identified objects picked out by inostensible terms when it comes to the quest for understanding—when we look for general patterns, inter-connections and unifications and when the final "state of comprehension" might even be about the nonpropositional structures of reality?

Object level curiosity about X is based on our ability to conceptualize X, to introduce inostensible terms ("the X?") and look for their referents. Meta-curiosity is curiosity about these very representations: how to conceptualize the problem? What descriptions to use? What inostensible terms to introduce? Again, one could always introduce inostensible terms, such as "the conceptualization of this problem." Here, also, the inostensible reference seems to be just a different name for the problem. True, meta-curiosity is on the brink of confusion, but this is sometimes just a different name for a philosophical puzzlement.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Stop and Smell the Roses: Inostensible Propositional Knowledge and Raising the Standard of Knowing

SAFIYE YIĞIT
Department of Philosophy, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Ilhan Inan's book The Philosophy of Curiosity is an exploration of understanding human curiosity and its relation to the use of language. He introduces the notion of inostensible reference (or reference to the unknown) that renders an interesting question possible. He claims that our aptitude for this kind of reference is what enables us to become aware of our ignorance and be curious. For him, there are two ways in which a proposition could be inostensible to a subject: one possibility is when the whole sentence's truth value is unknown to the subject, the other possibility is when the subject knows the proposition to be true but does not know the fact that makes the proposition true, which he later calls inostensible knowledge. The former case requires an awareness of ignorance to generate curiosity, and the latter case requires an awareness of inostensibility of one's knowledge to be conducive to curiosity. In this paper, what I would like to do is mainly to draw attention to the often neglected awareness of inostensible knowledge and explore its relation to curiosity. I also claim that, contrary to Inan's idea that the only way of having inostensible knowledge is when there is at least one inostensible concept in the proposition, there is another possibility of inostensible knowledge, which would correspond to a case in which all the terms are ostensible to the speaker and the proposition is known to be true, but the proposition as a whole is still inostensible. I would like to argue that such an awareness of inostensibility of knowledge is a key step in evaluating one's epistemic contact with reality and accordingly determining the degree of one's knowledge on the epistemic scale. I believe this awareness will implicitly raise the standard of knowledge and hopefully foster curiosity, in its broader meaning of caring to know. I will further suggest that the acquisition of ostensible knowledge, which is a form of objectual knowledge of a fact, could also enable the corresponding proposition to be known better by the subject. This claim of mine might be thought of as an attempt to argue for the gradability of propositional knowledge, which has been a controversial issue in epistemology.

Keywords: Curiosity, inostensible knowledge, gradability of knowledge

Introduction

It is no surprise to hear that curiosity propels discoveries, but one may also reasonably entertain the idea that discoveries could ignite curiosity. That would be a kind of curiosity not about the existence of the discovered phenomenon, nor a curiosity regarding the truth value of the proposition that the discovery spells out. It would be a kind of curiosity about the fact, the piece of reality itself. For instance, "Alpha Centauri A is the star that is closest to our sun" is a piece of knowledge I might learn from a reliable astronomy book. Now, I can claim that I know that Alpha Centauri A is the star that is closest to our sun. Just after uttering this, it might sound peculiar when I say that I am curious to know that Alpha Centauri A is the star that is closest to our sun. Isn't that sufficient for me to claim that I know the fact of Alpha Centauri A being the closest star to our sun? I already know it, don't I?[1] I know the fact exists, but there is more to knowledge and it usually takes more to satisfy curiosity. Suppose that it is the first time I hear the name of this star and the only thing I know of it is that it exists somewhere in space and is the closest one to our sun; in other words, I merely have knowledge of the truth of the aforementioned proposition. On the other hand, an astronomer possessing ample knowledge about the fact that makes this proposition true might know the same sentence. It seems there is a big difference between the epistemic state of the astronomer and that of mine concerning the knowledge of the proposition. We both "know that p" expressed by the sentence, yet, the two knowledge claims are not on a par. Propositional knowledge attributions do not discriminate between these two kinds of knowledge. This is the distinction Inan makes between "knowing that p" by merely knowing that there is a fact that makes the proposition true, what he calls inostensible knowledge, and "knowing that p" by knowing the fact, what he calls ostensible knowledge (Inan 2012: 52–53). In a theory of curiosity, this distinction becomes significant as sometimes curiosity is more than a search for certainty. One may know a proposition, be certain that this proposition refers to a fact but one may still be curious to know the fact that makes it true. In such cases, rather than knowing that the sentence expressing it refers to a fact, the subject might be after increasing "the degree of ostensibility", which is a notion that could be roughly described as how the curious subject is epistemically related to an object under a concept (Inan 2014).

[1] Later, this will be characterized as a case of inostensible knowledge.

1. *Inostensible Knowledge*

In order to make sense of these claims, it is crucial to understand the central concepts of ostensibility and inostensibility, which points to a novel distinction specified by Inan. In spite of the fact that offering a complete account of the centrality of these terms in a theory of curiosity is difficult and it probably demands a rigorous study of Inan's book, here it should suffice to offer a basic understanding of these concepts. Inostensibility is a term that first appeared in Inan's dissertation to single out a kind of reference in philosophy of language. He uses "inostensible reference" almost as interchangeable with reference to the unknown, and in his book he argues that our aptitude for this kind of reference enables us to become aware of our ignorance and be curious. The following quote roughly defines what he has in mind while using this terminology:

> The speaker may know what a term may refer to, in the sense that he knows that a certain object as being the referent of the term, and in the second case one may lack such knowledge. Let us call the first kind of term relative to a speaker an "ostensible" term (for that speaker) and the latter an "inostensible" term (for that speaker). (Inan 2012: 33)

To illustrate, suppose I want to inquire into the longest lived of men and since I do not know of any individual as being the longest lived of men, this makes the definite description "the longest lived of men" inostensible to me. Yet, once I learn the referent of this term, it becomes ostensible, even though it could have a very low degree of ostensibility at the onset. By getting more acquainted with the object, the ostensibility will increase. After introducing these concepts, Inan asserts that inostensible terms are always used in asking questions, and argues that every question asked out of curiosity involves the use of an inostensible term.

As one would expect, ostensibility is a relational concept; so, whether a term is ostensible or inostensible for a person depends on that person's epistemic link to the referent of that term. In other words, it is relative to the person and the same term may be ostensible for one and inostensible for another, and even for the same person a term that used to be inostensible in the past may later become ostensible upon gaining the required kind of knowledge. Then, what makes a proposition inostensible to someone? For Inan, there are two ways in which a true propostion can be inostensible for a subject, in the first case the subject does not know whether the proposition is true, and in the other case the subject knows that the proposition is true, i.e., it refers to a fact, but the subject does not know the fact which makes the proposition true. This latter case gives rise to "inostensible knowledge", in which the subject merely knows that there is a fact, but does not have sufficient experience of the fact so as to make it ostensible. On the other hand, one's knowledge could be deemed "ostensible knowledge" if all the terms that are contained in the given proposition are ostensible to

the speaker; that is, if the speaker knows the referent of the terms in the proposition. Conversely, in inostensible knowledge cases, for Inan, there is at least one term in the sentence that is inostensible to the subject. He even claims that "the degree of ostensibility of a whole declarative sentence is also a function of the degree of ostensibility of its constituent terms" (Inan 2014: 13), which comes to mean that if all the terms in a sentence are ostensible to a subject, the sentence is also ostensible. However, I would like to allow for another possible way of having inostensible knowledge, which is perhaps the least noticed one in inostensible knowledge cases. In this second case, one knows that the proposition expressed by the sentence is true, and one has ostensible knowledge of all the terms in a sentence, but the proposition as a whole is still inostensible to the subject. In other words, one knows that "a is F", and both a and F are ostensible to the subject, but the knowledge of the proposition as a whole is still inostensible.

Interestingly, the inostensibility of knowledge, especially if it is of the latter kind, mostly goes unnoticed. Contrary to the quite recognizable awareness of inostensibility we have while asking a question as in "how many people shared the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize?", by which we are attempting to transform our inostensible term "the number of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winners" to an ostensible one by uttering this question, the inostensibility of propositional knowledge often escapes our notice. To illustrate, whenever I get the answer "two" to the question "How many people shared the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize?", I now can claim that I know "the number of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winners is two" even though I may not know anything about the winners. Suppose someone else also utters the same sentence "the number of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winners is two" while publishing an interview she conducted face-to-face with the winners. Here, whereas the first subject merely has inostensible knowledge, the interviewer has ostensible knowledge of this proposition. Semantically, there is nothing to reveal this difference. This was a case of inostensible knowledge due to the inostensibility of the subject term for the speaker. Yet, for the cases in which the lack of ostensibility is regarding the knowledge of the fact the proposition as a whole refers to, it is even harder to recognize. That is to say, if it is a kind of inostensible knowledge in which all the terms are ostensible to the subject, and the subject further knows that the sentence is true, but the proposition as a whole still lacks ostensibility, this often goes unnoticed, and hence, it often fails to generate curiosity. For instance, one may think that the sentence "war is painful" is ostensible to a subject since both the concepts 'war' and 'painful' are ostensible for the subject and he or she knows the proposition to be true. But it might turn out that the fact the proposition as a unity refers to is not actually ostensible to the subject.

2. *Significance of Awareneness of Inostensibile Knowledge*

Now, I would like to focus on the significance of the awareness of inostensible propositional knowledge, and try to draw attention to how such an awareness might propel curiosity. I will begin by elaborating more on the neglect of the distinction between ostensible/inostensible knowledge in epistemology and allude to one of the shortcomings in epistemology that Inan draws our attention; namely, the indeterminacy of "to know". Despite its significant consequences, this important distinction seems to be insufficiently addressed in philosophy literature. Inan says "knowing that a sentence refers to a fact does not imply that one thereby knows that fact; and if not, one may still be curious about it". He argues that to satisfy our curiosity sometimes we need more than a proposition that we know to be true. Inan discusses this in his book making use of several intuitive examples and makes one wonder how such a significant distinction could be overlooked in epistemology. One would expect it to be emphasized more and even be established as a central distinction; in other words, one would expect that we should be able to distinguish between having merely the knowledge of truth of the proposition versus having knowledge of the fact itself. These two epistemic states, i.e., having inostensible propositional knowledge versus ostensible propositional knowledge, point to an important distinction that reveals significant epistemic intuitions.
Consider the following cases:

i. S knows that the scent of the rose in the vase is pleasant.
ii. S knows that the scent of Cosmos atrosanguineus is pleasant.

In the first case, the subject smells the rose and knows that the scent of the rose is pleasant. In the second case, given that cosmos atrosanguineus is an extinct flower that used to have a lovely fragrance, S can acquire that knowledge from a reliable source and can claim to know this fact. Nonetheless, even though the two subjects both claim the same epistemic standing, i.e., "to know", there is a striking difference between the two states. In case (i), S knows the fact that makes the proposition true, whereas in case (ii), S merely knows that this proposition is —or used to be— true. This latter case is an instance of inostensible knowledge since the subject term of the sentence "the scent of Cosmos atrosanguineus" is inostensible to S. It is important to be aware of what S lacks in (ii), even if S can use the same verb "to know" in both cases. This nuance is generally neglected by epistemology literature and the lack of this awareness might display itself by a loss of curiosity on the part of the knower, as the subject might consider himself as "knowing" the fact the sentence refers to. In this particular case, it is practically impossible for S to know the proposition ostensibly as he cannot know the scent to which it actually refers. In other cases, it could be possible to gain more ostensibility regarding a fact. Yet, I think merely pos-

sessing an *awareness* of the inostensibility of propositional knowledge attributions could be quite significant, and even help us look at the world differently. Knowing that war is painful is true and knowing the fact that makes this proposition true are quite different epistemic standings, and the latter is definitely more profound. Unfortunately, epistemology literature has been mostly insensitive to that subtlety.

Although one of the most original and important contributions of Inan's book is the claim that there is "inostensible propositional knowledge", awareness of inostensibility of propositional knowledge, which is so ubiquitous in the book, is not mentioned at all. I think drawing attention to this awareness is significant and plays quite an important role in a theory of curiosity, since a considerable part of our curiosities linger even if we have propositional knowledge, and knowing the truth or falsity of a proposition may not be what a curious person aims for in the end.

As normative a claim as it might be, this distinction of ostensibility and inostensibility, coupled with the awareness of such a distinction lets us appreciate there is more to knowledge; in a sense, it is an awareness that to know is deeper than knowing the truth of a proposition. This kind of awareness will be related to the value of knowledge that transcends certainty or truth. In a sense, it is about knowledge of "something" other than truth. Knowledge can get deeper, get better or get enriched without necessarily having anything to do with knowing more about its truth or having a stronger justification, this could happen due to experiencing, internalizing the piece of knowledge and making it one's own. Take the proposition "Love is beautiful", one can grasp this proposition and may merely know that this proposition is true, one can understand what this proposition might come to mean through reading a touching romance; one can also further experience love, get acquainted with the fact and come to know that the proposition "love is beautiful" means something much deeper than one originally thought. In the first case, the subject merely knows that this proposition is true but does not really know the fact the it refers to, in the second case, the subject has somewhat better knowledge, yet experiencing the beauty of love can enable one to know the proposition "love is beautiful" even much better. However, this still would not be the last step in the epistemic journey, for one could experience love once more in one's life and might realize that if this experience is love the former was indeed less than love.

Peculiar as it might sound, one suggestion could be to adopt the use of "testify" rather than "know" whenever one merely has inostensible propositional knowledge. In other words, at the entrance of the stairway to knowledge, one should perhaps be aware that one is not entitled to say one "knows" the proposition yet, or else one could at least realize that "to know" is gradable and it is possible to increase the quality of his knowledge. So, the use of "testify" should be seen as an attempt to

raise the standard of knowledge rather than a vain effort to change language. Accordingly, if I were lucky enough to have ostensible knowledge of the beauty of love, this would stipulate me to say "I know that love is beautiful"; however, being lucky enough not to have experienced the painfulness of war in my life so far, I should perhaps say that "I testify that war is painful" rather than "I know that war is painful".

Restricting the use of "to know" might seem as a fine grained issue that has little significance as long as we can communicate what we mean. But I have worries about the possibility of losing a sense of wonder and curiosity due to the pretense of "knowledge that we do not yet deserve". In philosophical terms, having de dicto satisfaction[2] of our curiosity sometimes stops us from inquiring further, and inostensible propositional knowledge passes as knowledge, in spite of the fact that it is just the entrance to the stairway to knowledge. Having ostensible knowledge—although it is not always possible practically or metaphysically—should perhaps be the ideal to strive for. This could be achieved through the act of distancing ourselves from the proposition and sincerely asking if we know what it really means —or might come to mean. By fostering the awareness of inostensibility of propositional knowledge, one would also nurture curiosity in one's life, as this awareness will manifest itself in inquiring more into what we thought we knew, and in a sense what we certainly, yet inostensibly, knew.

3. *A Threefold Awareness Regarding Inostensibility*

An important insight that emerges from recognizing this distinction between ostensible and inostensible knowledge in propositional knowledge attributions is that it makes possible to talk about degrees on a scale of epistemic strength/intensity. On the condition that the epistemic scale is thought like a stairway, inostensible propositional knowledge (IPK) will be taken as *merely the entrance to the stairway to knowledge*, which will open the door for the individual to be aware of the lack of ostensibility of his knowledge and this awareness will pave the way for further curiosity.

At this point, I would like to sketch out three possible cases of awareness of inostensibility regarding a proposition and how they could become conducive to curiosity:

> In case (a), S does not know whether the proposition expressed by the sentence is true,
> in case (b), S does not ostensibly know one of the terms in a sentence that he thinks he knows,
> and in case (c), the proposition expressed by the sentence is inostensibile for S even if S knows the proposition to be true and all the terms are ostensible to S.

[2] See Inan (2012, especially Chapters 5 and 9) for the distinction between *de re* versus *de dicto* satisfaction of curiosity.

In fact, pondering on the status of a proposition with respect to its epistemic link to the knower reveals some interesting intuitions, the most neglected of which is the awareness of inostensibility characterized in (c). Now, I will try to demonstrate what I call a *threefold awareness regarding inostensibility*; to do this, I will make use of three different cases of epistemic connection to propositions and each corresponding sentence will be used to elaborate more on the type of awareness.

Example for the case (a) S: There are extraterrestrial beings in outer space.
Example for the case (b) S: The roses in my friend's garden smell good.
Example for the case (c) S: War is painful.

In the example for case (a), S does not know whether the proposition is true and this is an opportunity to gain *awareness of ignorance.*

This sentence is inostensible to S because the truth value of the whole sentence is unknown to S, as S is not acquainted with the fact that makes this proposition either true or false. In the first sentence, the proposition, whether or not there are extraterrestrial beings in outer space, is so inostensible to S that S does not even know if it refers to a fact, let alone ostensibly know anything about the fact itself, and S is aware that he is still in the dark about it. This darkness often causes one to realize one's lack of epistemic contact with the fact and thereby one demands enlightenment. Since awareness of lacking knowledge, given that we are interested enough in the subject, usually causes curiosity, it is expected that the subject will get curious. Hence, there is a natural and easily detectable link between awareness of ignorance and curiosity.

In the example for the case (b), S knows the sentence to be true, but lacks ostensible knowledge of the subject term in the sentence, this is an opportunity S to gain *awareness of inostensibility of his knowledge due to the inostensibility of the subject term*.

Suppose S talks to a friend about gardening and wants to plant fragrant roses on his front porch. His friend tells him that the roses in his garden smell good and he might consider planting that type, which is called Francis Meilland. S believes his friend and now he can say that he knows the roses in his friend's garden, i.e. Francis Meilland roses, smell good. This is a case of inostensible knowledge because he has not seen the roses in his friend's garden nor has he experienced the smell. He merely knows that this proposition refers to a fact without knowing the fact to which it refers. He must stop and smell the roses to make his knowledge ostensible.

In the example for the case (c), S knows the proposition to be true, both terms are ostensible to him, but S lacks inostensibility of the proposition as a whole, and this is an opportunity to gain *awareness of inostensibility of his knowledge of the proposition as a unity.*

This awareness draws attention to a mostly unrecognized yet important distinction that afflicts many of our knowledge claims. Since all the terms in the sentence "war is painful" are ostensible to S, and the truth value of the proposition is not a mystery, and in a sense is too obvious, S might confidently, yet mistakenly, think that he is already at top of the epistemic scale regarding his knowledge of the given proposition. However, pondering on the ostensible/inostensible distinction will enable S to question the status of the proposition for him as a unity; and this might motivate him to deepen his knowledge. This could be thought as a call for increasing the degree of ostensibility of the proposition as a whole. Let us suppose S is a history professor and he knows a lot about wars in the human history and this concept is ostensible to him, he also knows very well that "war is painful" is true. Further suppose that he is familiar with pain due to his having lost a loved one recently, so he sadly knows what painful refers to. Even though the terms war and painful are ostensible to him, there is a sense in which he does not have ostensible knowledge of the proposition "war is painful". Conversely, a person who has experienced war and has gone through the painfulness of it would have ostensible knowledge of this fact and would know the proposition better. Yet, this should not be understood as requiring one to experience the painfulness of war, or any such experience, to know the propositions ostensibly. For instance, if one has not experienced humiliation before, it would not be logical to advise that person to be humiliated to understand the proposition "being humiliated is bad". There are other ways to make one's knowledge more ostensible, such as through empathy, getting more acquainted with the fact by observing others who experience it, as well as through other possible ways of gaining partial ostensibility. Regardless of the attainability of ostensibility or of possible means to attain it, I would like to make a more philosophically salient point here, which is a call for distancing oneself from the proposition and the concepts involved in the proposition and sincerely ask oneself if he really knows the fact the proposition refers to, and aim to imagine to what the fact might actually refer. Only then, can one determine how ostensible the knowledge at hand is for oneself. This awareness will be vital in acknowledging how deeply/fully/well one knows, or possibly utterly fails to know the proposition. Hopefully, it could also enable one to get curious to know the inostensible propositions more deeply. But, what kind of deeper knowledge would that be? It would not be about the truth of the proposition, as propositional knowledge already provides this to the subject. It has to be about *something other than truth*; it could perhaps be a transformative epistemic leap through experience, which causes one to gain better insight into the fact.

4. *Knowing a Proposition Better Through Having Better Ostensibility of a Fact*

Idiosyncratic though it may seem considering the mainstream epistemology literature, I would like to argue that it is possible to know more about a proposition without having anything more to do with knowing about its truth. In other words, it is possible to know more about a fact regarding *something other than its truth*. It is especially the case whenever the piece of knowledge at hand is of something to be experienced. I agree that it is not intuitive to think I may know the proposition "the age of my physics professor is 43" better or more deeply. This is a simple factual knowledge and when I hear that this proposition is true, it automatically becomes ostensible to me assuming that I am familiar with my physics professor and what it is to be 43, which simply means having lived in this world for 43 years.

However, for propositions that allow for better understanding it is possible to have partial ostensibility, which would be usually the case in experiential knowledge. In fact, it may even be the case that a full ostensibility is sometimes unattainable for some propositions, as "better knowledge" of them always remains possible. In light of this, I will argue that gaining partial ostensibility of the fact in cases of experiential knowledge enables one to know the proposition better. To illustrate, experiencing the beauty of love through watching a well-made romantic movie may give partial ostensibility of the fact of "the beauty of love", but experiencing it in one's own life might make one know the fact better and accordingly make one know the proposition that "love is beautiful" better. Similarly, experiencing the joy of being a mother makes one know the proposition that "becoming a mother is joyous" better. Yet, someone might get close to having better knowledge of this proposition by watching the joy of her best friend becoming a mother. Furthermore, I also would like to allow for the possibility of gaining partial ostensibility regarding an experiential knowledge not through direct experience but via other means such as fostering emphatic abilities in general. I may get better knowledge that "war is painful" not because I feel pain (get acquainted with pain) or experience war (get acquainted with war), but because I gain better emphatic abilities (due to becoming a mother/father, or reading about empathy in general) and so know that "war is painful" more fully. Even watching a movie or a documentary might help me make the fact of "war's being painful" more ostensible to me. So, I might claim that I know the proposition better now since I ostensibly know what it might refer to as a fact.

With reference to all that has been said above, I would like to claim that by gaining ostensible knowledge of the fact, one also gains better knowledge of the *proposition itself*. In other words, knowing the referent—or if I may say, knowing ostensibly—enables one to know the proposition better, in the sense of increasing one's acquaintance with the proposition. This could be thought as a claim for the possibility of

the gradability of propositional knowledge, and indirectly as a call for raising the standard of knowledge.

Yet, one might oppose this intuition and claim that rather than being a case of having better propositional knowledge, the above example would be better interpreted as a case arising out of increasing one's *objectual knowledge*. In other words, the opponent may claim that the inostensibility of the proposition is due to the lack of objectual knowledge of war and/or painfulness, and the more one attains objectual knowledge of those, the more ostensible the proposition will be. However, my claim is somewhat bolder than that, and extends to knowing better the *proposition as a whole*. I want to claim that what the subject lacks is not an objectual knowledge of war or painfulness, but the ostensible knowledge of the fact of "war's being painful". Since this is a kind of knowledge that can only be fully known through experience, there is something seriously missing in S's knowledge claim, even though S has non-experiential propositional knowledge. To put it slightly differently, one who has experienced the painfulness of war can be said to know "war is painful" better than S does.

Such an understanding of knowledge as something gradable is less controversial in cases of objectual knowledge, but gradability is almost never applied to propositional knowledge cases in mainstream epistemology literature. Yet, I think "knowing better" does not necessarily have to be "of an object", it could as well be "of a proposition". It would be overambitious to try to establish this view here, but I just want to note that this intuitive view is hinted at by a scant number of epistemologists.[3] One of the most outspoken proponents, Stephen Hetherington, attacks what he thinks are two "dogmas" of epistemology. One of them he calls "epistemic absolutism" which amounts to the claim that knowledge is absolute: you can be with or without it, but once you have it, it is not possible to have more or less. Sharing perhaps a similar intuition, Bac holds that empirical knowledge is a matter of degree (Bac 1999), and revisiting a similar characterization of knowledge, in a recent article, Bac and Irmak argue that we should rethink about what and how we know in general and whether knowledge is really an on/off switch which has no gradation or nuance (Bac 2011: 319). Some others such as Lawrance BonJour find that without allowing for such gradation, knowledge talk becomes useless and he even resorts to discarding the concept of knowledge: "The concept of knowledge is… a seriously problematic concept… So much so that it is… best avoided as far as possible in sober epistemological discussion." (BonJour 2010).

Related to this, recent epistemological discussions have seen a surge of interest in the notion of understanding as opposed to knowledge, and there have been attempts to shift the epistemological focus from knowl-

[3] Stephen Hetherington is one such epistemologist who offers a sophisticated theory of (empirical) knowledge by allowing for fine-grained evaluations of competing knowledge-claims (see Hetherington 2001, 2005).

edge to understanding. This has been mainly due to the problems encountered when searching for an intrinsic or distinctive value that can be attributed to knowledge (see especially Kvanvig 1998, 2003, Depaul 1989, Zagzebski 1996, 2003, Boylu 2010, Jones 2003 and Riggs 2002). Understanding, which is a concept that allows for gradability, has been appealing for virtue epistemologists who has concerns about reflecting the true nature of our knowledge claims. In her article, Boylu reasonably claims that "there is always a minimal understanding required by knowledge but one can understand better what one already knows." (Boylu 2010: 598). Hence, the idea of gradation is perhaps inevitable in knowledge talk.

For me, increasing the ostensibility of one's knowledge of a fact through experience makes the knowledge a better one compared to the non-experiential—albeit perhaps certain—knowledge one had before, and it adds further value to the knowledge at hand. Perhaps the idea that the value of experiential knowledge exceeds that of non-experiential knowledge is one of the insights that goes as far back as Plato's *Meno*. Knowing the way to Larissa is possibly a case of experiential knowledge, and having only factual knowledge rather than having experiential knowledge puts one on a comparatively worse epistemic standing. As Socrates says, "if a man knew the way to Larissa, or any other place you please, and walked there and led others, would he not give right and good guidance?" For Plato, he definitely would. Analogously, one who has experiential knowledge of a proposition would definitely be in a better epistemic standing.

To make sense of this distinctive value of experiential knowledge, it is perhaps useful to reflect on cases which can only be fully known through experience. Let us consider the following propositions:

> War is painful.
> A day spent in Disneyland is fun.

Assuming that the sentences above are true, I want to claim that it is possible to know these propositions better, more fully or ostensibly by coming to know what facts they actually —or possibly— refer to. In addition, knowing the facts more ostensibly enables one to have better propositional knowledge of such experiential knowledge cases. Thus, this allows me, *contra* Stanley (2005: 40), to argue that the following would be uncontroversial examples involving scales of epistemic strength or depth.

(a) A Syrian boy knows that war is painful better than a Swiss boy does.
(b) A Syrian boy knows that war is painful better than he knows that a day spent in Disneyland is fun.

Unlike the common assumption of lack of gradability for propositional knowledge, propositional knowledge cases that require experience to be fully known seems to be gradable. That is, the knowledge of some facts may become more ostensible, hence known better, by gaining

deeper knowledge of the facts they refer to. One might merely grasp the proposition "war is painful" and might know that proposition refers to a fact, which would merely be a case of inostensible knowledge. On the other hand, another person who gains ostensible knowledge of this proposition through experience may be said to know the proposition better. Just as better knowledge could be due to better acquaintance with the objects in the proposition, it is also possible through getting acquainted with the proposition as a whole. That is to say, getting more acquainted with *war* or *pain* or *Disneyland* or *having fun* might help you know the proposition better. This would be an attempt to make sense of this betterment of knowledge by appealing to increasing objectual knowledge of things while keeping propositional knowledge as it is, *sans* gradation. Yet, what I wish to claim is beyond that; I would like to entertain the idea that knowing a proposition more deeply could also be possible, which results from knowing the fact more ostensibly.

My reasoning will possibly become more obvious, once we get rid of the "know that p" formulation. I suppose it would be permissible to form the sentence "I know that war is painful" with this different formulation without losing the meaning: "I know war's being painful". This particular sentential form, which is the standard form used in Turkish for propositional knowledge attributions, perhaps reveals more accurate intuitions. To make it more explicit, let us consider Turkish language and the sentential form for propositional knowledge cases. The standard form of propositional knowledge in the Turkish language can be formulated word by word as "war's painfulness I know".[4] It is also possible to use the formulation "I know that war is painful" in Turkish,[5] but even though grammatically correct, it is rarely used, and when it is used, it usually adds a poetic touch to the statement. That is to say, in Turkish language, instead of the "S knows that x is y" structure, a sentence almost always has the form "S knows x's being y". The latter sentential form, which is the way Turkish people say that they know a particular proposition to be true, has a structure similar to that of objectual knowledge attributions. It seems that gradability becomes less problematic when the proposition to be known is formed as such; in other words, just as one could know an object better, it would be less controversial to claim that one could know "war's being painful" better.

Granted that gradability is possible for propositional knowledge, one may meaningfully say, "I know that war is painful better now" after experiencing the painfulness of war. So, my claim is that by making a *fact* more ostensible, one also comes to know the *proposition* better. Since, as argued above, it seems possible to get acquainted with propositional content just as it is possible to get acquainted with an object, it could be claimed that *better knowledge* is not restricted to things but is also applicable to propositions.

[4] In Turkish, the sentence would be "Savaşın acı olduğunu biliyorum".

[5] In Turkish, the sentence would be "Biliyorum ki savaş acıdır".

5. *Degrees of Ostensibility and Degrees of Propositional Knowledge*

After making this claim, I want to relate all these insights to my main endeavor, which could be thought of as an attempt to motivate curiosity by fostering an awareness of possible degrees of ostensibility regarding our propositional knowledge claims. Acknowledging the fact that propositional knowledge admits of gradability makes one understand that having inostensible propositional knowledge—knowing the truth of a fact without knowing the fact itself—is not the end but perhaps the beginning of our epistemic journey. The destination would be full ostensibility, which is an ideal a curious mind should strive for. It is an ideal because precious things are as difficult as they are rare:[6]

> Inostensible knowledge is abundant, but ostensible knowledge is scarce. This usually gets unnoticed. If knowledge is valuable, then surely ostensible knowledge should be taken to be more valuable than inostensible knowledge. There are many things people claim to know, and perhaps mostly they are right about it; but we forget the fact that in most cases when someone is said to know something that is of some significance, they have very little experience of the subject matter of whatever it is that they know… (Inan, Forthcoming)

The awareness that in most cases our knowledge is in fact inostensible proves to be significant, because whenever we realize that our knowledge attributions fall short of being ostensible, it propels us to strive to deepen our knowledge. This awareness could also enable one to appreciate the value of ostensible knowledge, which far exceeds the value of knowledge of truths. Taking ostensibility out of the picture, there remains almost nothing but knowledge of truths. Furthermore, when this passes as knowledge, this causes knowledge to be underrated, while knowledge of truths become overrated. My hope is that the awareness of inostensibility of propositional knowledge, and the possibility of knowing something more fully, deeply, completely, if I may say, *ostensibly*, would be valued more as a result of such an awareness. Only then can one meaningfully utter sentences like:

> I know that love is beautiful but I can know it more deeply.
> I know that love is beautiful but there is more to experience to know it fully.
> I know that love is beautiful but some truths allow for deeper understanding.
> I know that love is beautiful but it is not all that can be known about p.
> I know that love is beautiful, but it is inostensible propositional knowledge, and I can make it more ostensible.

Notice that, the first parts of the sentences above, which could be formulated as "I know that p" are so strong and perhaps possess an un-

[6] Alluding to Spinoza's famous saying.

deserved epistemic standing with which we credit ourselves. It easily misleads us into being dogmatic if we are not aware of our fallibility and not attentive to the inostensibility of our knowledge. It is interesting that *knowing the truth of a proposition*, which we express with "I know that p" is like knowing the name of a thing; it gives us the illusion of knowing the fact.

6. *To Name or Not to Name: The Guise of Ostensibility*

Lastly, I would like to elaborate on the guise of knowing associated with giving standard names to things. This is addressed in Inan's book but while his treatment is mainly about proper names and general terms, I will extend this problem to apply to knowing the name of feeling terms and the truth value of propositions (Inan 2012: 145). Inan thinks that "many proper names we use daily, of great figures, cities, or planets, are in fact inostensible for us, which we tend to forget" (Inan 2012: 63). Then, he goes on to say that:

> I know that the closest star to our sun is Alpha Centurie, but that's about all that I know about this star. If someone were to ask me what the closest star to our sun is, I would normally answer by "Alpha Centurie"; the reason for this is that normally I would take the question to be asking for a name, although the interrogative used does not really ask for a name but a star. If the name "Alpha Centurie" is in fact inostensible for me, given my lack of knowledge of it, then I really should have said that I do not know the answer to the question.

It is evident that knowing the name of a thing (also applicable to knowing the truth of a proposition) gives us the impression that we know the answer. This impression, in turn, causes us to stop inquiring further/deeper into the phenomenon. Perhaps the person in the example above had better replied "it is a star called Alpha Centauri" rather than claiming to know which star it is. In the case of general terms, Inan holds that we also feel a "false sense of acquaintance" even if we do not exactly know what we refer to. In turn, this causes a lack of awareness of our unfamiliarity with these terms.

> We use general terms in everyday speech having extremely little knowledge of their referents. We talk about different kinds of animals, herbs, atomic parts, or what have you, not really knowing them. Given that such knowledge is available and in our reach, we feel at home. The more frequently such terms are used, the more a false sense of acquaintance with their referents emerges. Just because someone uses the term "rye" in his everyday affairs regularly, to buy bread for instance, it does not follow that this person knows the kind of cereal it refers to. (Inan 2012: 145)

I would like to extend such a sense of false acquaintance to terms we use in language that we have not experienced as a fact but roughly know what they refer to. If one reflects on his epistemic status regarding his understanding of such terms like painfulness of war, joy of being a mother, losing a loved one, beauty of love, etc. one might come

to the realization that he is not acquainted with them since these are not fully known prior to experience. Furthermore, knowing a proposition that could only be known fully through experience to be true also causes one to misinterpret one's epistemic relation to the given proposition. For instance, knowing that "losing a loved one is bad" to be true might cause one to take this piece of knowledge for granted if one is not reflective enough on the epistemic status of this proposition in relation to oneself.

Now, to appreciate the role of experience in knowledge attributuions, let us consider two cases:

> The sky is blue. (Mary in the black-and-white room)[7]
> War is painful. (Someone who has not experienced war)

Or, assuming that speakers have never experienced war or the color blue, these two sentences would be better formed as:

> The sky is said to be blue.
> War is said to be painful.

In the first case, Jackson's Mary has no qualms whatsoever about the truth of this piece of knowledge. She in fact knows this—inostensibly though—better than many other people as she is taught quite a great deal about color science including how and where they are reflected on earth. Yet, there is a sense in which she lacks knowledge of sky's being blue. She only knows that the sky is said to be blue. She does not know what blue is like. Not getting out of her black and white room all her life, she has not experienced the color blue and there is a lack of ostensibility in her knowledge claim. She does not have all there is to know the fact that "the sky is blue" and whenever she is allowed to leave the room and look up at the sky, can she be said to know the proposition that "the sky is blue" ostensibly. Likewise, in the second case, a person who has not experienced war would not know what feeling corresponds to "war's being painful", even if these terms are ostensible to him. Since this wording might arouse a sense of false familiarity, let us come up with a new concept such as 'awefullypainful'[8] and let us assume it is a concept used only to refer to the feeling one has experiencing war. Let us also suppose that it is an easily graspable concept for speakers of English. Then, I may, without contradicting myself, say that I do not fully know war's being awefullypainful. I just know that "war is awefullypainful" is said to be true. Only if we take knowledge as saying nothing more than knowledge of truth of a proposition, then can I say that I know that war is awefullypainful.[9] Prior to knowing it ostensibly,

[7] The thought experiment was originally proposed by Jackson (1982, 1986).

[8] I made up that word from the word pain and 'awe' which etymologically comes from the Greek word 'achos' meaning grief, pain, woe. Also alluding to the connotations of fear, terror, and dread. Notice that it is purposefully written as "awefullypainful", rather than "awfullypainful".

[9] Perhaps it will be helpful to draw an analogy to Mary uttering the sentence 'I know that the sky is blue' prior to her experience of the blue sky.

if one asks me what feeling is awefullypainful, the only thing I could say is that it is the feeling one experiences in war. Similarly, suppose Mary goes outside and looks up at the blue sky, now she knows sky's being blue. Does she know the proposition better now? If we admit that ostensibly knowing is better, she seems to know the proposition "the sky is blue" better now. Yet, if we think of knowing a proposition as merely expressing a justified true belief of the subject, then nothing has changed for Mary, the proposition is still as true and as justified as it was prior to the experience. But there is a sense in which Mary knows "the sky is blue better after she sees the blue sky. This is a better knowledge of something other than truth, a kind of knowledge which requires experience, and the standard definition of propositional knowledge is inattentive to this.

Similarly, only after I experience war, can I be said to know how awefullypainful war is. A person who has experienced the painfulness of war might say, for instance, "I know how one feels in war, but I forgot what it is called", or perhaps there is no separate word for it in her language—just as the English language has none—and since naming is not knowing, it should not be about what it is called.[10] In the same manner, Mary may forget the name of the color, i.e. blue, after she sees the sky, but then she will still surely know the blueness of the sky itself. And just like Mary can say "I know the color of the sky but I forgot its name" without contradicting herself, another person can say "I know how war feels but I forgot what it is called". It is clear that to know a colour does not require one to know its standard name. Similarly, "awefullypainful" is still ostensible for one, even one she forgets or has never learned that it is called awefullypainful. This could be captured by the distinction between *knowing a concept* versus *knowing the name of a concept*; a similar distinction could be made between *knowing a fact* versus *knowing the truth of a proposition*, that is, whether or not the proposition refers to a fact. Ostensibly knowing that war is awefullypainful and inostensibly knowing that war is awefullypainful would be examples of the latter distinction above, respectively.

One important aspect to consider here would be the role of experience in making these distinctions. In Mary case, it is clear that to know blue and to know the name of the color blue are two different things. One is knowing the color itself, the other is just knowing the correct reference. 'Blue' is a word, but blue is a color, something to experience; 'awefullypainful' is a concept but awefullypainful is the feeling which is not fully knowable prior to experience. It would also be not wrong to claim that if one is satisfied by the name 'blue' when one inquiries into the color of the sky, then, instead of "what is the colour of sky?" one actually wants to ask "what is the name of the colour of the sky?"

[10] This point is made in Inan's book to establish the idea that "knowing the standard name of an object is neither necessary nor sufficient to come to know that object" (Inan 2012: 139).

In the same manner, if one is satisfied by the answer "war is awefullypainful", in other words, by the knowledge of truth of the fact that war is awefullypainful, then, instead of asking what does war feel like, in other words, knowing about the awefullypainfulness of war, one perhaps wants to ask "what is the name of the feeling you get in war?" One is a superficial thing compared to the other. Naming things is a habit that has many pragmatic advantages but it also deceives us into thinking that we have knowledge when we have only the knowledge of the name of a concept or only the knowledge of truth of the proposition. Inan shares his worry as such:

> There is nothing in the semantic content of the sentence that reveals this difference though. So the distinction between ostensible and inostensible knowledge cannot be cashed out in terms of the kind of proposition that is known. Contemporary epistemology, which predominantly focuses on propositional knowledge, is unable to mark this important difference. (Inan 2012: 68)

But why should we care about this distinction?

First, it is about raising the standard of knowing. An awareness of the inostensibility of knowledge will allow people to demand more, and aim at ostensibility. Through aiming at ostensible knowledge, one also aims at better knowledge, hence it becomes possible and meaningful to talk about better/deeper knowledge. Then, no one in their right mind would claim that they know things so effortlessly. Of course, they would know the *truth of the fact*, but that would be it. As noted earlier, for cases in which we find ourselves quite far from ostensibility, rather than saying "I know that x is F", I would rather we said, "I testify that x is F". For, "to know" is deeper.

We may perhaps liken "naming" to creating an epistemic mental file of things—a mental file that needs to be rich enough for some, while others may be happy with merely naming the file. But whenever people become aware of the scantiness of their files—that is, become aware of the inostensibility of their knowledge—this will make them realize that they do not have the right to claim they know it fully and this awareness will hopefully propel them to demand more and be curious.

It is important to note that, the person longing for ostensibility will not be after complete certainty (as the naming of the file is correct), but perhaps after complete understanding. There is a certain epistemic humility about the fact that he may come to know that "x is F" better through experiencing, internalizing, or reflecting on the proposition at hand. It is a desire for enriching the file through seeing, tasting, smelling, feeling, experiencing, etc. the fact the proposition refers to. Melodramatic as it may sound, it could be summarized as a call for people "to stop and smell the roses" before saying that they know that roses do smell. Put more prosaically, the point is that ostensible knowledge, unlike mere knowledge of truths, grants one internalized knowledge that is not easily lost, and it is this property that accounts for the distinctive value of ostensible knowledge over inostensible knowledge.

Another important question is: no matter how we define knowledge and no matter what our stance is on the gradability of knowledge, does knowledge of truths— that is, having IPK— satisfy curiosity? Should it be enough to satisfy curiosity? I think not. That would be like stopping at the entrance of the stairway to knowledge. That would be a cessation of curiosity way too early.

Secondly, I believe having ostensible knowledge of things might change the world for the better. Ostensibility is like ascending a stairway that is perhaps never-ending, and one had better aim as high as possible. This stairway starts with knowledge of truth (IPK) and it may gradually become less inostensible, but still more knowable. To illustrate with a few examples, romantic though it may seem, if people ostensibly knew or were aware of the lack of ostensibility of their knowledge that war is painful, they would be a lot more concerned about wars, what it really means to commence a war, and perhaps be more cautious to refrain from attitudes and acts that might give rise to war. Likewise, provided that people ostensibly knew what hunger is, then there would probably be less suffering from hunger. Deeper or better knowledge of propositions like "War is painful" or "This family is hungry" could possibly change the world; and even if having better knowledge of those propositions may not be practically possible, at least being aware of the inostensibility of our knowledge is significant. It helps us to empathize with people going through situations we have not experienced yet, and it enables one to care to know deeply. When one hears the sentence "hunger is bad", that sentence will produce an effect depending on the experience one has had of that fact in one's life. It is possible that there could be separate names for degrees of hunger; one word for being hungry for eight hours (which we normally take it to be), being hungry for a day, two days, a week, etc., then we would not so hastily claim that we know that "hunger is bad". We would question and care to know how others experience it. And this is not possible through a search for certainty that "hunger is bad", but is possibly attained by trying to increase the degree of ostensibility about the knowledge that "hunger is bad". One might state that "I know that hunger is bad", but it could be just knowledge of its truth, that is, inostensible knowledge, supposing that one is medically not allowed to feel hunger and is instructed to eat every two hours due to a case of severe hypoglycemia. Another could know it more ostensibly, but to a lesser degree compared to someone who stays hungry for a day. So, it is possible to know better what a person means when one hears another utter the sentence "My family is hungry".

I knew of an author once who never sated her hunger fully and did not turn on the heater in winter just to understand her fictional characters better. Perhaps, we could do better to understand non-fictional characters, and perhaps, at least hope to recognize that ostensible knowledge requires one to move further along in the transformational epistemic journey. And no matter where one finds oneself situated on

the stairway to knowledge, I believe wisdom resides somewhere in the vicinity of awareness of inostensibility.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Aran Arslan, Ayca Boylu, Murat Bac for reading drafts of this paper and I owe special gratitude to Ilhan Inan for long hours of discussion and his valuable comments on the paper. I also would like to thank Nenad Miscevic for giving me this opportunity to contribute to this issue.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

The Concept of Curiosity in the Practice of Philosophy for Children

İREM GÜNHAN ALTIPARMAK
Department of Philosophy, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Philosophy for Children is, at its core, an educational movement that started in the 1970s and it is currently practiced in over 60 countries. Rather than teaching children philosophy, it aims to develop thinking, inquiry and reasoning skills by means of intellectual interaction and by questioning both with the facilitator and amongst themselves. Thus it creates a community of inquiry. This movement has created a sound literature within philosophy of education which indirectly relates to issues in meta-philosophy, epistemology and philosophy of childhood. Despite the fact that Philosophy for Children is a movement which is predominantly based on questioning and inquiry, there is little emphasis on curiosity within its literature. This is not surprising because even in philosophy literature the concept of curiosity was ignored until quite recently. Producing the first book-length treatment of curiosity within philosophy literature, İnan provides a philosophical framework on how human curiosity is possible and how it finds expression. The notion of inostensible conceptualization, which İnan has developed and central to his theory of curiosity, could be utilized in order to demonstrate the significance of curiosity within Philosophy for Children. Philosophy for Children sessions are usually centered around a philosophical concept such as fairness, egoism, and identity. In this paper I argue that the in-class discussions in Philosophy for Children practice enable children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. That is, they do not have all the knowledge about this specific concept. In order to explain the concept of curiosity in P4C sessions, I have developed two notions: the first notion is curiosity-arouser, which I utilize to explain how the community of inquiry could better concentrate on and discuss the inostensible concept. The second notion is joint curiosity, which I have developed in analogy to the trans-disciplinary notion of joint attention. Similar to the positive impact of joint attention on child development, I argue that joint curiosity has positive outcomes for children's inquiry and questioning. I explain these notions in detail by providing examples of Philosophy for Children sessions. My overall aim is to emphasize the importance of curiosity in order for this practice to reach its fundamen-

tal aims. The practitioners and those who prepare materials have to take into consideration the concept of curiosity and must equip themselves with an understanding of it.

Keywords: Philosophy for children (P4C), philosophy of curiosity, philosophy of education.

General Information about Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children, abbreviated as P4C, is an educational movement that includes in its background the philosophies of John Dewey, Gareth Matthews, Lev Vygotsky, George H. Mead and Charles Sanders Pierce (Lipman et al. 1980, Murris 2008).[1] It has arisen from the philosophy professor's, Matthew Lipman, concern about the poor reasoning abilities of university students, and so as to find a solution to this he wished to improve critical thinking, to develop the inquiry about philosophical questions and to enhance making reasonable judgment at a younger age (Lipman 1985, Gregory 2011). In collaboration with Ann Margaret Sharp, he founded and became the director of Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), where the philosophy textbooks for children and the Philosophy for Children program were prepared.[2]

Lipman and P4C followers believe the fruitful outcomes of the development of thinking and reasoning skills at an early age in the process of education. Lipman (2003) acknowledges that children are curious and inquisitive, and thus introducing philosophy to children and discussing philosophical issues with them have the benefit of improving their certain skills. This is because "philosophy is the finest instrument yet devised for the perfection of the thinking process" (Lipman et al. 1980: xi). Philosophy for Children practitioners aim to develop children's cognitive and communicative skills by bringing philosophy into their school curricula. According to Lipman, getting acquainted with philosophy enables children to develop thinking skills, such as formulating concepts precisely, drawing inferences, making appropriate generalizations, recognizing consistencies and contradictions, clarifying ideas, identifying underlying assumptions, giving reasons, making distinctions, making connections, analyzing values, identifying fallacies, instantiating, constructing definitions for familiar words, taking differences of perspective into account, constructing arguments and formulating questions (Lipman 2014).

[1] The original name of this practice is Philosophy for Children (P4C). Some writers prefer to use the phrase "Philosophy with Children" when referring to this practice. I acknowledge both phrases and use the abbreviation "P4C" in this paper for brevity.

[2] Matthew Lipman prefers to call those textbooks "philosophical novels".

Children develop these skills by means of discussing a philosophical concept or issue.[3] The quality of P4C sessions rests on the fact that children scratch beneath the surface of a philosophical issue with the help of questions and dialogues that are initiated with the help of the materials appropriate for children's age and understanding. In order to fulfill this, some constitutive elements are essential to P4C sessions.

P4C Session

For a better understanding of my claims regarding P4C practice, it is necessary to know what takes place in a session. Briefly, P4C session is defined as a typical session that consists of a group reading a source text, followed by the gathering of students' questions stimulated by the reading.[4] There are certain elements in a P4C session, and these are indispensable factors of a session; namely, Socratic Dialogue, the Facilitator, and Community of Inquiry.

All these distinctive factors have different and complementary roles. The discussion method is grounded on Socratic Dialogue. Originally in Socratic dialogues, Socrates is "tirelessly pursuing intellectual inquiry by method of question and answer" (Kahn 1998: 72). Bringing this type of dialogue into the session helps children to enhance their dialogic skills, to hear each other's ideas and to make inquiries. "The dialogic skills the Socratic Dialogue employs are listening, formulating and reformulating, asking for clarification, checking for understanding, following on from probing assumptions and explicating them, abstracting and concretizing" (Knezic et al. 2010: 20).

In the Socratic method of systematic questioning and dialogue, children are encouraged to talk and listen to each other within a community of inquiry that is not controlled, but is facilitated by the teacher. The P4C practitioner is called a facilitator because she is not in a position of transferring knowledge. On the contrary, the facilitator is responsible for leading the sessions in order to enable children to experience philosophical discussions and to gain equity for talking and sharing as well as for the use of compatible discussion plans, exercises and activities. This is also pointed out by Murris, she says: "the philosophical dimension of an inquiry depends, to a large extent, on the facilitating skills and attitudes of the teacher" (Murris 2000: 40).

The children and the facilitator engaged in a Socratic Dialogue constitute a Community of Inquiry, abbreviated as CoI. With all its

[3] Although the concepts discussed in the sessions are mostly philosophical, there can be concepts or issues that are not philosophical; such as the concept of "cooperation" or "work". The issue of what a philosophical concept is, is a topic in itself. Nevertheless, philosophical questions could be generated from the concepts of cooperation or work. The underlying issue here is that the children are philosophically discussing them in the sessions.

[4] You can find the definition of a P4C session and more information on the website; www.p4c.org.nz.

members, including the facilitator, this inquiring community sits in a circle. Sitting in a circle is a significant aspect of a P4C session, because this aspect makes it possible for all members to fully see each other as peers. Thus, they are encouraged to share on the same platform. The aim is to give children an opportunity to share thoughts with each other. Having discussions in this inquiring community that requires sitting in a circle gives everyone the opportunity to hear one another's ideas, experience each other's thinking processes, help build up their thoughts by listening to each other, asking questions and be able to think within a community. This arrangement of the session promotes open-mindedness, self-expression and furthermore, intellectual courage, and respect for others.

Through embracing all these constitutive elements, a P4C session improves cognitive and social skills. On the whole, a Philosophy for Children session includes Socratic Dialogue and enables the community of philosophical inquiry to engage in discussions with the help of the facilitator so that children could inquire, ask questions, respond to each other, and hence become an active member.

Coming to the end of this section, I would like to mention a session, which I am going to refer throughout the paper, for illustration. The community of inquiry of this session was composed of ten people including the home room teacher, the facilitator and the primary school children aged 8. The video of a story book about the gingerbread man was introduced to the group.[5] In the video, the gingerbread man managed to escape from all the characters who said that they would eat him. Then, he came across a fox who said to the gingerbread man that he did not want to eat him. The gingerbread man was tired of running from the others. He felt no threat from the fox and wanted to walk with him. While the gingerbread man was enjoying his company, the fox played a cunning game and ended up eating him.

The concept of lying was the topic of concern for the inquiring community.[6] After watching the video, one of the members started the discussion with the following probing question: why did the gingerbread man believe the fox, who was a natural liar? This question brought up discussions on what lying is. Furthermore, inquiring community discussed ethical problems about lying. The discussions went on with commentaries, questions, answers and sharing experiences. In analyzing the concept of lying, related issues such as deceiving, hiding and keeping secrets were introduced by different members. By means of

[5] The name of the book is *The Gingerbread Man*. There are different versions of the book. I used a video version in this session. You can find the video on Youtube; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U89dkGrsYZY

[6] I bring such materials to P4C sessions that a couple of philosophical issues can be brought under light. In this example, some children share their opinions about the behaviors of the characters. Although there is more than one philosophical issue to discuss, the community of inquiry gave emphasis to the concept of lying because children chose to discuss it.

dialogue, conversations, questioning and sharing ideas, the community had discussions in order to understand better what those concepts stand for. They pondered on these concepts. The children mentioned their experiences. They thought about issues such as whether keeping secrets is lying, whether hiding is lying and whether lying is always bad. Some members changed their ideas and some others gained more information about lying. Throughout this paper, I will touch upon this sample and explain the concept of curiosity in the light of it.

Curiosity in P4C Literature

The general information about P4C reveals that the sessions are built on discussion, inquiry, and questioning. Children are able to grasp philosophical concepts (Murris 2000), inquire into them and ask questions about them. That being the case, discussing the concept of curiosity and its importance for inquiry and questioning deserve great attention. Although it is significant, the relationship between curiosity and questioning is not discussed in detail in the P4C literature. The importance of fostering curiosity and the success of P4C in fostering curiosity are acknowledged.

As mentioned earlier, Lipman and some P4C followers draw attention to the fact that children are curious, as part of their natural impulse, and inquisitive (Lipman 2003, Lipman 1976, Wartenberg 2007). Lipman is influenced by the philosophers Gareth Matthews and John Dewey, who both claim that curiosity is one of children's dispositions. The curiosities and wonderings of children are regarded so valuable that adults are criticized for losing their natural sense of wonder. This loss could be explained by giving several reasons, but, most importantly, implementations of wrong education techniques and programs cause children to be on the edge of losing their natural curiosity. According to Lipman, the nature of schooling, intransigencies of the educational system and didactic textbooks generate a loss of curiosity (Lipman 2003, Lipman 1976). In his paper *Philosophy for Children* (1976) he mentioned the underestimation of a necessary preparation to arouse a child's curiosity in education. He added that, in addition to arousing it, educators have to guide the child's responses. He said that "a curious child is like a coiled spring in that he contains his own energy, his own dynamism and his own way of opening or unfolding" (Lipman 1976: 15). At this point he did not elaborate on the importance of arousing curiosity; instead he mentions the importance of finding the "proper trigger".

P4C movement takes these educational problems seriously. Therefore, arousing and fostering children's curiosity are among the main concerns of P4C movement. The success of P4C, that is, getting children to be curious, is explicitly mentioned in the literature. For instance, it is argued that the P4C program not only benefits from children's natural curiosity but also fosters their original curiosity for intellectual inquiry

(Conlan 2013, Murris 2008). It helps children to be more curious by asking appropriate questions, and the P4C groups are said to display more curiosity (Oral 2012, Ndofirepi and Cross 2015, Trickey and Topping 2004). At the same time, the methods in the practice such as Socratic Dialogue and Inquiry are regarded as a way to awaken curiosity (Turgeon 2015). In addition to this, Ann Margaret Sharp sees curiosity and questioning as necessary features of a facilitator (Gregory 2011).

Drawing attention to the fact that children are naturally curious and the emphasis on the need of fostering it are pivotal gains for education. Yet, the explanation as to why it is important and necessary to foster curiosity in children is missing in the literature. From now on, I will discuss the need of fostering curiosity and the importance of the concept of curiosity in P4C with reference to İnan's conceptualization of curiosity.

Curiosity and the Asking of a Question

P4C is supposed to have children inquire and ask questions. As well as aiming to develop the thinking and social skills of children, P4C intends to enable children to be substantial questioners who will critically evaluate the information they acquire. There is a relationship between the asking of a question and being curious. Curiosity acts as a crucial motivation for humans to ask questions (İnan 2012). When we take İnan's hypothesis into account, curiosity gains a respectable and indispensible place in the process of asking questions and inquiry. Typically, we express our curiosity by the asking of a question. Although there are other ways of expressing curiosity such as mimics and gestures, the asking of a question is the fundamental way of expressing our curiosity. This relationship between the asking of a question and being curious renders the concept of curiosity significant for P4C practices in which questioning has an essential role.

In order to explain my claim, I refer to İnan's book *The Philosophy of Curiosity* which offers a theory of curiosity. İnan focuses on illuminating human curiosity. According to him, human curiosity has evolved together or before interrogative sentences. He claims that curiosity is one of the impetuses for our interrogative sentences. The mainstream understanding regards the asking of a question as a speech act. However, we could ask questions to ourselves and answer them without producing sentences. İnan takes into account the asking of a question to oneself as a private mental act and thus, regards curiosity as a fundamental impetus for humans to ask questions.

He acknowledges the variety of ways in which a speaker could be motivated to ask a question. "One may ask a question whose answer one knows just to test someone's knowledge of the matter, one may ask a rhetorical question to make a statement, and one may even ask a question whose answer one wishes to find out but not because one is curious about it all" (İnan 2012: 40). Similarly, not all inquiries require

curiosity. "Someone may inquire into something, not because he is curious, but because his job requires him to do so, or he wishes to get some satisfaction by it, or to find something novel, or to gain power, and so on" (İnan 2012: 19). Although there are different kinds of motivations behind the asking of a question and inquiry, these do not change the significance of curiosity. This is because curiosity is a *crucial motivation* for questioning and questions asked out of curiosity tend to be more in-depth and valuable in acquiring knowledge.[7]

In order to explain further how curiosity is related to the asking of a question, I will give İnan's description of curiosity. İnan says "for every question a subject asks out of curiosity there is a corresponding term for the subject that is inostensible for him and whose content is an inostensible concept; this I take to be a requirement for asking a question out of curiosity" (İnan 2012: 41). İnan provides us with a novel definition and defines curiosity as follows: it is the mental state one enjoys by the entertainment of an inostensible concept about something that is of interest. Then, what is an inostensible concept? According to him;

> In order to inquire into something, and later to be able to discover it, one must have at hand something that guides him…this guide, on my view, is neither any kind of knowledge, nor any kind of true belief, but it is rather a complex term that I call "inostensible" (relative to the inquirer).

He continues with an explanation of ostensible and inostensible terms as follows:

> In the first case the speaker may know what a term may refer to, in the sense that he knows that a certain object as being the referent of the term, and in the second case one may lack such knowledge. Let us call the first kind of term relative to a speaker an "ostensible" term (for that speaker) and the latter an "inostensible" term (for that speaker) (İnan 2012: 33).

At this point, it will be useful to exemplify İnan's argument. One of İnan's examples is the term "the population of Peru". I do not know "the population of Peru", in other words I do not know the number the term "the population of Peru" stands for which is what makes this term inostensible for me. However, for someone who knows what the population of Peru—what the term stands for—the term is ostensible. İnan says that the epistemic link to what the term stands for is what makes that term ostensible or inostensible for a subject. İnan applies this distinction to concepts that the terms express. "When we are engaged in an inquiry, the thing that guides us in our search for the object of inquiry is an inostensible concept" (İnan 2012: 35). He claims that the inquiry will end when the inostensible concept is transformed into an ostensible one.

[7] Curiosity could give rise to in-depth questioning. Children, who ask questions out of curiosity, ask not to be active, talkative, take attention of others or give response but ask because of their interest in the topic and their natural wonder about things in general. They are the ones who are willing to learn and think more about the concept in question. Curious children are likely to think, inquire and engage in a dialogue.

It is crucial to point out that there are degrees in ostensibility and curiosity (İnan 2014). A concept being inostensible for someone means that, there are (more) things to learn about that concept. Following İnan's example of the term "the population of Peru", we could say that for someone who knows the exact number of the population, this term would be fully ostensible. Most likely, however, there is no person who knows what that number is exactly. For me, this term is inostensible because I do not even know an approximate number this term stands for. Furthermore, even for someone who knows the population approximately, the term would still be inostensible but less so compared to my situation. There is a difference between the one who knows the exact number of the population and the one who knows it approximately. Since there are degrees in ostensibility, there is *to learn* for those who do not know the population and there is still *more to learn* for those who know approximately. Acquiring knowledge and gaining new experiences increase the degree of ostensibility. For concepts, especially philosophical concepts, there is a fair amount of information to learn. Thus, an increase in the degree of ostensibility, even if the concept is not fully ostensible, is still a remarkable achievement.

In the light of İnan's definition of curiosity, I would like to put forward a new analysis for the P4C sessions. A P4C session enables children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. The session allows children to discuss, to question, to provide answers, to make comments and to evaluate on the inostensible concept, to listen to each other's interpretations and ideas and to hear their own voices. By means of these, P4C aims to make children realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them, and then make the concept as ostensible as possible for the members of the inquiring community.

Examining the session example in the light of the inostensible concept is going to be helpful for a better understanding. The purpose of that session is to make those children become aware that there are many things that they do not know about lying than they thought they knew. The concept of lying being inostensible for a child means that she does not know certain things about what lying is. What the concept of lying stands for was a topic of debate for that community of inquiry because there were things that they did not know about lying.[8] They had different ethical claims regarding the action of lying. Throughout the discussions children analyzed some cases. They shared their experiences and tried to decide whether the cases in question fall under the concept of lying or other concepts. Throughout this P4C session, the concept of lying became more ostensible for the inquiring community.

If a child thinks that she knows the concept, most likely she will not ask questions about it. For a child, becoming aware of the fact that

[8] The concept of lying is a debatable topic of Ethics. Even for the grown-ups and the philosophers, the concept of lying may not be fully ostensible. I believe some philosophical concepts or issues are not fully ostensible even for the experts of those concepts or issues.

the concept is inostensible for her is a threshold in the process of interrogation and asking a question. If she thinks that she knows what the concept stands for, why would she feel the need to ask questions about it? We may argue that for children to ask questions out of curiosity, they need to have a realization of the inostensibility of the concept. In order to ask questions, they need to think that there are issues to question. In the P4C sessions, the child may realize that there is much more about the concept in question than her knowledge about it, that is she has partial knowledge about the concept, or she realizes that she has false beliefs about it.[9] This realization shows us that the child reaches a certain kind of an awareness of ignorance.[10]

In the session example sharing ideas, giving approval and counter examples, commenting on each other's sayings; namely having discussions helped children to realize the inostensibility of the concept of lying for them. Concept formation, differentiating the concepts lying, deceiving and hiding by discussion and evaluating the cases helped the community of inquiry to have clearer ideas about what those concepts mean in reality. The conversation below shows that children were having semantic disputes about the concept of lying. The conversation went as follows:

A: The fox deceived the gingerbread man.
B: The fox said that "I did not want to eat you". That's a lie!
C: The fox hid something. He did not tell the truth that he wanted to eat the gingerbread man. When we hide something from our parents or friends, we lie to them.
B: Keeping secrets is hiding. But keeping secrets is not lying.
D: We have the right to hide. This is keeping secrets. If you say the opposite of what you are hiding, this is lying.
A: The fox did not have a secret. He did not tell the truth. He wanted to eat the gingerbread man. He deceived him by lying to him.

With the help of this conversation, the community realized that members had different understandings about the same issues such as whether keeping secret is lying or not. The children wanted to continue discussing the concepts hiding, deceiving and lying in the light of sharing different examples and their experiences. Without sharing your ideas, hearing your own words and comments, it is not easy to realize your false beliefs. Child A thought about the behavior of the fox

[9] It is possible for the child to hear about the concept for the first time. However, this is contradictory to the fact that it is fruitful to discuss the concepts, issue or topics that children are already in search for their meanings. Although it is possible for some member of the community of inquiry to hear the concept in question for the first time, this is usually not the case.

[10] It is possible to say that Socratic Dialogue helps this realization. Achieving an awareness of ignorance is an aim of Socratic Dialogue. Socrates in his dialogues aims at helping the others to achieve it. As Kahn says; "his (Socrates) own modest claim is simply the recognition of his own ignorance; and his own endeavor in discussion with others is to help them achieve this same recognition" (Kahn 1998: 73).

and analyzed it. By this, he came to a conclusion that the fox deceived the gingerbread man. After child B gave him a reply, child C and D joined the conversation. One of the members continued this discussion by saying that;

D: The fox lied because he wanted to eat the gingerbread man. Without this lie, he could not eat the gingerbread man.
C: So, he lied.
D: Yes, but he lied for himself.
F: We have to be honest and say everything. But if we protect someone or try to save our life, hiding is not lying.
Facilitator: Is lying always a bad action?
G: There are different types of lies. For example, we tell pink lies. Telling pink lies is not deceiving. We tell pink lies for making our friends not to feel sad.
D: When we lie for our interest, no, this is not bad.
E: But it is bad for the gingerbread man!
D: But it is good for the fox. What could he do?
F: Something good for you can be bad for some others. So this is a bad thing, you should not do that.

The children helped each other as being the members of the inquiring community to differentiate the concepts and make them clear by giving arguments, introducing new concepts and examples. Introduction of "pink lies" was followed by the conceptualization of lies as black, pink and white later in the discussion. They discussed cases and had ethical discussions on whether lying is always bad or not. While child D legitimized the action of lying, children E and F opposed to this legitimization. The session enabled a realization of the inostensibility of the concept of lying in ethical terms so that they asked questions and shared their opinions about this concept. Constructing definitions for familiar words and formulate concepts precisely is challenging. Throughout this session, the community of inquiry tried to construct definitions for the concepts in question and formulate them.

To make my argument clear, I would like to give another example from a P4C session that I facilitated. In this session, the topic of discussion was cooperation. The book that we read was about creativity and cooperation.[11] The characters achieve something good and favorable by way of cooperating with each other. While we were discussing the concept of cooperation, one of the members said that;

W: Thieves cooperate to steal. However, stealing is a bad thing.

This sentence reduced the members of the inquiring community who were discussing the issue enthusiastically to silence. Every member began to think about this remark. Although we were discussing the cases where cooperation is not working and is not productive, none of

[11] The material of this session was the book called Swimmy. Lionni, L. (1963). *Swimmy*. New York. NY: Pantheon.

us mentioned achieving something bad and unfavorable by way of cooperation. Then, the members continued the discussion by giving similar cases as examples.

X: For killing somebody, people can cooperate!
Y: They can hurt animals by cooperating.
Z: Before, I thought cooperation is always good. Now I changed my mind. Bad things can happen by cooperating.
Homeroom Teacher: I realized that I'm teaching the concept of cooperation in giving emphasis to the fruitful outcomes of cooperation. I'm always giving examples of cooperative activities that have positive outcomes. Now I see that my approach is missing some aspects of cooperation. People can certainly achieve something unfavorable by cooperating.

By way of cooperation, we may achieve something not only good, but also achieve something bad. It is clear that, the members gained new information about what the concept of cooperation stands for and some members realized their false beliefs, such as the child Z, after considering this information. The children, who had thought that cooperation was always good, realized that this was not true. By means of discussing the concept of cooperation child W came up with a remark. His contribution affected the community of inquiry, and thus some members declared that they had changed their ideas after evaluating and accepting that remark.

In every successful session, children realize the inostensibility of the concept in question. The materials of P4C together with questions, discussions and hearing the thoughts and experiences of others about the concept in question have the possibility to make the child realize the inostensibility of the concept in her own intellectual journey. Therewith sessions serve the purpose of accomplishing the task to make the inostensible concept as ostensible as possible for each child.

Do the sessions complete the transition of the concept from inostensible to an ostensible one? Neither the session complete the transition of the inostensible concept into an ostensible one, nor, the session aim to complete it. The purpose of the program is to discuss the concept in question philosophically in which a complete analysis of the concept is not a requirement. In the sample session, the community of inquiry did not come to a decision about what lying is or about whether lying is always bad or not. However, they thought about these issues, shared their ideas and heard each other's ideas. For the children, these opened the way to think about their own ideas and compare different thoughts about the same issue. To put in a nutshell; fair amount of information and opinion were shared by means of discussion in that session. Those are what enabled the transformation of the inostensible concept, lying, into a more ostensible one for the children. At the end of the session, to a certain degree, they have an idea of what lying is and is not.

On the other hand, aiming to make the concept ostensible for each

child will bring up the issue of didactic teaching. Making a concept as fully ostensible as it could be requires having all the knowledge about it beforehand and the task of transmitting it during the session. However, the community of inquiry with the facilitator discusses the concept, finds out what the concept stands for and even may come up with new ideas. The issue here is not to teach or transmit them all the information about the concept but to make the concept as ostensible as possible by *discussing* it.

In this respect, the midwife analogy sounds quite plausible for P4C sessions. "A number of metaphors have been developed to illustrate the role of the teacher…the teacher is seen as a…midwife" (Splitter and Sharp 1995: 140). The facilitator leads the session, asks questions to children and helps them to state what they have on their minds. Not only the facilitator but also the discussions and the session in general have the potential of acting like a midwife. Children are eager to talk and share their experiences. They have opinions and want to hear the thoughts and ideas of other members; that is to say they want to learn what the other participants think. The session enables them to hear the members and also their own thoughts by means of Socratic Dialogue, discussion and sharing ideas. P4C gives them the opportunity to state what they think and give answers to the questions. Children have the chance to take the thoughts out of their minds. By means of creating an inquiring community in which thinking and sharing opinions are fostered, the session acts like a midwife.

P4C sessions act like a midwife and there is much more to it. In addition to acting like a midwife, that is creating an environment for the children to take their thoughts and ideas come out of their minds, the sessions work on those thoughts and ideas, paving the way for their development. By enabling them to hear other minds, building up on to other's thoughts, evaluating arguments, drawing inferences, finding examples, sharing experiences and self-reflection, children come to a certain decision or understanding regarding the philosophical concept and get acquainted with philosophical discussions.

So far I touched upon the relationship between the asking of a question and being curious. If my position is taken into account, then, an analysis of the concept of curiosity would be essential for P4C sessions in which there is a fair amount of questioning and inquiry. When P4C sessions are analyzed under the light of İnan's theory of curiosity, it is seen that, P4C sessions have the power to foster children's natural inclination to be curious by offering them discussions that are centered around a philosophical concept (or a concept which can be discussed philosophically) which is an inostensible concept for them. The P4C session helps children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. Through discussions, asking questions and inquiring into the concept in question, the sessions serve the purpose of making the concept as much ostensible as possible.

The crucial point is the occurrence of an awareness of ignorance, that is a realization of the inostensibility of the concept, which may lead the child to ask questions. When the child realizes her, the concept is inostensible for her, it is more likely for her to question the concept and be an active member of the community of inquiry thus, be able to make the concept more ostensible for herself and also make the discussion more fruitful by her contribution. Becoming aware of the fact that the concept in question is inostensible is very crucial in the process of becoming curious and asking questions. However, this is not enough. As İnan suggests, "only when awareness of ignorance concerning a specific matter is accompanied by a certain kind of interest in that matter could it result in curiosity" (İnan 2012: 126). It is also necessary to draw the attention of the children to the concept and arouse interest, in order to get them to be curious. For a better discussion of the concept of curiosity and how to get children to be curious during the sessions we have to mention attention and interest, and then examine the P4C session in the light of these notions.

Attention Grabber

For children to be curious apprehending that the concept in question is inostensible, that is an awareness of ignorance, is necessary but not sufficient. To become curious, the child has to pay attention and moreover, feel interested in the topic. The session and the materials have to be arranged with respect to drawing the attention of the children to the concept and making them feel interested in it. The important thing is to prepare the materials according to the cognitive levels of children. The materials help us present the concepts to the community of inquiry at the beginning of the sessions. The important thing is to prepare the materials according to the cognitive levels of children. The materials and the way the concepts are presented have vital roles for the sessions because the children pay attention to the concept and to the sessions by means of the materials and their presentation. Paying attention will prepare the way for a realization of the inostensibility of the concept.

For fulfilling this realization in children, first, the materials have to draw their attention. According to Lipman, "the child has little future to count on; they only know that the present makes sense or does not make sense, on its own terms. This is why they would appreciate having educational means which are meaning-laden: stories, games, discussions, trustful personal relationships, and so on" (Lipman 1978: 256). If the materials designed according to the needs and cognitive levels of the children are presented in the classroom, it becomes easier to draw their attention to the concepts. Typically, short stories or passages from stories are used in the classroom in order to present the concepts or the issues. Other materials such as videos, toys or skits may well be used in the sessions in order to bring a concept to the class and take their attention. In relation to that, "attention grabber" seems

a suitable umbrella term for P4C materials whether they are books, passages, short stories, videos or skits. The aim of these materials is to draw the attention of the children to the philosophical concepts or issues contained in these materials.

For drawing the attention of the children not only the material itself but also its presentation is influential. During the presentation of the attention grabbers, it is useful to ask one or two questions for clarity. When there are unclear or ambiguous points, it will be hard for the child to grasp the issue, keep his interest, and thus become curious. Before pondering on the concept, the child has to understand the content of the material. Asking questions during the presentation of the material is practical also to engage the distracted children to the story. The questions for summing up, such as, "what has happened so far?" and the questions for emphasizing connections between two things are helpful.

As mentioned before, in the session example the video of a story book was presented. The video includes lively images, colorful scenes and animal characters. These make the video an appealing material for children and thus, the community of inquiry watched it with enthusiasm. It was successful in drawing children's attention because it was appropriate for children's ages and cognitive levels.

After the presentation, one of the children asked "how can a gingerbread man run faster than a horse?" This question was about the material. Another child asked "how does the gingerbread man believe the fox who is a natural liar?" This question indicates that he understood the story and questioned the actions of a character. What is the difference between these two questions? In both cases, children paid attention to the video. However, the child who asked the second question both paid attention to the material and felt interested in the issue. Both questioners were in an attempt to understand. However, the child who asked the second question was curious about the issue which opens a way for the discussion about the concept of lying.

Being perplexed may well be the case for the child who asked the question "how can a gingerbread man run faster than a horse". It seems that she was perplexed about the logical issue such as how a cookie can run faster than a horse. The distinction between curiosity and perplexity is worth noting here. Perplexity is for the good of arousing curiosity. When a child is perplexed, she is more likely to ask questions that are supposed to make the issue clear for her. Children could ask questions out of perplexity when they are in need of clarification. A perplex child is also the attentive child who cares about the topic and needs a clarification because she is on the way of grasping the issue. It is necessary for the facilitator to take into account the reasons behind children's questions so that the facilitator could make the clarifications. It is useful for the facilitator to distinguish between curious states and perplex states of the child so that she could put an end to her perplexity. When

the issue is clear for more members, it would be possible to have a sound discussion with more participants.

Joint Attention

Thus far, I claimed that for catching the attention of the children, the materials and their presentations play crucial roles. The materials that are suitable for both introducing the philosophical concepts (or concepts that can be discussed philosophically) and drawing children's attention to the concept act as attention grabbers in the session. At this point, providing the analysis of the concept of attention is going to be useful. Paying attention individually and paying attention jointly in a group or community are regarded as two different aspects. Since children are members of an inquiring community in P4C sessions, joint attention comes to the forefront.

Joint attention is used and defined by developmental psychologists and linguists: joint attention which occurs when a group of people perceive the same object together is attributed to mind functions in which we understand the intention and goal-directed behaviors of other people around us. Its effectiveness for improving human capacities is proven (Timothy 2010; Kidwell and Zimmerman 2007). In a famous study that is conducted on mothers and their children, Tomasello and Farrar indicated that "during periods of joint attentional focus both mothers and children talk more, the dyad engaged in longer conversations, and mother used shorter sentences and more comments" (Tomasello and Farrar 1986: 1459).

If we are striving for getting children to be curious and developing their thinking and social skills, it is better to establish joint attention during the session. Joint attention smooths the way for the members of the community of inquiry in engaging to all parts of the session. Joint attention must be established if the objectives of discussing in a community are supposed to be reached. By means of joint attention, members affect each other in a positive way and this enables more sound and fruitful dialogues, conversations and discussions. Thus, it is expected for an attention grabber and in general the session, to create joint attention in the community of inquiry.

As aforementioned, every child, who pays attention, is not necessarily curious about the topic in question. Paying attention and being curious are relational; however, paying attention is not always followed by curiosity. If arousing curiosity is an aim of the session, then, I propose that it is meaningful for an attention grabber to create joint attention, and also be a curiosity-arouser. For the effectiveness of a P4C session, it is more anticipated for the material to function as a curiosity-arouser. For the effectiveness of P4C sessions, it is more anticipated for the materials to be a curiosity-arouser. To fulfill this, the materials and the session have to make children feel interested in the topic.

Interest

In order for an attention grabber to be considered a curiosity-arouser, children have to feel interested about the content of it. As İnan puts it "to become curious one must also have an interest in the topic that the concept is about" (2012: 42). The relationship between curiosity and interest is a uni-directional one. "For everything we are curious about we have an interest, but we are not curious about anything we have an interest in" (İnan 2012: 126). A curiosity-arouser has to draw children's attention to the concept, make them feel interested in it, enable a realization of the inostensibility of it and thereby, arouse curiosity.

Although drawing the attention of the children to the concepts poses no difficulty with the proper materials, accomplishing the task of both drawing their attention to the concept and arousing their interest require greater effort. In order to accomplish these, it could be better to introduce the philosophical issues or concepts that children are already acquainted with. Discussing concepts which children have been instructed during other lessons or they encounter in their daily life arouse their interest more easily. "Children look for meaning and they are hungry for those that might be relevant to-and might illuminate-their lives" (Lipman et al. 1980: 17). In this manner, discussing the concepts that they are acquainted with would help enabling the children to feel interested in those concepts.

Joint Curiosity

İnan's conceptualization of curiosity elucidates the need of fostering curiosity in P4C sessions. According to his theory, a child's realization of the inostensibility of the concept together with her attention and interest get the child to be curious about it. I would like to introduce a new concept to this picture with regard to P4C sessions. In a P4C session, there is a special type of curiosity which is different than individual curiosity. The term joint attention shows us that there is a fair amount of difference between paying attention and paying attention jointly regarding their outcomes. Joint attention is more influential for developing skills and creating a sound communication. Taking into account the positive outcomes of joint attention, joint curiosity could appear to be more effective in comparison with individual curiosity, for developing more fruitful discussions and creating a more productive inquiring community. It seems the P4C literature and the literature on curiosity could be enriched by a concept which I would like to name joint curiosity. It is naïve to expect a philosophical study about joint curiosity when there are too few articles on Philosophy of Curiosity.

For P4C, the ideal could be establishing joint attention and joint curiosity during the sessions. Similar to attention and joint attention cases, joint curiosity could be more effective for a sound discussion compared to individual curiosities. Children listen to each other's thoughts,

ideas, experiences and questions with curiosity and hence, the session creates powerful discussions in which there is questioning out of curiosity. Theoretically, if joint attention is a more effective tool than attention, then joint curiosity would be more effective than individual curiosities in the sense of sharing, questioning each other's thoughts and building up ideas, and therefore would lead to more effective discussions. There would be more members who are willing to participate to the discussions. The more the community of inquiry enjoys joint curiosity, the more in-depth questions and fruitful discussions will come out. When there is joint curiosity during the sessions, building up onto each other's sayings and asking questions to each other could bring more fruitful discussions and analyses.

I would like to explain further the concept of joint curiosity with a conversation from the sample session. As I said before, we were discussing the concept of lying and the community of inquiry differentiated the concepts hiding, secrets and lying from each other. The conversation went as follows:

A: A close friend of mine saw me talking with another friend. She asked me what we talked. I cannot tell her because we have talked about her birthday party organization. It would not be a surprise to her if I tell her our conversation! So I told her that we spoke about something else. This is not a lie because we were trying to make her a surprise. This is keeping secrets.

C: Keeping secret is not lying. Sometimes when you keep secret, you do it for the sake of the other people such as the case in the birthday example. The same thing happened to me and I was the birthday boy!

A: Don't you feel angry when they didn't tell you what they talked about?

C: Yes, I get angry at that moment but then they told me that they were talking about which birthday present they will buy. When I learn this I didn't feel angry anymore. Also when I get the present I felt happy.

A: Sometimes boys come near and ask us what we did talk about. When there is a secret there, I don't say it. I have to keep it because this is a secret and I have the right to keep it.

B: But this is telling a lie. Why don't you just say this is a secret so that I cannot tell you?

D: Yes I agree with B. Why don't you tell the truth?

A: (thinks for a while) Because they will not give up and let me go. They will harass me about it.

B: Have you ever tried to say this to them?

A: No, because if I say this, they won't leave me alone.

D: How will you know this without trying?

A: (feeling uncomfortable, starts to move on her chair) I'm sure this will happen.

B: But how can you know without trying!
A: Ok, I never thought about it that way.
C: Although you won't be telling a lie when you say it is a secret, you are still hiding something from someone.

The community was discussing whether the case that A exemplified is lying or not. Some children agreed with her (A), and some did not. They had a conversation and some children questioned her action. In a sense, they bombarded her with questions. By means of these, she began to think about her own action. The questions of these curious children led to a fruitful discussion and clarification.

In this example there is joint attention; these children's attention was on the issue of what lying is. A, B, C, D are all attentive to this concept. By means of their joint attention, the discussion became more fruitful and vivid in the sense that more members of the community of inquiry shared their thoughts about the concept. This discussion could be effective also if only two children would have talked. But with the contribution of others, new concepts were introduced and more questions were asked. Joint attention enabled more members to participate. Thus, this made the dialogue and the discussion more fruitful.

Further, this example shows us the constructive effect of joint curiosity. B and D were not only attentive jointly but also curious jointly. They were curious about the same concept and concentrated on the same example. Their joint curiosity led them to question the issue *together*. They built up *questions* like building up ideas. C shared his experience and thoughts while A was participating actively in the discussion. However, D and B were curious on the same topic so that they asked questions. B's questions out of curiosity and A's answers, that is their dialogue, created a proper condition for D to enjoy his curiosity and ask questions. The harmony in these questions indicates a joint curiosity.

This example shows how joint curiosity progressively affects the discussion. By means of joint curiosity, the discussion became fruitful and lively. In addition to having an influence on the discussion, joint curiosity led children to formulate and ask questions, to reply each other's comments and generate novel ideas and thus, helps to stimulate the session. Not only at the beginning of the discussion but throughout the session, joint curiosity enables children to formulate and ask questions. As mentioned in the first part, Lipman emphasized the fact that getting acquainted with philosophy makes formulating questions possible for children. Questions raised by children during the session both indicate this fact and help them to improve their critical thinking abilities which is one of the main purposes of P4C.

All in all, emphasizing the significance of curiosity for P4C by presenting a theory of curiosity could help this practice to reach its fundamental aims. The notions of curiosity-arouser and joint curiosity may be expanded and used in additional areas of education. In my opin-

ion, using curiosity-arousers and getting children to be curious jointly would produce effective outcomes not only for P4C but also for other educational concerns.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the people who have helped me in the process of writing this paper. I had the chance to share some of my ideas presented in this paper on Philosophy of Curiosity Conference at University of Maribor in April 2015. I would like to offer my special thanks to Nenad Miščević and Smiljana Gartner for providing me that opportunity. My special thanks are extended to Safiye Yiğit, Günfer Mendoza, Melisa Mendoza and Ufuk Altıparmak for their valuable comments that greatly improved this paper. Advice given by Safiye Yiğit has been a great help. I would also like to show my gratitude to Boğaziçi University and Enka Schools for opening doors throughout my studies. I am immensely grateful to Ayça Boylu for all her advice and guidance that broaden my horizon. The completion of this paper could not have been possible without my advisor İlhan İnan, whom I would like to express my deepest gratitude for giving me his invaluable support and guidance and much more, which to name here would be very long. I am more than grateful to him for fostering my curiosity.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Semantics through Reference to the Unknown

ARAN ARSLAN*
Department of Philosophy, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

In this paper, I dwell on a particular distinction introduced by Ilhan Inan—the distinction between ostensible and inostensible use of our language. The distinction applies to singular terms, such as proper names and definite descriptions, or to general terms like concepts and to the ways in which we refer to objects in the world by using such terms. Inan introduces the distinction primarily as an epistemic one but in his earlier writings (1997: 49) he leaves some room for it to have some semantic significance i.e., the view that in certain intensional de re contexts whether a term occurring in a sentence is ostensible or inostensible may have a bearing on the semantic content of the sentence. However, in his later writings e.g., The Philosophy of Curiosity, he appears to abandon his earlier thoughts regarding the semantic significance of his distinction. He says: "the ostensible/inostensible distinction is basically an epistemic one.... It is an epistemic distinction that has no semantic significance" (2012: 65). I argue that there are indeed such intensional contexts in which the distinction has some semantic significance, i.e., whether a term is ostensible or inostensible has in fact a bearing on what proposition is expressed by the sentence in which the term occurs.

Keywords: Inostensible reference, semantic significance, reference fixing.

* I want to thank Ilhan Inan for his helpful discussions, suggestions and comments on the topic and the content of the paper and to all participants of his *The Philosophy of Curiosity* reading group, especially to Naci Erdem Gökce. In addition, I have recently presented the thoughts I defend here in the GRG talks of LOGOS research group at University of Barcelona. Thus, further thanks goes to the members of LOGOS for their helpful comments, especially to Johannes Anton Alexander Findl and Anton Alexandrov.

1. *Introduction*

One of the striking features of our language is that we are able to talk about objects we have not *known* or *experienced* yet. For Inan, what allows us to acquire the capacity of talking about the things that are *unknown* to us is that our language has a distinct *tool* as a peculiar use, namely the tool of *inostensibility*. The distinction between ostensible and inostensible is introduced in terms of the epistemic distance between a speaker and an object which is the referent of the term used by the speaker. Many terms in our idiolects that we use to refer to objects are ostensible for us. For instance, the terms, by virtue of their referents, such as "Hisarüstü" or "the location of my former residence" are to some extent ostensible for me since I have a sort of knowledge of the referents of such terms mostly from 'immediate acquaintance' or experience and they are inostensible for someone else who does not have such knowledge. Terms like "Barack Obama" or "the president of United States in 2016" are ostensible presumably for most people who are interested in global politics. On the other hand, terms like "the president of United States in 2025" is inostensible for everybody since nobody knows who will be the president of United States in 2025. In this descriptive sense, Inan's distinction has Russillian roots.[1] As Inan pointed out (2012: 67), Russell had already the conceptual elements that could have helped him to construct a theory of inostensibility and thereby, a theory of ignorance and curiosity, but he did not develop such theory based on ignorance. Russell was far more knowledge-oriented at the time than ignorance-oriented as Inan now is.

Besides ordinary singular and general terms, the distinction has far-ranged applications on different kinds of terms such as empty names, indefinite descriptions and non-extensional general terms. Generally speaking, due to the object-independent character of the distinction, for instance, an empty name can well be inostensible for a speaker if the speaker does not know that it does not have a referent. Thus, non-referring terms, as Inan pointed out (Inan 2012: 164), can be qualified as ostensible for a speaker when the speaker knows that it has no referent. The inostensibility of a non-referring term depends upon the knowledge of the non-existence of the referent of the term. In addition, a term which is inostensible for a person at some time t can be ostensible for him at some other time t' or *vice versa*. I may not know who the queen of the Kingdom is but *later* learn that she is Elizabeth. Likewise, I may know Elizabeth as the queen of the Kingdom but *later* forget

[1] "The basis for inostensible terms are descriptions, and especially definite descriptions, i.e. terms that have the semantic function of referring to one and only one entity." (Inan 1997: 11). Although Inan's distinction owes a lot Russell's famous distinction between "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge by description", it considerably diverges from Russell's theory in that neither all knowledge by description is qualified as inostensible nor is all knowledge by acquaintance qualified as ostensible. See also (Inan 2012: 67–75).

that she is the queen or that the queen is her. For these reasons, Inan's distinction is subject-relative, relative to subject's epistemic condition.

The distinction applies also to the ways in which we refer to objects in the world.[2] I believe, *inostensible reference* is of upmost importance as the key term in understanding Inan's conception of inostensibility. Inan defines inostensible reference as "*the reference to an object without knowing to which object the term one is using refers.*" (2005: 158) The key point in understanding inostensibility requires us to understand what we mean by knowing an object (a person or a thing). Inan considers a crucial distinction between knowledge about objects: Knowledge of the existence of an object and knowledge of an object itself.[3] He admits (2010: 2) that the notion of 'knowing the referent of a term' is based upon the latter kind of knowledge, e.g., objectual knowledge. For the rest of the paper, I will take into account only this kind of knowledge in characterizing the distinction. There are two reasons for this: First, objectual knowledge is what allows for *de re* exportation (though this does not imply that there is no propositional *de re* knowledge). Second, in the reference-fixing cases that we are going to discuss in

[2] Inostensibility applies to both semantic and speaker's reference. There are certain occasions where the speaker reference is semantically relevant. In his book, Inan gives a detailed discussion of the inostensible reference as the necessary condition of human curiosity on the one hand and of the semantic/speaker's reference on the other (see Inan 2012: Ch. 7: "Reference to the Object of Curiosity", especially p. 124). For Inan, inostensible reference involving both successful speaker's reference and successful semantic reference is always *de re* and give rise to singular curiosity by the singular *de re* reference. Where there is no speaker reference, the way the speaker refers to an object is said to be taken *de dicto*. For Kripke, there are certain cases where the speaker's referent is the semantic referent, i.e., where the speaker's *general intentions* coincide with his *specific intentions*. Kripke says: "In a given idiolect, the semantic referent of a designator (without indexicals) is given by a general intention of the speaker to refer to a certain object whenever the designator is used. The speaker's referent is given by a specific intention, on a given occasion, to refer to a certain object. If the speaker believes that the object he wants to talk about, on a given occasion, fulfills the conditions for being the semantic referent, then he believes that there is no clash between his general intentions and his specific intentions… My hypothesis is that Donnellan's referential-attributive distinction should be generalized in this light… In one case (the "simple" case), his specific intention is simply to refer to the semantic referent; that is, his specific intention is simply his general semantic intention... Alternatively—the "complex" case—he has a specific intention, which is distinct from his general intention, but which he believes, as a matter of fact, to determine the same object as the one determined by his general intention" (Kripke 1977: 264). In this passage, contrary to Donnellan (1966), Kripke argues that "having an object in mind" is not a requirement in order for that object to be considered as speaker's reference. Throughout the paper, I also do not count the condition of "having an object in mind" as a condition for speaker's reference.

[3] The roots of this distinction between knowledge about objects go back to medieval times. Although there is the difference in its peculiar object, it was in fact once made by Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* (2015) when he discern the knowledge of God from that of its existence and presented some arguments for the latter while defending the impossibility of the former.

the next part, it is the kind of knowledge that the reference fixer lacks, which is what makes the term inostensible for the fixer when she fixes the referent of the term with certain descriptions.

2. *Semantic significance*

So far we have seen that Inan introduces the distinction primarily as an epistemic one. Now we shall turn to its semantic significance. One of the ways to find out whether a given distinction is semantically significant is to check out whether it is susceptible or leads to a semantic ambiguity in certain contexts. There are in fact some intensional *de re* contexts where Inan's distinction is susceptible to a semantic ambiguity. And the task in front us is to provide such contexts in which a sentence expresses a false proposition if its semantic content includes an inostensible term and a true proposition if it does not or *vice versa*. Here we apply a general test under a general assumption according to which if two propositions have the same content (the same meaning), then it cannot be the case that one is false and the other is true in the same context of utterance as well as the same context of evaluation. I argue that there are some contexts (intensional), where speaker's epistemic distance to an object—a distance determining speaker's ignorance or his knowledge of the object in question—is at least *partially*[4] responsible for the alteration in the truth values of certain contingent propositions. Thereby, I claim that in these contexts, one's epistemic condition contributes to the meaning of the sentences whose contents differ in having a subject term which picks out a *unique* object (or a *unique* kind) to which the one is either ostensibly or inostensibly referring.

Let us first focus on Inan's earlier and later thoughts about what semantic implications can be derived from his distinction. The earlier thoughts he defends in his dissertation (1997) generally maintains that in certain intensional contexts a term's inostensibility "may have some bearing on what proposition is expressed" by the sentence in which the term occurs (Inan 1997: 50). In his later thoughts (Inan 2012: 136), on the contrary, Inan appears to endorse the view that the transition of a term from inostensible to ostensible, e.g., the improvement in one's epistemic condition concerning the knowledge of the referent, has no effect on the meaning of a sentence. Contrary to Inan's later thoughts, we have good reason to hold that there are some intensional *de re* contexts where, *ceteris paribus,* the epistemic distance of the speaker to the object which the speaker refers to inostensibly or ostensibly is (however *partially)* responsible for the change in the truth values of certain contingent propositions. And these propositions as contents under the scope of an epistemic operator include a subject term picking

[4] Partially, because we need some room for the modal force applied by the epistemic operator on the meaning of the given sentence.

out a *unique* object (or a *unique* kind) to which the one is either ostensibly or inostensibly referring.

In his doctoral dissertation (Inan 1997), Inan gives a brief discussion for the semantic significance of his distinction. He says "in certain intensional contexts such as the sentences with epistemic operators, whether a certain term in a sentence is ostensible or inostensible (for some or all of the speakers in a community) may have some bearing on what proposition is expressed by that sentence" (Inan 1997: 52). However, he admits that in most cases, what proposition is expressed by a simple sentence in the subject-predicate form 'N is F' uttered by a speaker is independent of whether 'N' is ostensible or inostensible for the speaker. When the sentence "the smallest prime number is even" is uttered by a speaker, we need not know whether the subject term 'the smallest prime number' is ostensible or inostensible for him in order to determine what proposition is expressed by the sentence. The cases in which inostensibility of terms may have some bearing on what proposition is expressed by the sentence they occur in are in fact very special and peculiar cases where a sort of reference-fixing ceremony is required. Hence, I shall restrict the discussion only to those specific reference-fixing cases. The detailed discussions for the two reference-fixing cases can be seen in both Inan's earlier (1997) and later works (2010), (2012). In the first case, we apply the distinction on the general term 'helium' by considering the discovery of the element and in the second we apply it on the singular term 'Neptune' by considering the discovery of this planet.

Let us start with the discovery of helium. Inan gives a brief summary as to how the term 'helium' was introduced into our language as following:

> Pierre Jansen first found a bright yellow line in the spectrum of the light emitted by the solar chromosphere, which he thought to be a sodium line. Later the chemist Edward Ramsey and the astronomer Joseph Lockyer concluded that the element was not sodium, but some other element that was not discovered on earth, and gave it the name "Helios", the Greek word for sun, which later turned into 'helium'. Only afterward did William Ramsey discover the existence of helium on earth. If this is historically accurate, then I believe that it should be correct to say that Lockyer and Ramsey introduced the general term 'helium' not by ostension but rather by fixing its reference by a description....This is how a simple inostensible general term may be introduced into language. Later when helium was discovered, and we came to know a certain element as being the referent of the term 'helium', the term became ostensible. (Inan 2012: 35)

Let us assume that Ramsey introduced the term 'helium' by the description "the element causing the D-3 line at *t*", where the D-3 line is the name of some particular yellow colored line that had been observed on a light spectrum emitted by the sun at some time t and further, he fixes the reference by that description. Given that introducing of the name takes place before the element is discovered on Earth, the name

'helium' is an inostensible term not only for Ramsey but also for all the speakers in the community at *t*. In other words, because 'helium' is introduced by an inostensible description which has the reference-fixing descriptive content for whatever 'helium' refers to, the term itself also is inostensible for the whole community including Ramsey at *t*. Moreover, since the reference-fixing occurs before the discovery, Ramsey (like the whole community) is not in a position to fix the extension of the term by ostension. That is another reason why one lacks knowledge of the object, namely its objectual knowledge, thus; he must solely rely on the initial reference-(extension)-fixing descriptive content. After the discovery, the extension of 'helium' could be fixed by ostension, and once that is done, the initial extension-fixing-description would have no longer any significance other than historically (Inan 1997: 49).

Throughout the paper we rely on a general assumption regarding the relation between truth value of a sentence and its meaning and that is: if two propositions have the same content (the same meaning), then it cannot be the case that one is false and the other is true in the same context of utterance and that of evaluation. The aim is to show that in a certain context, a certain sentence expresses two different propositions having different truth values with respect to the inostensibility of terms occurring in that sentence. Now consider the following sentence:

(1) It is discoverable that helium did not cause the D-3 line at *t*.

There is a strong case to be made that if 'helium' is an inostensible term for both Ramsey and the whole community at *t*, then (1) has to express a false proposition.[5] As Inan pointed out, "If 'helium' named some element, it had to be the one causing the D-3 line at *t*" (1997: 50). But after its discovery on Earth, the term turns into an ostensible name for Ramsey (and for the whole community) in the sense that now he can fix the reference by ostension; thus (1) will express a true proposition. After all, Ramsey like the other members of community can conceive that the element that caused the D-3 line at *t* was not the same element he later becomes acquainted with on Earth since after the term becomes *adequately* ostensible for Ramsey (or for the whole community), the content of reference-fixing description attached to the name would express an accidental property of the designated entity. To put it differently,

[5] In his dissertation, Inan marks out the intensional contexts through the sentences with epistemic operators such as "*it is discoverable that*" and "*it is certain that*. The first operator can also be modified in modal terms such as "*it is possible to discover that*". But even in the sentences only with modal operators, term's inostensibility may also have a bearing on what proposition is expressed by the sentence in which the term occurs. When Ramsey uttered the sentence "It is possible that helium did not cause the D-3 line at *t*." (*), he would admit that what he uttered expresses a false proposition given that the term 'helium' is inostensible for him and by substituting the term with its reference (extension)-fixing description, Ramsey as the reference-fixer would arrive at the sentence "It is possible that the element causing the D-3 line at *t* did not cause the D-3 line at *t*." towards which his rational response would obviously be false when he is asked what he thinks about (*).

there are some possible worlds where not helium but some other alien element causes the D-3 line at *t* as well as there are many worlds where not 'helium' but '*x*elium' refers to the element causing the D-3 line at *t*. So, the sentence (1) expresses a true proposition when the term becomes ostensible simply because it is discoverable that helium did not cause the D-3 line at *t*. According to Inan, "… unlike singular terms, when fixing the reference of a general term if we necessarily fix a content to it (such as a Fregean sense) that is not necessarily the content of the reference-fixing description, then it may be argued that the term 'helium' when first introduced (as an inostensible term) differs in content from the content of the term today (as an ostensible term). This would then imply that the discovery of helium changed the meaning of the term 'helium'. This sounds very implausible" (Inan 1997: 52, fn. 17). But if the reference-fixing- descriptive content of an expression was its meaning, then it would be right to conclude that the discovery of helium changed the meaning of the term 'helium'. There are many reasons for us to argue otherwise, i.e., that the content of the term 'helium' cannot be identified with the content of the reference-fixing-description nor do we necessarily fix a content to it and yet the term's inostensibility has a bearing on what proposition is expressed.[6] The first reason comes from the Kripke-Putnam account of natural kind terms according to which such terms seem to be deprived of descriptive content and their extensions are partly fixed by external factors. The second reason would be that such terms are considered as rigid designators which pick out one and the same kind in all possible worlds whereas the reference-fixing-description is not a rigid designator and does not individuate an essential property for what the term refers to. Thus, the sentence (1) expresses a false proposition at *t* but expresses a true proposition now (or after the empirical discovery which let people to fix the referent of the term by ostension). However, a possible objection can be given as following: The sentence (1) expresses different propositions with respect to different times such as *t* and *now* only because there is a shift in the context of evaluation. Therefore, the reason why we have two different propositions is because of a shift in the context of evaluation, not because of the term's inostensibility. As a reply, we may say: it is true that there is a change in the context of evaluation of (1) with respect to these different times but this does not imply that two different propositions

[6] There is no consensus among philosophers on what general terms designate. Marti (2004) opposes the orthodox view that rigid general terms expresses essential properties. For some, in different worlds a general term may have different extensions as its designation, which puts a question mark on their rigidity. Some others like Inan (2008) take the extension of a kind term to be an abstract entity which is independent of its particular objects, thus, he finds enough room to hold their rigidity safe. But this view too is controversial for it renders almost all general terms rigid and leads to an open-ended discussion that cannot take place in this paper. For that reason, I leave these issues aside. Cf. Inan (2008), Salmon (2005), Marti (2003, 2004), Lewis (1986), Soames (2002), Devitt (2005), Burge (2010).

are not brought about due to the term's inostensibility. To show this, we can modify the case by keeping the context of evaluation same and arrive at the same conclusions. Suppose, upon reading some articles about the element, not Ramsey, but someone else in today's world, who does not have any knowledge about science or chemistry, fixes the referent of the term 'helium' by the description "the element causing the D-3 line at *t*". Given Inan's characterization of inostensibility, the name 'helium' is an inostensible term for that person. The name must be inostensible for him for it is introduced by an inostensible description. Given also the ignorance of this person about to what the element the term refers, he is not in a position to fix the extension of the term by ostension, thus; he must solely rely on the initial reference-fixing description. Although the sentence "helium is the element causing the D-3 line at *t*" expresses a contingent truth, the falsity of (1) is due to the modal force of the operator. Given this modal force, it appears that it cannot be discovered that helium did not cause the D-3 line at *t*. The modal force of the operator is from one's epistemic condition which determines the term's inostensibility. One knows that there is a specific kind which has some property, and one knows this fact because of the fact that the description's uniquely individuation function picks out the kind through which one comes to know that it exist. Therefore, the sentence (1) has to express a false proposition if the term is inostensible for that person. Suppose further that after some time, this person decides to study chemistry and has sufficient acquaintance with the chemical substance. And now the term becomes adequately ostensible for him in such a way that his initial reference-fixing-description becomes no longer significant for he could fix the extension of the term by mere ostension now. After all, this person can conceive that the element that caused the D-3 line at *t* was not the same element he later is acquainted with since the term becomes adequately ostensible for him. Therefore, (1) has to express a true proposition when the term becomes ostensible for that person. So from the perspective of the ignorant person who fixes the referent of the term 'helium' by that description, (1) is false, but from our perspective, it is true, though the context of evaluation is the same. Inan notes that Brueckner mentions a possible objection to this argument. Brueckner suggested that there is still a difference in the context of evaluation, since certain facts about the idiolect of the ignorant person who fixes the referent of the term 'helium' differ from the experienced or the epistemically improved one. But as Inan replies, "normally the context of evaluation of a sentence such as (1) should not include facts about someone's idiolect" and continues that even if we accept such an inclusion, the intuitive conclusion we may drive from it supports our claim because "it shows that the truth value of the sentence is sensitive to whether the name is ostensible or inostensible for the evaluator" (Inan 1997: 51, fn.18).

Now let us turn to the case of Neptune and suppose Leverrier introduced the name 'Neptune' with the definite description "the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus".

(2) Neptune is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus

Given that reference fixing ceremony *via* a linguistic stipulation, for Kripke (1980), Leverrier could know the truth of the sentence (2) *a priori* just as the reference fixer of the standard meter in Paris could know that the length of S at *t* is one meter *a priori*. Since Leverrier knows *a priori* the contingent truth, (2) expresses a true proposition. Before the empirical discovery of Neptune and after the reference fixing ceremony, Leverrier could intelligibly utter: "I know that Neptune is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus". For Kripke, why the sentence (2) express a contingent truth is because of the fact that the definite description as the predicate term is not a rigid designator whereas the subject term 'Neptune' is (Kripke 1980: 55). The reference-fixing-description picks out an accidental property such as being the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus for the referent of the name 'Neptune'. Hence, in some possible worlds in which Neptune, Uranus and Earth exist, Neptune can be the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Earth, not of Uranus. But in all possible worlds in which Neptune exists 'Neptune' refers to Neptune.[7]

Now consider the following sentences given by Inan (1997, 2012):

(4) It is discoverable that Neptune is not the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus.

(5) It is certain that if Neptune exists, then it is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus.

Before its empirical discovery, the name 'Neptune' was an inostensible term for Leverrier. After the discovery, he could fix the referent of the name by ostension. The context of evaluation of the sentences (4) and (5) should again be taken from the perspective of Leverrier. If so, we see that Leverrier's rational responses to the question "What do you think about the truth of those sentences?" would drastically change with respect to the term's inostensibility for him. Hence; (4) is obviously false but (5) is true if the term 'Neptune' is inostensible for Leverrier as the reference fixer. One may argue that if the modal force applied by the operator is taken as metaphysical, then the term's inostensibility should not have any bearing on what proposition is expressed. I think this intuition is right but in our case the modal force embedded in the operator should be taken as epistemic. For instance, if we are asked whether it is possible that 521 is not a prime number, then we, in principle, may answer that "Yes, it is possible that it is not a prime number", provided that we have no knowledge as to whether

[7] Suppose a neutron star is approaching to the solar system. Eventually by the force of the gravitational field of the star, the state of the orbits of the heavenly bodies in the solar system can break down in such a way in which Neptune for some time will be the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Earth, not of Uranus. Thus, this is not just metaphysically but also physically possible *scenario*.

521 is a prime. Lack of *de re* knowledge about the number affects the modal force applied on the proposition. But in the metaphysical sense, 521, the 98th prime number, must be a prime number. So, we will have an epistemic reading of the sentence in mind. Why (4) is false when the term is inostensible for Leverrier is not only because it is not possible (given epistemic modality) that after Leverrier fixes the reference of the name, he finds out that Neptune was never the cause of the perturbations but also because it would contradict with what Leverrier knows a priori. It just seems absurd to claim that by a description one can name an object which is known to exist as having a certain property through which he identifies the existence of the object with that description and at the same time one finds out that the description does not fit the object in question. Another reason for why (4) is false and (5) is true when the term is inostensible for Leverrier is because the propositions constructed by the reference fixing ceremony *via* an act of linguistic stipulation are non-informative and indubitable for the reference fixer. For Inan, the reason why the sentences expressing non-trivial propositions that are contingently true cannot be the object of doubt for Leverrier is that such sentences are non-informative and indubitable for him (Inan 2012: 170). Besides all, in its *de re* context Leverrier knows *a priori* that there is a specific object and that it is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus. Inan maintains that in the reference-fixing cases the speaker is not under *normal conditions*.[8] When Leverrier fixes the reference of the name 'Neptune' by its reference-fixing-description and later forms the sentence "Neptune is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus", in the mind of Leverrier there is no prior file of the object, which allows him to evaluate the truth of the sentences (4) and (5) different from when he is under normal conditions. On the other hand the sentence (4) is true but (5) is false if the term 'Neptune' is ostensible for Leverrier. The reason why the sentence (4) is true and (5) is false now is because after the empirical discovery of Neptune and consequently after the term becomes ostensible for Leverrier, his initial reference fixing would no longer be significant for him given that (due to the non-rigidity of the description) it could have been the case that the uniquely individuation function of the reference-fixing description of the term 'Neptune' picks out a different object who has the accidental quality. One may object to our account in the following way: It would not be a big surprise that an epistemic distinction may have a bearing on what proposition expressed by a sentence whose content includes an epistemic operator. It would be vacuously true to say that an epistemic distinction applied on a certain term occurring in a certain sentence with an epistemic operator *must* have a bearing on what proposition is expressed by that

[8] According to Inan, if S acquires a name "N" and then later learns that N is F, then S is under normal conditions with respect to the sentence "N is F" (Inan: 2012: 172).

sentence if the term on which the distinction is applied is in the scope of the operator. However, this objection cannot undermine our claim since we would explain nothing about the fact that makes the meaning of the sentence, not only of the operator susceptible to the given distinction. Strictly speaking, if a term on which an epistemic distinction is applied is in the scope of a certain epistemic operator in a given sentence and if there are cases in which that epistemic distinction applied on that term occurring in that given sentence with that operator has a bearing on what proposition is expressed by that sentence, then we must agree that meaning of that sentence depends upon that distinction, however trivial it seems. The triviality requires its own account of explanation, which is a work that ought to be done in another paper.

3. *Conclusion*

I argued that there are some certain intensional contexts such as the sentences with certain epistemic operators, where the epistemic distance of the speaker from the object to which the speaker inostensibly refers might be the thing that is responsible for the change in the meaning of the concepts or the thoughts about those objects. Thus, the distinction based on the epistemic condition of the speaker as the reference fixer has a semantic significance in some certain intensional contexts. What does this picture tell us? What kind of philosophical consequences may we drive from the thesis that in certain contexts, subjects' epistemic condition has a bearing on the meaning of certain sentences? What implications of these consequences can we also derive from this picture to have an idea about why in these reference-fixing cases, epistemic condition of subjects does have a bearing on the semantic content of certain propositions and why in most other cases does not? I will leave the possible answers of these questions aside for another and perhaps a more detailed discussion.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Epistemic Value. Curiosity, Knowledge and Response-Dependence

NENAD MIŠČEVIĆ
Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts
University of Maribor, Slovenia

The paper addresses two fundamental issues in epistemic axiology. It argues primarily that curiosity, in particular its intrinsic variety, is the foundational epistemic virtue since it is the value-bestowing epistemic virtue. A response-dependentist framework is proposed, according to which a cognitive state is epistemically valuable if a normally or ideally curious or inquisitive cognizer would be motivated to reach it. Curiosity is the foundational epistemic virtue, since it bestows epistemic value. It also motivates and organizes other epistemic virtues, so it is foundational and central for epistemology. The second issue is the one of the fundamental bearer of epistemic value. I shall argue that truth is the primary goal, but that mere true belief is not the fundamental bearer. Rather, the bearer is a relatively minimalist kind of knowledge. Mere true belief cannot be rationally accepted in isolation from a supporting structure. However, any efficient supporting structure introduces further epistemic goods (justification, reliability, anti-luck guarantees), thus upgrading the original true belief. Mere true belief can be neither defended, nor rationally sustained through time, due to isolation. Mere true belief cannot be rationally sustained in the face of a slightest bit of contrary evidence (the Meno insight). Therefore, mere true belief is not rationally stable. Minimal knowledge is, and this accounts for the primary and secondary value problem, and for a relatively undemanding kind of tertiary value.

Keywords: Curiosity, belief, epistemic value.

1. *Introduction*

Let me first express my gratitude to Ilhan Inan; I am very happy that we were able to organize an Ilhan day in Maribor, from which the papers in this volume mainly come.[1]

Many philosophers, scientists and educators agree that knowledge has a value. Inan is surely among them: in his brilliant curiosity book he writes:

> Whether curiosity is taken to be a form of virtue or not, it should be clear that there are important connections between being curious and some of our basic epistemic attitudes and achievements. Knowing, for instance, is an epistemic achievement, at least in certain cases, and curiosity is one of its basic motivators. (Inan 2012: 143)

Other, related epistemic items, like true belief or understanding also seem to have a value. Some of the value seems clearly instrumental. Knowledge that my two new neighbors are happily married to each other might be useful for me in order to know what to expect from them, how to behave towards each and both, and so on. Knowledge that some Neptune moons are rich in water might turn out to be practically useful in a more distant future, when we might need water from outside our usual earthly sources. But, other kinds of value are also in the offing. I was happy to learn about the Neptune moons not because I expected that I will need some water originating from them, but simply because I saw it as a very interesting fact about our distant neighbors in the solar system. Call this other kind of value "intrinsic". Call the value of epistemic states (or facts) "epistemic value", or "e-value" for short. I shall assume that instrumental e-value is not problematic, and concentrate on the intrinsic e-value.[2]

Allow me a few terminological proposals. Take the basic epistemic item of your choice: truth, true belief, justified true belief, knowledge, and understanding. Let me for now call it just „grasping".[3] I shall abbreviate grasping the truth that *p*, as „G*p*". Let us agree that some items of this kind do have intrinsic e-value. For example, "Some Neptune moons are rich in water" has such value for me. Consider now some *p* and grasping the truth of it (G*p*). One option concerning their value is that they are not valuable; at a more general, philosophical level, then, no such item has epistemic value. We have already embraced a more optimistic view, according to which such items often are valuable.

[1] Thanks go to Ilhan Inan, Safiye Yiğit, Duncan Pritchard, Ian Carter, and other colleagues participating at the curiosity conference in Istanbul (2014), virtue epistemology conference at Taipei (2014), at the philosophy conferences in Rijeka (2014) and Bled (2015), the Inan conference in Maribor in April 2015, and at the discussion of my presentation in Edinburgh in 2016.

[2] I am leaving aside here the difficulties concerning the instrumental e-value, put forward by Allan Hazlett in his (2013).

[3] Following Duncan Pritchard's (2014) terminology of grasping the truth (either true belief, or something richer and closer to knowledge).

Now, suppose I am interested in "p", and curious whether things are as the proposition *p* represents them to be. Again, there are two options. I might be curious about the items as a means to an end, extrinsically and instrumentaly. Knowledge that my two new neighbors are happily married to each other often has this extrinsic character, having to do with expectations and useful ways to behave. Alternatively, some topic might be intrinsically interesting, epistemically attractive in itself. Following Brady (who in this context also mentions Hurka (2001: 6)) I shall equate intrinsic goodness with non-instrumental goodness, leaving aside complicated cases where one can, in a sense, have one without the other (Brady 2009: 265).

Intrinsic curiosity and intrinsic e-value will be our topic. I have already quoted Inan. Let me add one more quote connecting curiosity to epistemic value:

> Human curiosity may or may not be considered to be a virtue; but even if it isn't, it must still be of vital importance in its relation to certain epistemic attitudes that most of us value. We wish to be inquisitive and open-minded, and we wish to realize how fallible our beliefs are and become aware of our own ignorance and our cognitive limits. This requires epistemic self-reflection. But where would one find the motivation to do this? There are a lot of things that we do not know, but only a small portion of them is brought to our consciousness. Why is that? Because we care about certain things and not others. We have an interest in certain topics, and we care to know more about them. It is this kind of interest that motivates us to reflect on our ignorance, and only then we become curious. So in this sense, curiosity is value laden. We are curious only about things that we are interested to know. Such an interest surely is a product of what we value. Even if we don't value the very object of our curiosity, we are interested in it because we believe that coming to know it relates to certain things that we do value. The broader our interests are, the broader the scope of our curiosity. (Inan 2012: 183)

Let me next borrow three more quotes listed by Stephen Grimm in his (2008) paper, to illustrate the fact that epistemologists normally accept that some items have intrinsic e-value:

> [Goldman:] Our interest in information has two sources: curiosity and practical concerns. The dinosaur extinction fascinates us, although knowing its cause would have no material impact on our lives. We also seek knowledge for practical reasons, as when we solicit a physician's diagnosis or compare prices at automobile dealer shops. (Goldman 1999: 3)
>
> [Alston:] [Although having true beliefs furthers our practical goals] the attainment of knowledge and understanding are also of intrinsic value. (Alston 2005: 31)
>
> [Lynch:] We care about the truth for more than just the benefits it brings us... There are times in our lives when we simply want to know for no other reason than the knowing itself.
>
> Curiosity is not always motivated by practical concerns. Consider extremely abstract mathematical conjectures. With regard to at least some such conjectures, knowing their truth would get us no closer to anything else we want. (Lynch 2004: 15–16) (All three quoted in Grimm 2008: 727)

I shall return to these quotes in a few lines, and I shall freely assume that there is intrinsic e-value. Our question in this paper is *where intrinsic e-value comes from, and the conjecture we are going to develop and defend is that it derives from human curiosity or inquisitiveness.* The first quote from Goldman already suggested the connection, without making the crucial step of deriving value from curiosity. Similarly, in the continuation of Alston's quote:

> … the attainment of knowledge and understanding are also of intrinsic value. 'All men by nature desire to know,' said Aristotle, and this dictum has been reaffirmed by many of his successors.

And he goes on in the same direction:

> Members of our species seem to have a built-in drive to get to the truth about things that pique their curiosity and to understand how and why things are as they are and happen as they do. So it is as close to truistic as we can get in philosophy to take truth as a good-making characteristic, and falsity as a bad-making characteristic, of beliefs and other outputs of cognition. (Alston 2005: 31).

The quotes point in the direction of the thesis that desire for knowledge, or truth, or something similar is connected to the intrinsic value of these items, but they do not tell us what the connection is exactly like. Grimm himself is a bit more explicit:

> …according to this way of thinking, our curiosity about how things stand in the world is . . . importantly like the thirst we (characteristically, at least) feel when our body is dehydrated. When our body is dehydrated—when we experience thirst—*satisfying* our thirst is naturally thought to possess a kind of intrinsic value. (Grimm 2008: 727).

(Let me note that he does not clearly endorse the way of thinking he mentions.) I shall try to formulate the claim about the assignation of e-value by the desire to know, and in doing it, assign the central role to the desire, which I shall simply call "curiosity". Curiosity bestows e-value. It is central for the area of epistemology, and we shall be exploring one important aspect of this centrality.

All this brings us to the work of Ilhan Inan dedicated to curiosity. As Safiye Yiğit has noted at a presentation (in Maribor), my work could be seen as being complementary to his. Inan is focused upon more internal matters, above all the definition of curiosity, whereas I am more interested in its external status within the general field of epistemology, in particular virtue-epistemology. In my first paper connected with Inan's work I have noted that his descriptive-explanatory interest in curiosity is well-matched by my normative view that curiosity is the central motivating epistemic virtue, since his stress on the explanatory centrality of curiosity is well matched by its central normative role in the account. Here I shall be making a step further and talk about curiosity bestowing epistemic value; I hope our views can still be brought into harmony.

Besides this broad agreement, I shall be referring to Inan's work in talking about kinds of curiosity that can bestow value, since his work

on various degrees of ignorance (inostensibility) is very useful for drawing distinctions in this field. Finally, when I shall be characterizing valuable epistemic states, I shall, besides propositional belief/knowledge take into account Inan's highly relevant objectual(ist) distinction of inostensible vs. ostensible conceptualizing of the target of curiosity.

Here is the brief preview. We have two issues to address, first, the metaphysical one: where does the e-value come from? Is it more subjective or more objective? Second, the epistemological issue: which items are really epistemically basic?

I want to start from the metaphysical issue, the crucial issue in epistemic axiology. So, in the next section (section 2), I shall be talking about grasping, leaving open its precise nature, and going straight to the metaphysical issue of the source of value. I shall introduce the idea of response-dependence, and propose that e-value is response-dependent. Graspings of "*p*" are e-valuable because they would be positively valued by relevant cognizer(s), on the basis of interest in whether *p*, or p-curiosity. Curiosity is the foundational epistemic virtue, since it bestows epistemic value.

Section 3 discusses the issue of the target of idealized curiosity which is at the same time the fundamental bearer of epistemic value, namely a relatively minimalist kind of knowledge. Mere true belief cannot be rationally accepted in isolation from a supporting structure. This point is introduced by a discussion of a coffee-machine thought experiment, and the e-value of reliability is affirmed and discussed. The result is then developed into a characterization of the structure(s) that are serious candidates for the bearer of e-value.

Section 4 brings together the results from the two previous sections, and connects them to the conjecture that curiosity is also an organizing epistemic virtue. It thus ends with the double claim: curiosity organizes all other epistemic virtues, and it bestows e-value on our knowledge, and knowledge-like states.

2. *Response-dependence, curiosity and value*

Once upon a time I wanted to know whether Neptune's moons are rich in water, and I learned from a reliable source that they are. Sue wanted to know which town is the capital of Rwanda, Inan tells us (2012: 138), and she learned that it is Kigali. I ended up having a piece of propositional true belief, hopefully even a piece of knowledge. Sue ended up with a piece of ostensible information ("Kigali") with which to replace her former inostensible description "the capital of Rwanda". We ended up with positive "graspings", to use the term introduced in the previous section. I had a propositional grasping, G*p*, of the proposition that *p*, Sue had an objectual one, G*o*, of the object *o*. We were both happy, since we reached something that has epistemic value (e-value, for short) for each of us. We shall discuss in the next section the precise nature of

the bearers of e-value. Here, let me just mention that I agree with a long tradition that on the propositional side truth is paramount, and I assume that in the case of objectual acquaintance correctness plays the same role. But what about achievement? It is welcome but it is not crucial.

Now, how can we account for such intrinsic e-value? Someone may try to avoid the problem by denying the existence of intrinsic e-value: nothing is intrinsically valuable as the object of cognition, or as the state of grasping it. Some of my students were defending this intrinsic e-value nihilism. We agreed at the beginning of the paper that nihilism is untenable: knowing facts about Neptune, or Rwanda, might be intrinsically valuable.

So, the tactics to be followed in this section will be to assume that some *Gp*s (and G*o*s) are e-valuable; where does the intrinsic epistemic value of G*p*s (and G*o*s) come from? Let me call both G*t* for short, "*t*" standing for "target". Now, what is epistemic valuing like? The usual feeling ("phenomenology") is clear: some G*t*s concerning some states of affairs (or objects) are intrinsically e-valuable, and people, if intelligent, well-informed-educated and sensitive are curious about these states of affairs. Here is Inan:

> If curiosity always involves interest and interest always involves values, then it follows that curiosity is always value-laden. I believe that such a position is correct. This would imply that strictly speaking there is no such thing as "sheer curiosity", if the term is taken to refer to a mental state in which one is merely curious about something that is not motivated by anything he values. (Inan 2012: 128)

And the link with the desire to know is easy to spot:

> If such an interest causes a desire to know, then it must be of the second order, in that the curious being not only has to be aware of what he or she does not know but must also desire to come to know the unknown. What exactly is involved in such a desire to come to know the unknown, how it is possible, and whether such a desire is to be taken as identical to that mental state of curiosity are issues to be explored now.
>
> It appears that the general tendency is to take curiosity as being an essential tool in achieving something that has intrinsic value, whether that is knowledge or understanding, in the propositional or objectual sense. (Inan 2012: 10)

This is what we have on the side of the desiring or interested cognizer. On the side of the object, the target to be grasped, grasping itself, or its external referent, we have a brute fact of being valuable. But why would a target of curiosity have *intrinsic epistemic* value? Take Neptune's water-rich moons and the capital of Kigali (or the fact that a determinate city is such a capital). Why would anything about them have *intrinsic epistemic* value? Consider first the extrinsic value: information about Neptune's water-rich moons is epistemically extrinsically valuable because it is useful *for us*. But the idea that there is a non-relational intrinsic value attached to them (or to Kigali), and that

such a strange fact could be dictating epistemic axiology seems a bit extravagant. Just postulating that it has one leaves epistemic value unexplained.

We are thus facing Euthyphro's dilemma concerning the order of determination: does curiosity bestow value upon truths and graspings of truths or is it the other way around? Analogous questions arise about other kinds of value (moral, aesthetic) and the usual feeling ("phenomenology") and the kinds of options are the same. As we are all aware, there are roughly three groups of options altogether, differing in the order of determination.

First option: graspings (G*p*, G*o*) and their objects are not really valuable; 'e-value' is mere projection. We might call it value nihilism, or strong anti-realism (projectivism). An example of it is offered by Stephen Stich in his 1990 book.[4]

Second option: graspings (G*p*, G*o*) and their objects are intrinsically e-valuable in themselves—strong realism. Here, the strong realist claims that intrinsic e-value determines human curiosity (at least in the right cognizers). A fine defense of such objectivism about e-value can be found in Michael Brady (2009) and I shall be addressing some of his arguments a few pages below.

Third option: graspings (G*p*, G*o*) and their objects are e-valuable because of our curiosity-dispositionalism or the response-dependence view. This is the view to be defended here.

Note the analogy with color: strong anti-realism (projectivism) would claim that 'nothing is really red". Strong realism would claim that being red is a completely objective feature of red because it produces some relevant redness-related perceptual state. Finally, the response-dependence view has it that a surface is red because it tends to produce the redness-response in relevant observers under normal circumstances.

I shall set aside the strong projectivism that comes close to error theory, and e-value nihilism, and turn directly to response-dependentism (dispositionalism) and thereby to the claim thatintrinsic curiosity is the e-value bestowing epistemic virtue. This is the strong (and, to many tastes problematic) claim that I want to start to defend here. Here is the general form for accounting for e-value:

> *p* (&G*p*) are e-valuable iff a person H, sufficiently cognitively normal (or, alternatively, idealized), and familiar with the domain of p, would be stably intrinsically curious about p.

Now we need a bit of refining. Let me start by introducing a distinction. When Sue learns about Kigali being the capital of Rwanda, she experiences the information (and her grasping of it) as being valuable. This is the subjective aspect, and I shall talk of e-value as experienced, or e-VALUE$_{exp}$ distinguishing it from the objective e-value we want to account for (compare it to the experience of surface being colored, in

[4] See my extended criticism in Miščević (2000).

contrast to the objective color). So, please note the terminology: Value as experienced = $value_{exp}$

The experience represents the information about Kigali (and the grasping of it) as being valuable; the value as experienced is being felt as the property of the information (and grasping). I can feel how valuable this thing I have learned is for me, Sue might think. And the experience is transparent; it goes right to the target itself. The e-value is *transparently* present in the target:

1. $e\text{-}value_{exp}$ is being experienced as being a property of a state of affairs. (*A transparency datum*)

The datum is both obvious and robust. It crucially distinguishes the experience of value from the experience of pain-causing devices. Locke's mana (a laxative inducing stomach pain), a device that produces pain in the thumb, say a thumbscrew, or an imaginary pain-producing surface, like those in Wittgenstein's thought experiment are, or would be, experienced in a quite different way. Victim's perceptual apparatus does not ascribe to those a phenomenal property corresponding to their pain-producing power. With value, as with color, things stand otherwise: they are experienced as belonging to the targets.

1a. Intentionally experiencing e-value is an act of axiological intuition.

I use the term "intentionally" in the sense of being object-directed. Remember our wondering at what non-human facts could make an item (like "Neptune's moons are rich in water", or the Kigali fact) intrinsically epistemically valuable. In a sense, the wondering points to a minimally naturalistic stance: there is nothing in the nature of physical reality that accounts for axiological properties. This gives us our next premise:

2. The $e\text{-}value_{exp}$ is not an experiencer-independent property of the state of affairs. (*naturalism*)

It has been objected by Stroud that accepting the scientific, "unmasking" premises, like our 2, leads the theoretician to believe there are no corresponding properties. His example involves color. He claims that in order to defend such a view, the theoretician must be able to "identify perceptions as perceptions of this or that colour without himself ascribing any colour to any physical object", and this "cannot be done" (Stroud 2002: 245; the argument is deployed at length in 2000, Ch. 7). However, this objection underestimates the possibilities of bootstrapping: the unmasking theoretician starts in his own case with the full panoply of commonsense beliefs, and then proceeds by weakening them, as his theorizing progresses, going from "this is red" to "this looks red to me", where the content of "red" changes accordingly. To apply it to our case, the response-dependentist theoretician starts in his own case with the full panoply of commonsense beliefs, and then proceeds by weakening them, as his theorizing progresses, going from "this is valuable" to "it feels valuable to me", where the content of "valuable" changes accord-

ingly. And he does not have to end up as a value nihilist, as we shall see in a moment.

3. The e-value$_{exp}$ is not a property of a subjective state (*From Transparency*).

It is the value projected onto the target (moons, Kigali and facts about them). Unfortunately, both claims, 2 and 3, attribute a certain error to Sue. But, no one is perfect. And our everyday experiences and folk conceptualizations offer no guarantee of being error-free. Sue's error might be like the folk error of taking "up" and "down" as absolute properties of space. It is not dramatic, but it is an error nevertheless. C*harity* in interpretation dictates that we don't see folk as referring to nothing whatsoever when referring to directions conceptualized in the absolutist, folk way. Rather, they are best interpreted as managing to refer to the property that is the closest cousin of the intended one. The point is not just minimizing the error, but also rationalizing it, making it intelligible. Charity and *inference to the best explanation* go hand in hand. The traditional dispositionalist or response-dependentist thesis honors both. It captures the fact that *the closest actual referent for color concepts and expressions* is the disposition of surfaces to cause the target intentional states. And that *the closest actual referent for value concepts and expressions* is the disposition of targets to cause the right intentional states. And it does this stressing the right order of determination: what makes a surface red is its state-causing power, and not the other way around, what makes the information e-valuable is causing the satisfaction of curiosity, and not the other way around. Therefore (*by principles of charity and by inference to the best explanation*):

4. Conclusion: Being e-valuable in the objective sense is being such as to cause the response of experiencing e-value$_{exp}$ in *normal/ideal-? observers* under *normal circumstances*. (*Response-intentionalism*)

Let us now start unpacking the Conclusion. As for observers, we have left open two options, the first referring to normal observers, the second to ideal ones. Start with the first, the egalitarian one:

p (&G*p*) are e-valuable iff a person H, endowed with at least normal cognitive capacities and at least some general knowledge, and familiarity with the domain of p, would be stably intrinsically curious about *p* (either whether *p* is true, or about truths in connection with *p*, or both).

Assume that the cognizer is aware of her cognitive capacities (a small idealization). But now, why do we say "in connection with *p*"? To deal with the "curious facts" problem raised by Brady (2009: 278–9). Suppose we think about the following piece of information:

It is forbidden for aircraft to fly over the Taj Mahal.

Brady suggests that we are happy to know such facts without having any antecedent curiosity about them. I suggest that there is a conse-

quent curiosity: we appreciate grasping them because we find them curious, raising further questions, like why anyone would forbid flight over Taj Mahal and the like.

But this is just the beginning of a dialogue with Brady, who has come up with a collection of objections to the response-dependentist account in his paper on curiosity and the value of truth in the *Epistemic Value* volume. Here is his remark about the egalitarian version of the account (he doesn't call it "egalitarian" himself):

> But there seems to be a strong reason to be sceptical about this line on epistemic value. For it is a general truth in value theory that, although the fact that I do desire or care about something might incline us to think that that thing is worth desiring or caring about, it does not guarantee that it is. There is always the possibility that I desire or care about something that I ought not to desire or care about, that is, something that is not worthy of my concern. In other words, there is always the possibility that one of my ends or goals is not a proper end or goal. If so, we might think that the fact that I desire the truth on a particular subject for its own sake does not guarantee that the truth on that subject is worth desiring, or is valuable as an end. (Brady 2009: 269)

We obviously have to idealize; the question is how much. Here is the general form:

> G*p* is e-valuable iff a person H, endowed with (decent to high) cognitive capacities and general knowledge, and familiarity with the domain of *p*, would be stably intrinsically curious about p (either whether *p* is true, or about truths in connection with *p*, or both).

Michael Brady in his paper delineates such a position without endorsing it; in fact he proceeds to criticize it and ends by rejecting it. Here is the proposal:

> How can we move from the claim that we are naturally curious to discover the answers to particular questions, to the claim that answers to those questions are valuable in themselves? This problem is pressing, given that there might be something amiss with our curiosity or concern, and which therefore casts doubt upon the value of the truths which constitute the object of that curiosity or concern. A simple solution is to idealize the relevant concern for truth. Thus, we might claim that the truth on a certain issue is valuable, not if someone does care about or desire the truth on that issue, but only if the person would care about the truth under certain idealized conditions: if, for instance, the person would desire the truth on that issue were she fully rational (…). A process of rational idealization will bring to light whether the subject's interest is instrumental or intellectual, will ensure that inquiries are not based upon false beliefs, and will rule out curiosity that results from irrational compulsions. We might therefore maintain that it is the satisfaction of natural and rational, idealized curiosity which has final value. (Brady 2009: 271)

Obviously, the proposal needs a lot of work to arrive at the right level of idealization. Too little is unsatisfactory, given human limitations; unfortunately, some people are intrinsically curious about worthless matters. Too much is equally bad: only high level problems will be in-

trinsically interesting to such an epistemically ideal person. In addition, we have the issues of depth and width: short of omniscience, what is the right proportion of going into detail and depth, and wanting to encompass as many areas as possible? So, the general question is with us, concerning both subjects and circumstances: how much idealization and of what kind? I still believe that intrinsic curiosity is the e-value bestowing epistemic virtue. Instead of trying to solve all the difficulties at once, I shall limit myself to a handful of problems, some of them raised by Brady and his original and challenging counterexamples.

First problem: the superficiality of novelty. In his "Interest and Epistemic Goodness" (2011) Brady starts from psychology: "There is wide agreement—among psychologists, at least—on the appraisal variables that generate interest", he writes. "One of the central appraisals is of novelty: 'whether or not an event is new, sudden, or unfamiliar. For interest, this novelty check includes whether people judge something as new, ambiguous, complex, obscure, uncertain, mysterious, contradictory, unexpected, or otherwise not understood." (Silvia 2006: 57). He also mentioned that interest and importance diverge. In the handout he points out that "… we tend to find old, expected, familiar things comfortable or enjoyable, but are interested in things which are unexpected, unfamiliar, mysterious, baffling" (Brady 2011: 2). So, the curious person starts by noting that something is ambiguous (complex, obscure, mysterious, contradictory), and asks oneself how one should one understand it. He finds such interest superficial and unstable.

Answer: To me it seems that if curiosity is directed to the "new, ambiguous, complex, obscure, uncertain, mysterious, contradictory, unexpected, or otherwise not understood" then its central goal is achieving understanding, rather than arriving at isolated items of knowledge, and I think it is epistemically quite a good thing. The interest in complexity leads to the desire to understand, the crucial epistemic desire. Novelty is in the vicinity; it involves not-yet-understood matters. Finally, a virtuous researcher is able to control herself, to balance novelty with relevance and depth, and so on. So much for the first line of defense. But one may also add that the interest in the novel and the complex is, globally seen, extremely epistemically useful. Novelty liberates us from cognitive inertia; just think of depressed people who have lost their natural curiosity.

Second problem: M. Brady's symmetrical problem for curiosity as a source of value:

> ... [t]here are *epistemic* windfalls, truths whose value depends upon the fact that they were unsought, and so depends upon the fact that they were not the results of inquiry. (Brady 2009: 280)[5]

[5] Here is a longer quote:
…we might think that there are epistemic windfalls, truths whose value depends upon the fact that they were unsought, and so depends upon the fact that they were not the results of inquiry. For example, if unsolicited affection constitutes a positive value in our lives, we might think that unsolicited knowledge of affection

He claims that, for instance, unsolicited knowledge of affection constitutes a positive value in our lives.

Answer: Suppose I care for the love of three persons, Jane, Julia and Peter, but I don't care at all whether Kate loves me, and I don't give a damn for info about it. Why would "unsolicited knowledge" of her affection constitute a positive value in my life? So, I assume that these counterexamples to the response-dependentist account do not really threaten it. On the other hand, if I cared about Kate's feelings, I would have normally asked myself whether she has affection for me, and thus I would have been (perhaps very passively and lazily) curious about the matter.

The third problem: the fact-value gap. Here is a remark against response-dependentism made by Stratton-Lake in his Introduction to Ross's classic *The Right and the Good*:

> [o]ur knowledge that certain things are intrinsically good does not seem to be derived from other evaluative knowledge, and given the autonomy of ethics, this knowledge cannot be derived from non-evaluative premisses, such as our knowledge that we desire or approve of that thing. (Stratton-Lake 2002: xliii)

A simple answer: Let us accept for the sake of argument that moral value is completely autonomous. We have no reason to accept the analogy with e-value; it is simply not so separate from its factual supervenience basis as moral value is.

The fourth problem: omniscience. Inan, Carter, and my student M. Bakalova warned me that a person, who knows everything and is thus epistemically close to perfection, would not be curious, and would thus paradoxically lack the alleged main motivating epistemic virtue.

One answer is that many human virtues are tailor-made for human agents in less-then-perfect but better-than hellish human circumstances. Curiosity is one such virtue, typical for finite and relatively ignorant beings, in need of constant updating of information in order to function successfully. (Analogy: an all-powerful, even omnipotent being does not need courage.)

But I would add more: I stipulate a slightly wider meaning of "inquisitiveness" that also includes cherishing the truth once found. It seems to me a natural extension of the narrower meaning: a person with bad memory but eager to learn things, who subsequently doesn't care a bit for the knowledge acquired and is completely unworried about having forgotten everything she learned, is not consistently inquisitive. So, the hypothetical omniscient person who keeps her virtue by cherishing what she knows is "curious" in this wider sense.

> does as well. Thus, I might learn that 'she loves me' because of her unsolicited declaration of love. Here my true belief has value that it would lack if it resulted from inquiry on my part. There seem to be a great number of surprising but welcome truths that fall into this category. So the efforts of inquiry are sometimes incompatible with the intrinsic value of true beliefs. (Brady 2009: 280)

The fifth problem is the issue of bad curiosity: some cases of curiosity are really bad. How can curiosity then bestow any positive value?

Answer: Most bad curiosity is the one that is extrinsically motivated (envy, bad goals, etc.) but what if I am intrinsically motivated, but my curiosity is still unacceptable (say, curious about the private life of my student, whom I just find an interesting person, without having further goals but grasping truths about him)? In these cases, the moral disvalue (in the example, the derogation of privacy) counterbalances the intrinsic e-value, and wins (there are two further sub-options: either the e-value is annihilated, or it stays there but is simply defeated by the negative extrinsic, moral disvalue).

Sixth problem: sometimes intense curiosity can block insight. Scientists tell us that they got their best ideas when they stopped being obsessed with the issue they were working on; suddenly the insight would come, often in unexpected circumstances.

Answer: psychologists agree with scientists-discoverers, but they tell us that the best explanation is to postulate the existence of a subpersonal inquisitive drive (see Kounios and Beeman (2015)).

There are further issues to be addressed: kinds of curiosity reflected on the features of e-value, the nature and the origin of e-disvalue, and many more. But we have to conclude. Let me reiterate the main idea of the section and of the paper: intrinsic curiosity is the e-value bestowing epistemic virtue. Probably *most things that concern us in our normal human lives are response-dependent*: goodness-wickedness, beauty-ugliness, attractiveness-repulsiveness, being humanly meaningful vs. being meaningless and empty. In contrast, *most things that are metaphysically important are not response-dependent*. To put it in a form of a slogan, *response-dependence belongs to the manifest picture we care about humanly, independence belongs to the deep reality we care about scientifically*. Philosophy is the happy branch in which we can discuss both.

Let me now turn to the empty slot I left in the story. What are the targets of curiosity and the bearers of epistemic value? Although I think that the proposed account would work for a very wide range of candidates, an opponent might see the lack of discussion of the topic as a fatal lacuna in the account. So, the question should be addressed. It will take a lot of space, in comparison with the main topic, but still I apologize for too brief a treatment of an intricate and important topic.

3. *Targets of curiosity: Bearers of epistemic value*

We have been freely talking about "grasping" as candidate bearer of epistemic value. But what kinds of doxastic-epistemic states are eligible candidates? Let us stay with propositional curiosity and corresponding states; we shall try to generalize our result(s) to their objectual counterparts later. Certainly, we have true belief, (internally) justified true belief, knowledge, understanding and perhaps even more, for example wisdom. Does each item have a value? And what are the paramount

qualities that support the value? Let me agree with a long tradition that truth is paramount. But what about achievement? It is welcome but is not crucial. So many items are valued that do not involve significant achievement, as Duncan Pritchard has argued at length, in detail and to my mind convincingly (for instance in his (2014).[6] So it is good to have true belief, and to have internally justified true belief, and reliably acquired true belief, and knowledge. But also the components (justification, reliability) seem to be valuable. Knowledge seems to have a high status partly because of its stability and reliability. On the theoretical level it would be nice to have an account that could order the bearers of e-value, for instance show that value of understanding is greater than value of knowledge that is greaterthan value of justified true belief that is greaterthan value of mere true belief (what about reliably acquired true belief?). But some comparisons might be difficult, and there might be no consensus about ordering.[7]

So, let me start by discussing the value of stable, reliable origin. It has been famously contested by Linda Zagzebsky, for instance in her (2003) paper, where she offers a few remarks on coffee and coffee machines, that have been reconstructed as a provocative thought experiment. I shall use the summary offered by Duncan Pritchard, since it makes clear the thought-experimental character of the argument:

> Imagine two great cups of coffee identical in every relevant respect—they look the same, taste the same, smell the same, are of the same quantity, and so on. Clearly, we value great cups of coffee. Moreover, given that we value great cups of coffee, it follows that we also value reliable coffeemaking machines—i.e. machines which regularly produce good coffee. Notice, however, that once we've got the great coffee, then we don't then care whether it was produced by a reliable coffee-making machine. That is, that the great coffee was produced by a reliable coffee-making machine doesn't contribute any additional value to it. In order to see this, note that if one were told that only one of the great identical cups of coffee before one had been produced

[6] But Pritchard goes very far:

> When I say that truth is the fundamental epistemic good, I mean that from a purely epistemic point of view it is ultimately only truth that we should care about. Call this the truth thesis…
>
> ... Elsewhere, I have characterised this view as epistemic value T-monism, in that:
>
> (i) it is a view about epistemic value specifically (that's the 'epistemic value' part);
>
> (ii) it says that there is just one finally epistemically valuable epistemic good (that's the 'monism' part); and
>
> (iii) it says that this finally epistemically valuable epistemic good is truth (that's the 'T' part) (2014:114)

[7] Compare John Gibbons' (2013) book on the norm of belief. He notes that the following are all fairly plausible claims about when we ought to believe things.

- (T) You ought to believe p only if p is true.
- (J) You ought to believe p if and only if you're justified in believing p.
- (K) You ought to believe p only if you'd thereby know that p.

> And that though they're all plausible, they can't all be true. But, he tries to do justice to all of them.

> by a reliable coffee-making machine, this would have no bearing at all on the issue of which cup one preferred; one would still be indifferent on this score. In short, whatever value is conferred on a cup of coffee through being produced by a reliable coffee-making machine, this value is 'swamped' by the value conferred on that coffee in virtue of it being a great cup of coffee. (Pritchard 2011: 246–7).

Pritchard calls it the swamping argument and here is his formulation:

> (1) The epistemic value conferred on a belief by that belief having an epistemic property is instrumental epistemic value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
>
> (…)
>
> (2) If the value of X is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present, then it can confer no additional value.
>
> (…)
>
> (3) Knowledge that *p* is sometimes more epistemically valuable than mere true belief that *p*. (Pritchard 2011: 248–9)

This brings the Swamping Problem onto the scene: if the value of a property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then this property can confer no additional value on that item. This holds for epistemic properties in relation to the good of truth. So, knowledge that *p can be no more valuable than mere true belief that p*. Pritchard accepts (1) and (2) and rejects 3. Knowledge has *no added epistemic value* in comparison to true belief. Justification is epistemically worthless! But this seems really counterintuitive and problematic. Is there a way out?[8]

[8] Here is a longer quotation from J. Kvanvig offering an analogous problem. He talks about Meno problem, of whether, and if yes, why knowledge is more valuable than true belief.

> Assumption 1: The Meno problem can be solved if there is a property P that (i) distinguishes knowledge from true belief and (ii) is a valuable property for a belief to have.
>
> Assumption 1, however, is false. To see that it is false, consider some simple analogies. If we have a piece of art that is beautiful, its aesthetic value is not enhanced by having as well the property of being likely to be beautiful. For being likely to be beautiful is a valuable property because of its relationship to being beautiful itself. Once beauty is assumed to be present, the property of being likely to be beautiful ceases to contribute any more value to the item in question. Likelihood of beauty has a value parasitic on beauty itself and hence has a value that is swamped by the presence of the latter. Take anything that you care about: happiness, money, drugs, sports cars, and so on. Then consider two lists about such things, the first list telling you where to obtain such things and the second list telling you where you are likely to obtain such things. Now compose a third list, which is the intersection of the first two lists. It tells you of ways and places that both are likely to get you what you want and actually will get you what you want. But there would be no reason to prefer the third list to the first list, given what you care about.
>
> These analogies show that when the value of one property is parasitic on the value of another property in the way that the likelihood of X is parasitic on X itself, the value of the first is swamped by the presence of the second. So even if likeli-

Let us look at the coffee thought experiment again. Are we ever being offered the choice as described?

> "Here are two beliefs, e.g.
> 1. *Wuhan is in China.* and
> 2. *Maribor is the Slovenian town closest to Graz.*
> Both are true, but 1 is from an unreliable source, and 2 is from a reliable one. Which one do you prefer?"

Did you ever receive such an offer? Does it make sense? Imagine: I am telling you that Maribor is the Slovenian town closest to Graz, and that you are hereby getting it from an unreliable source! If I am offering you the choice, and you can trust me that "*Maribor is the Slovenian town closest to Graz.*" is true, then you are getting your belief from a reliable source. If you cannot, the offer cannot be formulated. In short, *there is no viable equivalent of the tasting of coffee, no neutral checking*: if the checking is worthy of its name, it yields more than mere true belief: either justified true belief, or knowledge. If it does not, it does not test for the truth of the belief. So, the coffee thought experiment is ok for coffees. But it lets us down at the stage of generalizing (all kinds of goods) and of analogizing beliefs to cups of coffee. Moral**:** the coffee model is not applicable to beliefs.

I have been telling the story in terms of propositional knowledge, but it can be retold in terms of objectual curiosity and knowledge, dear to Inan. Let us repeat the game. I just told you:

> "Here are two sentences:
> 1. *Wuhan is in China.* and
> 2. *Maribor is the Slovenian town closest to Graz.*
> Both are true, but 1 is from an unreliable source, and 2 is from a reliable one. Which one do you prefer?"

Consider now the critical definite descriptions "the country in which Wuhan is located", and "the Slovenian town closest to Graz". You have started with two inostensible concepts, the first corresponding to "the country in which Wuhan is located", and second corresponding to "the Slovenian town closest to Graz". In the game I am also offering you their ostensible equivalents, "China" and "Maribor", but I am doing it in a thoroughly unacceptable way, by saying that the first offer is reliable and the second is not. But it makes no sense to make an offer and then claim it is unreliable. It is not like offering two coffee cups that taste the same. The analogy with coffee fails for the ostensible/inostensible contrast as well as for the more traditional epistemological concepts.[9]

> hood of truth is a valuable property for a belief to have, adding that property to a belief already assumed to be true adds no value to the resulting composite that is not already present in true belief itself. So Assumption 1is false; one cannot solve the Meno problem simply by finding a valuable property that distinguishes true belief from knowledge. (Kvanvig 2003: 45, thanks to J. Adam Carter for pointing the passage out to me.)

[9] Here is the third consideration:

So, merely true belief taken in isolation cannot really be rationally accepted. Belief is unlike coffee in crucial respects. Most importantly, its value cannot be tested without the test importing new, crucial information that turns true belief into something more powerful (justified true belief or knowledge). Therefore, a *de facto* true belief cannot be rationally accepted in isolation from these crucial additions.

The coffee model seems to make sense from the third person perspective, but not from the first person perspective of the cognizer. And it is the cognizer that is being asked about her preferences, not the external judge. But what kind of stability is involved here? Pritchard claims it is merely practical,[10] but in our context there is no mention of practical use. It is a matter of pure credibility, so, it should be *informational or epistemic*. Let me generalize. Here is a general dilemma for the coffee model:

If you were informed from an epistemically authoritative source that "*p*" is a true belief, then you would have reliable information that *p*.

If you were not, then you would have no reason to accept that *p*.

There is no middle ground here. The opponent, for instance Pritchard, might try to argue that our point is simply a matter of pragmatics. Indeed, offering a piece of information and claiming at the same time

> BELIEF-MACHINE VARIANT The person who is curious whether Goldbach's Conjecture is true would not be fully satisfied by a mere true belief as to whether it is true. If offered a choice between a device that would, upon pressing a button, implant a true belief as to whether the Conjecture is true and a device that would implant knowledge, the subject would prefer the latter device and would do so to satisfy curiosity. Indeed, the requirement of knowledge is not merely for a justified true belief. (Schmitt and Lahroodi 2008: 134)

So far, so good. But it is too little to say that the subject would just prefer the knowledge machine. Imagine waking up with the mere belief: Goldbach's Conjecture is true. No reasons, no awareness of the source! Like the Truetemp. It would be quite irrational to accept the belief-machine offer.

[10] Pritchard writes:

> /t/here is little to be gained by responding to the swamping problem by arguing that the epistemic standing in question generates a practical value that mere true belief lacks. For example, suppose one responded to the swamping problem by arguing that knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief because knowledge entails justification and justification is practically valuable. Justified true belief, we might say—in a broadly Socratic fashion (…)—a 'stability' that mere true belief lacks, and this means that it is more practically useful to us in attaining our goals. The problem with this response, however, is that it doesn't appear to engage with the swamping problem at all. After all, the difficulty that the swamping problem poses concerns how to make sense of the idea that knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief because it involves an epistemic standing which better serves our specifically epistemic goals—in particular, the epistemic goal of true belief. Thus, the kind of value that is at issue is specifically an epistemic value. Accordingly, even if it is true that knowledge has more all-things-considered value because it entails an epistemic standing which adds practical value to true belief, the problem would still remain that, on the face of it, knowledge is not epistemically more valuable than mere true belief (Pritchard 2011: 246–7)

that the source, namely the speaker herself, is unreliable is a pragmatic contradiction, or paradox. But this pragmatic incompatibility tells us nothing about the actual distribution of e-value, he might claim. We need an example of a situation where pragmatic considerations are blocked, but the importance of justification and reliability remain. Here is a possible example:

The elections

You are very curious about the presidential elections in my country, which involve two candidates, Kolinda and Josip. It is the election day, 5 p.m. The results are not yet known, they will be known at midnight, but you are not aware of it, and you trust me.
I try a practical joke. I toss a coin (at 5 p.m.) And the coin says "Kolinda". I call you and tell you "Kolinda is the winner". You accept, form the belief and you thank me warmly for the info.
At midnight, it becomes public that Kolinda indeed won**.** I call you, and tell you that it was a joke, and I had no clue when I called you. "But at least, my info was true", I add. How would you react?

One rational reaction: "Well, don't do it again, Nenad!" Others would be along the same line, criticizing me for my stupid joke. Suppose I answer:

"Yes, but your belief was true, you should appreciate it a lot by your own lights!"

This is even worse. It looks like the worth of merely true belief is rather minimal. And it looks that by making you accept the true belief that Kolinda is the winner, I did you a disfavor.

Moral one: true belief is valuable, but implanted alone it has a minimal value!

The impression can be strengthened:

We generally don't regard stable arrangements as a series of one-shot deals: a good relationship is not a two thousand and one-night stand, a stable home is not a series of many 24-hours lasting improvised shelters. But with knowledge, it is even more dramatic. The one-shot offer itself does not make sense. Acceptability and reliability go together in a package deal.[11] I shall call the moral of the election story the "package deal argument" (See Carter et al. 2013).

I have been telling the story in terms of propositional knowledge, but it can be retold in terms of objectual curiosity and knowledge, dear to Inan. So, in the story retold, you are interested in who the new president of Croatia is. You have an inostensible description of him/her, namely "the new president". What you want is a more ostensible infor-

[11] The type of combination is widespread, way beyond the mere intrinsic e-value of truth. Imagine you would value a lot having a nice drink. And you are offered a glass, you drink it and enjoy it. Next day you are told that it could have been poison. You would not thank the person for the nice drink, although the drink is what you basically value.

mation, let's say the name. (with all the problems that go with it, listed and brilliantly analyzed by Inan in 2012:142 ff, in connection with the name "Kigali"). Now, with the practical joke I actually gave you the right information, it's Kolinda. Still, you are not satisfied, after you hear about my actual ignorance at the time of giving the info. What is needed is the package deal: *ostensible information with some guarantee of reliability*. I cannot defend the fully isolated true belief (except going the Martin Luther WAY: here i stand and believe, ich kann nicht anders!).

So, here is my proposal: combine the package deal argument with the failure of the coffee thought experiments. The resulting picture will be the following:

> Truth is the primary goal, but mere true belief is not the fundamental bearer of e-value. Rather, the bearer is a relatively undemanding, minimalist kind of knowledge. Curiosity follows the same pattern: a rational cognizer wants truth plus supporting structure.

Mere true belief is only minimally valuable for the curious cognizer. I told you the name of the winner, you got the true belief, by pure luck. Truetemp got one by insertion into his brain. How valuable, epistemically speaking, is it for you and for Truetemp respectively? Not much; very little has been given to you and to him. (You have right to be offended at my playing games with you, Truetemp at tampering with his brain, for very little in terms of *epistemic* gain!). So this is the typical epistemic value of true belief without supporting structure. It is not impressive. Plato already knew it: such true beliefs are like Socrates's *daidaleia*, moving statues-robots, utterly defenseless, and ready to run away (*Meno* 97a–98b). Mere true belief cannot be rationally sustained in the face of a slightest bit of contrary evidence. For example, I believe (truly) it is not raining, but I have no supporting structure for my belief. A mere drop of water on my window, say from my neighbor's hose, makes me change my mind, and the true belief is gone. But also, my change of mind is in a sense less than rational. In contrast, if I have a supporting structure (I can see no clouds in the sky) the rational defensibility is there. Now, is rational defensibility merely practical and instrumental? Why would it be? Why is this not epistemic?

If you already have an intuition that the additional element of stability and defensibility does add epistemic value, you can use a Modus Tollens: the additional element cannot add epistemic value unless it is itself epistemically valuable. It does add epistemic value. Therefore, the additional element is epistemically distinctly valuable.

> Mere true belief (as well as mere correct ostensive information) cannot be rationally accepted in isolation from a supporting structure.
> However, any efficient supporting structure introduces further epistemic goods (justification, reliability, anti-luck guarantees), thus upgrading the original true belief**.**
> Mere true belief **(**as well as mere correct ostensive information) can be nei-

ther defended, nor rationally sustained through time, due to the isolation**.** (see Carter et al. 2013)
Mere true belief cannot be rationally sustained in the face of a slightest bit of contrary evidence (The Meno insight). Therefore:
Mere true belief **(**as well as mere correct ostensive information) is not rationally stable.
Mere true belief **(**as well as mere correct ostensive information) is only minimally valuable for the curious cognizer**.**
Epistemic goods come in package deals.
Rational stability is an epistemic, not merely a practical property (or status).

Let us leave open how massive the supporting structure should be. For our purposes a molecular, not holistic structure is enough. The Truetemp analogy suggests that the structure should contain an indication of origin, some indication of circumstances (perceptual, testimonial, memory-based belief). All this might help to account for the value problem. Let me just note the direction of solution, leaving the details for another occasion. First, showing that knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief, which we did. Second, showing that knowledge is more valuable than that which falls short of knowledge. Justified true belief without some indication of reliability is not a satisfactory package deal.[12] Finally showing that knowledge is more valuable than that which falls short of knowledge not merely as a matter of degree but of kind. A very modest proposal: the special status comes from the fact that (minimal) knowledge is the first, or the basic kind of grasping the truth that has all the requisite qualities.[13]

Let me put my cards on the table in matters of the source of e-value of various candidates: the intrinsic e-value of true belief derives from the desire for truth, the intrinsic e-value of justified true belief derives from the need for reflective certainty, and the ability to defend one's belief and transmit it if needed. The need for reflective certainty, I submit, is epistemic as is the need for the ability to defend one's belief and transmit it if needed (social epistemic). The e-value of knowledge derives from all the preceding elements plus defensibility and stability (achievement is optional). It is probably the first satisfactory package that gives one, from the first person perspective the epistemically stable supporting structure. Understanding is the next one; its intrinsic e-value derives from its richness and cognitive relevance and role in manipulating causes. All this would demand a lot of arguing; I have to stop here.

[12] I leave for some other occasion the discussion of the view, due to Kvanvig, according to which knowledge knowledge is not the first inquiry stopper, whereas the gettierized justified true belief already is.

[13] All this should be argued for on the bases of various proposed accounts of knowledge. I've been stressing stability. But similar considerations hold for other proposals. Consider D. Pritchard's recipe for knowledge: virtue + anti-luck. The virtuous origin (like the old style justification) secures the rationality of forming and keeping alive the belief. The anti-luck component caters for the stability.

So much for beliefs and curiosity in general. But what about truly foundational beliefs (if there are any); where does package deal come from in their case? For instance, Wittgenstein's hinges? A possible answer is that they are presumably widely shared in the epistemic community ("shared" in several relevant senses), and their special status accompanies them as part of their package.

Next, what about the sub-personal level? I assume the story is roughly similar. Our cognitive modules trace the origin and credentials of various inputs. A normally functional cognitive apparatus is able to distinguish sub-personally imagined from sub-personally perceived contents. Let me borrow a pair of terms from Sosa (2015: 67 ff). He talks about biological-functional vs. intentional, noting that on the biological level the proper function of the human belief-system is to represent reality-as-it-is: the representation should be as accurate as possible given the costs. On the intentional level the proper function links beliefs to the truth-goal. My own preference is to think that the intentional is continuous with the biological (Dretske, Millikan), but I will not be dogmatic here. A broad parallelism will be enough. On the sub-personal level our cognitive mechanisms search epistemic stability-defensibility as much as on the personal level. So, there is no principled problem.

I assume that similar considerations are valid for Inan's ostensible/non-ostensible contrast as they are for propositional beliefs. You might be offered an ostensible replacement ("China") for your initial non-ostensible one ("the country in which Wuhan is located"), and the replacement might be correct. Still it does not help much, if you don't have a stable and reliable infrastructure supporting the replacement. If you have one, say, "I got it from my Chinese student, whose documents testify that he studied in Wuhan; so, presumably he is reliable about its location", the ostensible characterization is epistemically valuable.

4. *Conclusion: The centrality of curiosity*

In this paper I have tried to do two things concerning the value of truth and knowledge, and their relation to curiosity. First, and most importantly, to address the Euthyphro's dilemma concerning the order of determination: does curiosity bestow value upon truths and graspings of truths or is it the other way around? Second, to offer a sketch concerning the bearer(s) of epistemic value, and to adjudicate between purely truth-centered proposals, and wider options, including properties like reliability, stability and justifiedness.

Let me focus upon the first task. The paper argues for a response-dependentist account of intrinsic epistemic value of true grasping (belief, knowledge): intrinsic curiosity is the value-bestowing epistemic virtue. In short: the value is normally experienced as being a property of a state of affairs to be grasped. However, value naturalism suggests that it is not an experiencer-independent property of the state of affairs.

Hopefully, the value is not merely a fiction. Therefore, by principles of charity and by inference to the best explanation, being epistemically valuable in an objective sense is being such as to cause the response of intentionally experiencing epistemic e-value in under suitable circumstances. Our graspings of propositions and objectual characterizations are epistemically valuable iff a person, endowed with at least normal cognitive capacities and at least some general knowledge, and familiarity with the domain of *p*, (or, alternatively, the person's somewhat idealized counterpart) would be stably intrinsically curious about *p* (either whether *p* is true, or about truths in connection with *p*, or both). Similar conditions hold for objectual curiosity. We have tried to address a number of objections to this view, and we hope to have offered at least beginnings of a right response. We concluded that curiosity is the foundational epistemic virtue that bestows epistemic value to its targets. Now, I would like to try connecting the claims to my previous work on curiosity.

I have tried elsewhere to defend the following claims: first, that intrinsic curiosity is an epistemic virtue. Second, that it organizes and mobilizes other virtues, both abilities related and morality-related ones. Obviously, curiosity is *not* an ability, it is a *motivatin*g truth-seeking virtue, a choice-related feature of the mind, of the sort similar to generosity and courage. These virtues are normally praised by thinkers like Zagzebski who stress the motivating role of virtues. Curiosity also helps integrating other moral-like virtues in the picture and accounting for them. They are of two kinds. Either they directly aid curiosity, like open-mindedness does, perhaps preventing the cognizer's mind to get clogged by worthless old stuff. Or, they have to do with other values (e.g. originality with the value of being new in an interesting way) and other kinds of virtue, above all moral virtues (e.g. generosity). One should see them as hybrids, partly moral, partly purely epistemic. This fits the intuition that they have high moral relevance, as well as the assumption that they favor reaching purely epistemic goals. This preserves both *primacy of truth-goal and the traditional and ordinary understanding of virtue as a motivating feature*. The result would be an integrated virtue-based view. What about cognitive capacities or capacity-virtues, like, for instance, well-functioning and well-integrated perception and rational intuition, the kind of virtues mentioned by Sosa and Greco inside their very definitions of knowledge? Are they really virtues? Yes, they are, in their own modest way and the truth-camp philosopher should not worry. However, they are not motivating virtues. They are *executive* virtues. They lead the agent to the epistemic goal set primarily by her inquisitiveness, pure or practical.

The proposal perhaps merits to be characterized as an *integrated virtue-based view*, since it is strongly aretaic, integrates motivating and executive virtues, and aims at seamlessly integrating the typical pursuits of virtue epistemology with the traditional business of episte-

mology. The character-virtue tradition and the truth-centered one can be married in a quiet and civilized fashion, without forcing any shotgun wedding between them. Combined with the present claim about the response-dependent nature of epistemic value, the proposal becomes even stronger: curiosity is *the central and the foundational* epistemic virtue. It is foundational since it bestows epistemic value, and central since it organizes other epistemic virtues.

The second issue is the one of the fundamental bearer of epistemic value. Truth is central for human cognitive-epistemic effort. I have argued, briefly and all too briefly, that truth is the primary goal, but that mere true belief is not the fundamental bearer. Rather, the bearer is a relatively minimalist kind of knowledge. Mere true belief cannot be rationally accepted in isolation from a supporting structure. However, any efficient supporting structure introduces further epistemic goods (justification, reliability, anti-luck guarantees), thus upgrading the original true belief. Keep in mind how little epistemic value commands the mere true belief (or mere correct ostensible presentation) without the supporting structure. And how much more, intuitively seen, is provided by justification and knowledge (and their objectual correlates). And note that the surplus comes from them alone, not from the minimal e-value of true belief.

Mere true belief can be neither defended, nor rationally sustained through time, due to isolation. Mere true belief cannot be rationally sustained in the face of a slightest bit of contrary evidence (the Meno insight). Therefore, mere true belief is not rationally stable. Minimal knowledge is, and this accounts for value problem in its various guises.

On the side of objectual curiosity, dear to Inan, we have similar candidates for the bearer of epistemic value beside mere correct ostensible presentation (concept), namely justified correct ostensible presentation and justified correct ostensible presentation with reliable underpinning, not to speak of understanding as a further candidate. As in the case of propositional belief, here epistemic goods come in package deals.

Let me reiterate: curiosity is *the central and the foundational* epistemic virtue. I hope this idea gives a general epistemological framework that would be very friendly to research, like Inan's on the inner nature and proper definition of curiosity. I have learned a lot from his book and papers, and I hope that we shall continue the fruitful and inspiring discussion.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Afterthoughts on Critiques to The Philosophy of Curiosity

ILHAN INAN
Department of Philosophy, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

In this paper I respond to and elaborate on some of the ideas put forth on my book The Philosophy of Curiosity (2012) as well as its follow-up "Curiosity and Ignorance" (2016) by Nenad Miščević, Erhan Demircioğlu, Mirela Fuš, Safiye Yiğit, Danilo Šuster, Irem Günhan Altıparmak, and Aran Arslan.

Keywords: Philosophy of curiosity, ignorance, curiosity, knowledge, reference.

At the time when I published my book, *The Philosophy of Curiosity,* there were only a handful of journal articles and book chapters within the philosophy literature on curiosity.[1] Most of the questions that I addressed and discussed in that book—let alone the answers I proposed—were ones that were hitherto not even raised by any philosopher in the long history of our discipline of more than two millennia. It is a joy to see that in the past four years there has been a rise in interest in at least some of these issues. The extant and scarce literature back then dealt with two questions; one concerning what curiosity is, and the other on whether it is valuable. No doubt these are the two most interesting and perhaps also the most central philosophical questions that may be raised on curiosity. There was however no discussion, for instance, on the question of whether for a being to become curious it is a precondition for them to have the ability to construct a mental representation of something unknown. This issue immediately brings forth various other related questions. Is being curious and intentional mental state? Does mental representation of the unknown always have conceptual content? Can beings who do not possess a language be curious? The list goes on and on. Once you start pondering upon these questions, you find yourself in a rich area of research at the crossroads of philosophy of

[1] For the philosophical literature on curiosity prior to 2012 see the Introduction to Inan (2012).

language, philosophy of mind, epistemology, ethics, value theory, and even philosophical logic. The articles in this issue raise and discuss some of these important issues; some are favorable to my theory of curiosity providing valuable extensions of my views, and others are more critical, raising several fundamental objections; yet all of them I have read with joy. Nenad Miščević does a wonderful job in arguing that curiosity is "the foundational epistemic virtue", a view I somewhat merely presupposed in my work, but did not have the resources to argue for. Both Mirela Fuš, and Danilo Šuster address an interesting topic that I had little to say about in my book, namely meta-curiosity, that is curiosity regarding one's own mental states such as beliefs, or even one's own curiosity. With her strong practical and theoretical background in the Philosophy for Children movement, Irem Günhan Altıparmak demonstrates why curiosity ought to be a central notion in this discipline, by—to my delight—utilizing some of my ideas. Aran Arslan takes up a rather technical problem concerning whether there are some special epistemic contexts in which the distinction between ostensible and inostensible reference—on which my theory of curiosity is built—has any semantic significance. On the more critical side Mirela Fuš and especially Erhan Demircioğlu propose certain considerations that question my view that not all instances of curiosity have propositional content. Safiye Yiğit convincingly argues against my position that when one has merely inostensible propositional knowledge there must be at least one inostensible term in the sentence that expresses that proposition. Perhaps the most pressing objection comes from Danilo Šuster who takes up certain cases of curiosity which appear to be problematic for my central thesis that curiosity as a mental state always involves the representation of an unknown entity through an inostensible concept.

Reply to Demircioğlu

By appealing to the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity I have argued that there are also two corresponding forms of ignorance. In his lucid paper Demircioğlu objects:

> …the problem is that whatever reason Inan brings forth for doubting "the propositional-bias" in the case of curiosity…could have been easily formulated, with relevant terminological changes being made, as reason for doubting that bias in the case of ignorance, and this shows that the argument *from curiosity* for the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance is unnecessarily circuitous: assuming that the argument from curiosity establishes the conclusion that there is a distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance, that conclusion could also have been established without going through the roundabout way appealing to the distinction between objectual and propositional curiosity. (Demircioğlu 2016: 307)

Granted that an argument for the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance can be given without mentioning curiosity at all. Demircioğlu's objection is that bringing curiosity into the picture

does not add any further support for this conclusion. I think it does. That is because curiosity is typically expressed by the posing of a question, and it is clear that that there is a genuine distinction between a wh-question and a whether-question. That a wh-question can never be answered by a simple "yes or "no" is sufficient to show that what is being asked is not whether a certain proposition is true or false, which is what makes the curiosity expressed by such a question objectual. Given that typically curiosity arises out of ignorance, we should then conclude that in such cases the ignorance in question is also objectual. So an argument from curiosity to show that not every instance of ignorance is propositional, I believe, adds support to this conclusion. Let me also note that there is also a personal reason why I think this way; it was through philosophizing on curiosity that I came to realize the significance of the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance.

I have argued that there are two forms of propositional curiosity corresponding to the two forms of propositional ignorance, fact-ignorance and truth-ignorance. In reply Demircioğlu says:

> Inan's "fact-ignorance" is best understood as "failure to know *the object* that is a constituent of the fact that makes a proposition true" and as such it falls within the rubric of Inan's *objectual* ignorance. So, the only form of propositional ignorance that we are left with is what Inan calls truth-ignorance. (Demircioğlu 2016: 309)

This appears to be (partly) a terminological issue. What I call "propositional ignorance" (corresponding to propositional curiosity) is one whose content is a proposition. When one does not know whether a proposition is true or false, the content of one's ignorance is a proposition. Demircioğlu agrees. When one knows that a proposition in true, but is ignorant of the fact that makes it true, the content of one's ignorance is still a proposition. In both cases the proposition in question is inostensible for the agent. In the former case, it is inostensible because the agent does not know whether it is true or false (and therefore does not know its referent), and in the latter case it is still inostensible given that the agent does not know the fact to which it refers (though he or she knows that it refers to a fact). That a term may be inostensible in these two different ways is easier to see when we consider definite descriptions. The description "the closest planet to Earth on which there is intelligent life" is inostensible (most likely for all us) given that we do not know whether it has a referent, but the description "the cause of dinosaur's becoming extinct" is also insotensible for anyone who does not know what it refers to even if they know that it must have a referent (given that they know that dinosaurs existed in the past, but no longer do so, and that it has a cause). Something similar takes place when we consider full sentences; one may be ignorant as to whether a sentence refers to a fact (when one does not know whether it expresses a truth or falsity), or one may know that the sentence does refer to a fact (when one knows that it expresses a truth) but is ignorant of the fact to which

it refers. (This is based on a theory of truth and falsity that I am currently working on in a new book project: a sentence is true just in case it refers, and is false just in case it fails to refer.) I agree that that fact-ignorance may be taken as a special instance of objectual ignorance, but still we should not forget that it has propositional content. One reason why I wish to make the distinction this way is because one may have objectual ignorance of a fact even if the content of their ignorance is not propositional. This would be the case for instance if someone were to say "hey, did you hear what happened yesterday" and I have no idea to what fact she is talking about. In these cases reference to a fact is enabled by a definite description rather than a full sentence (i.e. "the fact my friend is talking about"), and therefore is not propositional.

The most pressing objection that Demircioğlu puts forth has to do with the distinction between objectual and propositional ignorance:

> Let us call the thesis that for every case of objectual ignorance, there is a case of propositional ignorance with which it can be identified *propositionalism about ignorance* (shortly, *PI*) … Inan is right that the fact that eliminating propositional ignorance eliminates objectual ignorance does not imply that objectual ignorance is the same as propositional ignorance. However, the question that calls for an answer is what it is that explains *that* fact: why does eliminating propositional ignorance eliminate objectual ignorance? The question receives a straightforward answer if PI is true. Inan's account, on the other hand, owes us an answer. (Demircioğlu 2016: 311)

I agree that propositional knowledge can eliminate one's ignorance even if the content of one's ignorance is not propositional (though in most cases such knowledge has to be ostensible). My emphasis here is on the *content* of ignorance though, or to be more precise, the *content of awareness of ignorance*. It seems wrong to claim that when you are ignorant where your keys are, and your keys are in fact in the bathroom, then the content of your ignorance can be captured by the proposition that your keys are in the bathroom. After all this may not even have occurred to you. If not, then what you were aware of was not your ignorance that your keys were in the bathroom. If what Demircioğlu calls *propositionalism about ignorance* were to be correct, it would follow that being aware of your ignorance where your keys are, would be the same thing as being aware of your ignorance that they are in the bathroom (assuming that it is true). This simply cannot be correct. When you are curious about where something is, (or who someone is, or why something happened etc.) and you have no hypothesis about the correct answer, then you cannot express your curiosity as a whether-question, and consequently you cannot express your ignorance in terms of a proposition whose truth value you seek. Indeed, once you come to know that your keys are in the bathroom your ignorance as to where your keys are will be eliminated, and your curiosity will be sated. This in no way shows that you were curious about whether your keys were in the bathroom. If it never occurred to you that your keys were in the bathroom, not even as an unlikely hypothesis, then you were simply not curious

about whether the keys were there. Of course you were ignorant that your keys were in the bathroom, but you had no awareness of this. It simply follows then that the ignorance of which you are aware that led you to be curious where your keys are, was not your ignorance concerning the proposition that the keys are in the bathroom. To repeat, the fact that objectual ignorance can be eliminated by the acquisition of propositional knowledge does not show that objectual ignorance is also propositional. Demircioğlu seems to agree with this, but he thinks that I owe an explanation. My explanation is that when you have objectual curiosity there is a corresponding inostensible term, and one way of converting that term into an ostensible one is to acquire propositional knowledge. When you find your keys in the bathroom, two things happen simultaneously; one is that by observing the whereabouts of your keys you convert your inostensible term "the location of my keys" into an ostensible one, and the other is that you gain propositional knowledge of the fact that the keys are in the bathroom. It would not be correct to claim that propositional knowledge always has this affect.

Reply to Fuš

Mirela Fuš, in her interesting paper, argues that objectual curiosity has propositional content, which I strictly wish to deny. She claims that when Holmes is curious about who murdered Smith, he believes that someone murdered Smith, which of course has propositional content. For some reason she thinks that this belief statement is a "translation" of the original statement that attributes curiosity to Holmes. I cannot think of any sense of "translation" that would make her claim true. Curiosity-attribution is one thing, belief-attribution is another. It may be said that when Holmes is curious about who murdered Smith, he presupposes that someone is the murderer. But that expresses what he presupposes, it definitely does not express what he is curious about. In fact, by presupposing that someone murdered Smith, Holmes may be curious about things other than who the murderer is. For instance, if Holmes is curious about where the murderer is, he again may presuppose that someone is the murderer. Furthermore, it is not clear to me that in order to be curious about who the murderer is, Holmes must believe that someone is the murderer. If the evidence Holmes gathers at the scene does not rule out the possibility that Smith was assaulted, or perhaps committed suicide, and if Holmes thinks that the evidence slightly favors the murder scenario, but not strong enough for him to come to believe that Smith was in fact murdered, then he may merely presuppose this without believing it. (For a more detailed discussion of this see Inan (2012), Chapter 11-Presuppositions of Curiosity.)

There is an interesting footnote in which Fuš mentions an objection due to Timothy Williamson:

> Timothy Williamson (in personal discussions) pointed out that what is going completely astray with Inan's strategy is that he is focusing all the time

> on *belief* when the curiosity has to do with *knowledge*. For example, Williamson strongly disagrees with the above claim that "Curiosity can only take place when we come to realize the fallibility of our beliefs" (Inan 2014: 145). He believes that somebody who has no awareness of their own fallibility can also be curious, let's say, about what is inside of the box. For if you don't know what is inside the box, you can still have a desire to know what is inside the box. This is for Williamson a result of his commitment that curiosity acquires a desire to acquire knowledge. However, for the sake of argument, I will proceed with Inan's notion about one's realization of one's fallibility. (Fuš 2016: 317)

This appears to be based on a misunderstanding of my claim "Curiosity can only take place when we come to realize the fallibility of our beliefs" (Inan 2014: 145). Perhaps I should have been a bit more careful in making this statement in the way that I did. I did not mean to suggest that for every instance of curiosity the subject has a belief, which he or she realizes to be fallible. First of all, I made this statement within a context in which I was discussing propositional curiosity, and not objectual curiosity. Coming to realize the fallibility of our beliefs is a precondition only for propositional curiosity. Secondly note that the statement contains the notion of belief in the plural and not in the singular. That is because it expresses a general precondition for propositional curiosity. It can be paraphrased as: only those beings who have the capacity to reflect on the fallibility of their beliefs can enjoy propositional curiosity. Otherwise it would be wrong to claim that in order for one to be curious about whether such-and-such is the case, one must come to realize that their belief that such-and-such is the case is fallible. That is because the curious subject may simply not hold such a belief. In order to be curious about whether there is life on other planets, you need not believe that there is life on other planets, in which case "coming to realize the fallibility of your belief" would not be applicable. In fact, as I have argued in the same paper, one may believe that such-and-such is *not* the case, and still be curious about whether such-and-such is the case. Despite the fact that Williamson's objection is based on a misreading of what I said, I was nonetheless pleased about it, because it adds support to my contention that not every instance of curiosity is propositional. The example cited by Fuš, that is being curious about what is in the box, is an instance of objectual curiosity. I am in full agreement with Williamson that this not need involve an awareness of the fallibility of any particular belief the subject has. This appears to show that Williamson agrees with me that not all curiosity is propositional.

In her paper Fuš brings up another very interesting issue, which unfortunately I never got a chance to deal with, at least not in print. This has to do with what may be called meta-curiosity, that is curiosity whose object is one's own mental state. I take it that what Fuš calls "horizontal versus vertical dynamics" addresses this issue. This involves curiosity about one's own beliefs, desires, knowledge, etc. and

even one's own curiosity. If one does not have privileged access to one's own mental states, in the sense that one's beliefs about their own mental states may at times be fallible, then it should be the case that one may enjoy curiosity with regard to one's own mental states. This is indeed a very interesting issue and I am grateful to Fuš for bringing it up. Questions such as "what do I feel now?", "do I love her?", "do I sincerely believe that this year will be better than the last?", or even "am I really curious about whether there is liquid water on Mars?", in certain contexts, may perhaps legitimately express one's curiosity. There is obviously a lot more to be said about this.

Reply to Šuster

Now another form of meta-curiosity is one that is about, not an object, but a concept. Danilo Šuster addresses this issue in his engaging paper and discusses it in length. In fact, Šuster is not convinced that such instances of meta-curiosity can be handled by my theory of inostensible conceptualization. He appears to be inclined to think that there may be other cases of curiosity as well which do not fit this model. Before we get to these other cases first let us look at what Šuster has to say on meta-curiosity.

> Can we also be curious about something we are at the time unable to conceptualize, to describe with an inostensible term? According to Inan (2012: 65), "if we cannot express our curiosity by a definite description, then we really have not expressed a precise question that captures our curiosity." This sounds plausible—the inability to conceptualize one's inquiries is often a sign of confusion and one's search in the dark. But not always. We are able to ascend to higher levels and ask meaningful questions about curiosity itself. We can be curious about the very conditions for the cognitive contact with reality: What representations to use? How to conceptualize a certain problem? What definite descriptions to use? Why should these questions not be allowed as the proper focus of curiosity? (Šuster 2016: 333)

To substantiate his point Šuster provides us with a nice example:

> Let me illustrate some of these points with the help of a science fiction novel, *His Master's Voice* (HMV), by Stanislaw Lem (published in 1968, English translation 1984). Its main topic, I would say, is *scientific curiosity*—scientists are trying to decode, translate and understand what *seems* to be a message from extraterrestials (specifically, a beam of neutrinos with regularities from the *Canis Minor* constellation) … Two years of intensive curiosity were mostly spent on formulating the proper questions for inquiry—how to conceptualize the strange phenomenon, what kind of inostensible terms to use. The initial question, I suppose, was just—what is *this*? And then the focus shifted to the hypothesis that the observed regularities constitute a message. This was just a provisional, hypothetical conceptualization, typical, I would say, for certain foundational scientific investigations. Inan might say that the main question of curiosity was: "What is the meaning of the signal?" with "the meaning of the signal" as the inostensible term, standing for … what, exactly? Meanings make for very strange objects, even more so than facts (just consider the eternal search for "the meaning of

> life"). In the scenario by Lem, this question comes very close to the question of meta-curiosity: "How to represent the strange phenomenon?" (Šuster 2016: 334)

Such cases of curiosity cannot be subsumed under an inostensible concept according to Šuster:

> Object level curiosity about X is based on our ability to conceptualize X, to introduce inostensible terms ("the X?") and look for their referents. Meta-curiosity is curiosity about these very representations: how to conceptualize the problem? What descriptions to use? What inostensible terms to introduce? Again, one could always introduce inostensible terms, such as "the conceptualization of this problem." Here, also, the inostensible reference seems to be just a different name for the problem. True, meta-curiosity is on the brink of confusion, but this is sometimes just a different name for a philosophical puzzlement. (Šuster 2016: 339)

First let me note that, under my theory, though meta-curiosity is a special case that involves certain forms of higher-order conceptualization, even instances of ordinary first-order curiosity that can be expressed in language also typically involve meta-cognition. When Holmes is curious about who murdered Smith, we assume that he is aware of his ignorance of what the referent of the term "Smith's murderer" is. The content of the description is what I take to be a singular concept. Holmes is then aware of his ignorance of the referent of this concept which requires him to attribute a property to it, which I take to be the property of being inostensible. Curiosity that involves awareness of ignorance of the referent of a concept always requires one to attribute a property to that concept, namely the property of its being inostensible. In that sense curiosity expressed by a simple who-question does involve second-order predication. Nonetheless it is not an instance of meta-curiosity given that its object is a person and not a concept. Curiosity expressed by a whether-question on the other hand is more abstract, in the sense that its object is not an object, but a property. Being curious whether *there is life on other planets* requires one to reflect on this thought and to become aware of their ignorance about whether it corresponds to reality. In simple terms what they seek is whether it has the property of *being true*. If we take meta-curiosity to be the kind of curiosity which is directed toward not an object but a concept, we should conclude that curiosity expressed by a simple whether-question is also an instance of meta-curiosity. It is highly important to come to realize that beings that do not have the capacity for such forms of meta-cognition cannot enjoy curiosity as such. Now coming to the sort of meta-curiosity that Šuster mentions. When we experience a phenomenon which we cannot even recognize to be falling under any familiar sortal-concept we may become curious about how to represent the phenomenon in question. If we were to detect a signal that appears to be coming from outer space, we may be totally in the dark as to what it "means". Granted that a description such as "the meaning of the signal", in such a case, appears to be too vague or indeterminate to serve as a useful inostensible term.

If we cannot specify any kind of entity as possibly being the referent of such a term, then it is not clear what we are curious about. Now if this is indeed a case in which there is curiosity, but there is no proper inostensible term that represents the object of curiosity as Šuster claims, then it should follow that the question "what are we curious about?" should have no definite answer. If so, then it seems to me that the mental state of the subject who raises the question cannot properly be said to be one of curiosity. It may be mere perplexity, or perhaps some may wish to call it "proto-curiosity". A more primitive version of such a case could take place when an animal, or even a human in the early stages of evolution, comes across something unusual and unexpected and cannot make any sense of it. One may get a feeling of *wonder* in such a situation, in the sense of being astonished or perplexed, but this does not amount to curiosity. Now putting aside Lem's novel, it seems to me that when the experts at NASA receive some unusual signal as such, they are not merely perplexed or astonished, but in fact curious. Given their linguistic skills, and their capacity for meta-cognition, they would be in a position to represent the unknown by an inostensible term that is a lot less vague and indeterminate than a phrase such as "the meaning of the signal". They could be curious about what its cause is, or whether it is being transmitted by some intelligent beings or whether it s caused by, say, an electromagnetic field which they have not been able to detect yet etc. Similarly, when one asks what the meaning of life is, but is unable to explain to us what it is that they seek in asking this question, then I would be inclined to think that they are simply confused. Mere confusion, perplexity, or astonishment does not amount to curiosity. Now in those types of cases that Šuster mentions, one may raise the simple-sounding question "what is it?". Such an interrogative may acquire different contents depending on the context. It may, for instance, be used to ask what *kind* of phenomenon it is. Here the inostensible term would then be "the kind of phenomenon the signal belongs to". Such a term need not be vague or indeterminate. Beings that do not possess a language, or those that do not have a meta-concept like *kind*, cannot construct such an inostensible term, and hence cannot be curious about what kind of phenomenon they are experiencing. Perhaps what worries Šuster is that the kind of phenomenon in question may be something that we are totally unfamiliar with. It may very well be the case that we have no prior concept for such a kind. Is there any paradox here? No! If the phenomenon in question is of a novel kind, then simply by constructing the inostensible description "the kind of phenomenon the signal belongs to" we are able to represent the kind in question, though only inostensibly. Later if are lucky enough to determine the kind in question, we could be in a position to grasp this kind ostensibly.

Šuster's gives another interesting case:

> An example might be a quote from Galileo (*Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, cited in Lambie 2014: 46):

> ... considering that everyone who followed the opinion of Copernicus had at first held the opposite, and was very well informed concerning the arguments of Aristotle and Ptolemy, and that on the other hand none of the followers of Ptolemy and Aristotle had been formerly of the Copernican opinion... I commenced to believe that one who forsakes an opinion which he imbibed with his mother's milk and which is supported by multitudes, to take up another that has few followers ... must of necessity be moved ... by the most effective arguments. This made me very curious to get to the bottom of the matter. (Šuster 2016: 329)

Šuster takes Galileo's curiosity here to be an instance of meta-curiosity:

> One way to understand Galileo's "This made me very curious to get to the bottom of the matter" is precisely as a question of meta-curiosity: how to approach a certain problem and what concepts to use? (Šuster 2016: 333)

I am not sure whether Šuster's interpretation of Galileo's curiosity is historically accurate, but assuming that it is, once again I see no problem with it. A meta-representation by the use of an inostensible term such as "the way to approach the problem" or "the concepts to use in dealing with the problem" is perfectly fine; note that once again beings that do not possess the concept of *ways of approaching a problem*, or the concept of a *concept*, will not be in a position to construct such inostensible terms even if they have a language. On the other hand, I am not convinced that Galileo's curiosity was of this kind. It seems more plausible to assume that when Galileo wished to get to "the bottom of the matter", given the context, what he wanted to know were "the facts that settle the dispute between the Ptolemaic and the Copernican theory". If so, then what Galileo was curious about were those very facts, which he must have thought will settle the dispute in favor of the Copernicans. To generalize, when there is a dispute between two rival theories on an important topic, one may be curious as to what the facts are that would reveal which of the two theories is the correct one. Now clearly in such cases the object of curiosity is not very specific, but the fact remains that there is an inostensible term whose referent is being sought. To appreciate the value of this all one needs to consider is to think of people or animals who are unable to conceptualize facts and therefore are unable to construct such an inostensible term and be curious about its referent. Whenever there is dispute concerning an issue which we care to know it is a privilege to possess the capacity to reflect on which view is correct and what facts would settle the issue in favor of it.

Perhaps the most important type of case that Šuster has doubts about how it can be accounted for by my theory concerns why-questions. Here is what he has to say on the matter:

> Well, *reasons*, *causes* and *ways* make for strange referents. First of all, what kinds of *entities* are we talking about? Inan says nothing about the referents of terms for reasons and causes. So let me try with a plausible hypothesis… we might try to postulate *facts* as candidate referents for inostensible terms referring to unknown reasons and causes…. Why was it Europeans who

> conquered the world rather than the Chinese? It turns out that Europe had an optimal intermediate degree of fragmentation (a too-unified society is a disadvantage, and a too-fragmented society is also a disadvantage). Difficult to pin this down as "the object of the inostensible concept… Of course, there is always an inostensible description available for any "Why X?" question. A simple "the reason for X" or, even more general, "the explanation of X" can be postulated as the unknown referent, whatever that might be. But this is just like saying that the "epistemic file" on X has been opened, but there is nothing in it, or that a file has been created without any descriptive content. (Šuster 2016: 331–332)

Why-questions are notoriously difficult to analyze. Sometimes we ask for a cause, sometimes a reason, and yet at other times we ask for an explanation without committing ourselves to whether that involves a cause or a reason or a combination of the two. Furthermore, the notions of cause, reason and explanation are also highly interest-relative; what counts as a good explanation of why something happened may differ from person to person, and even from context to context for the same person. Curiosity expressed by a why-question is then equally difficult to treat. As Šuster notes I have refrained from going into a detailed analysis of why-curiosity; but this was not due to an oversight on my part. Rather being aware of the difficulties involved, I decided to set it aside so as not to get entangled in technical discussions on the notions of cause reason and explanation in general. The purpose of the book was to give a theory of curiosity in general; it was not to analyze each and every form of curiosity in detail. Of course it would have made the book a lot richer had I been able to allocate a separate section on why-curiosity, but it was simply too difficult a task to undertake. There is after all a large philosophical literature on causes and reasons and ones who specialize on the topic could do a better job on it. In fact, by utilizing the notion of inostensible reference one can write a whole book on why-curiosity with all its different forms. Now having said all this, I still think that Šuster's criticism is missing a very important point. That is as vague and indeterminate and interest-relative and context-dependent as it may be, still the notions of cause and reason are precious concepts which allow us to raise why-questions, and more importantly they allow us to become curious about why something happened. To appreciate the significance of this all we need to do is to consider those beings that do not possess the concepts of cause and reason, for instance some animals, perhaps all, or small children who have not yet acquired a language. It seems to me to be extremely implausible to hold that such beings can in fact be curious as to why some event took place, or why someone performed the action that they did. Can a dog, for instance, be curious about, say, why you ate treating her badly, or an infant be curious about why her mother's milk tastes different this time? Granted that animals and infants do show certain emotional responses in such cases when something unexpected happens; they may be surprised, or be perplexed, but none of these emotions can be iden-

tified with curiosity concerning causes and reasons. Aristotle, in the beginning of his Metaphysics, proclaims that all philosophy starts with wonder which is what leads us to ask why-questions. Had there been another creature on earth which had the capacity to ask why-questions out of curiosity, they too would have had at least the capacity to do philosophy and science. There appears to be no evidence for this.

Šuster writes:

> I do not think that all questions of curiosity can be reduced to the quest for objectual knowledge so masterfully covered in Inan's book. "Why?" of causes, reasons and explanations cannot be (easily) accommodated in this model, even less so our desire for understanding. True, one can always coin inostensible descriptions like: "the explanation of this strange fact." But, in this case, inostensible reference seems to be just the name of the problem and not the proper solution. (Šuster 2016: 333)

I must have to disagree with Šuster here; it seems to me that the ability to construct an inostensible term such as "the explanation of this strange fact" is one that can be possessed only by those kinds of beings who have not only mastered a language, but are also advanced enough to grasp higher-order epistemic concepts such as explanation. It may very well have been the case that in the early stages within the evolutionary process of language our ancestors lacked this ability given that their language had not sufficiently developed to include a term for the notion of explanation. That is perhaps why the emergence of science and philosophy had to wait for many millennia to come even when our ancestors spoke a fully recursive language.

Another problematic issue that Šuster rightly brings up has to do with our curiosity expressed by sentences that contain logical operators and connectives:

> There is a familiar conundrum in the area of truthmakers—are there distinct kinds of facts corresponding to logically complex truths, such as negations, disjunctions, generalities? Are there *negative* facts, such as the fact that there is no life on Jupiter's moon—presumably the answer to the question: "Is there any life on Jupiter's moon?" Also, causes and reasons are often disjunctive: why did the accident happen? Because Fred omitted to take precautions. What kind of empirical object (fact) is to be found in the world as the referent for Fred's omission? Omissions are wildly disjunctive. (Šuster 2016: 330–331)

I must admit that in my book on curiosity I have not been able to give a complete account of how each and every instance of curiosity expressible by a term containing a logical operator can be subsumed under an inostensible concept. I think I did a fairly good job in handling curiosity expressed by conditional and disjunctive questions (see Chapter 2 in Inan (2012)), but I was unable to put forth a detailed account of curiosity expressed by terms containing quantifiers, and perhaps more importantly, my treatment of curiosity involving negations was at best scratching the surface of an issue that I now consider to be vital in our efforts to understand what truth is. After the publication of my

book I have been working on exactly this topic which has now turned into a book manuscript. Given the depth of the issue it is by no means possible for me to give a satisfactory answer to Šuster here, but I can at least give you a rough idea how I now treat such cases. By utilizing Frege's notion of a reference-shifting operator I hold that for every sentence that contains a logical operator, the terms within the scope of that operator refer not to their customary referents but to their contents. For instance, the sentence "the earth is not flat", when we give negation wide-scope, does not refer to a negative fact; rather it refers to the thought *that the earth is flat,* and says of it that it does not corresponding to reality—which I take to be a special form of failure of reference. Such a sentence, given that it expresses a truth, does refer to reality, but its referent is, not an empirical fact, but rather what I call a "content-state". When one is curious about whether the earth is flat, the object of curiosity is a property of a thought. In such a case the proposition that the earth is flat is inostensible, given that our subject does not know whether it refers to a content-state—in which case it is true—or whether fails to refer—in which case it is false. Disjunctions, conditionals, quantified sentences can also be handled in a similar fashion, though their analyses is more complicated than negation.[2]

Reply to Yiğit

With regard to the distinction I have made between ostensible and inostensible propositional knowledge Safiye Yiğit comes up with a very interesting objection:

> For Inan, there are two ways in which a true propostion can be inostensible for a subject, in the first case the subject does not know whether the proposition is true, and in the other case the subject knows that the proposition is true, i.e., it refers to a fact, but the subject does not know the fact which makes the proposition true. This latter case gives rise to "inostensible knowledge", in which the subject merely knows that there is a fact, but does not have sufficient experience of the fact so as to make it ostensible. On the other hand, one's knowledge could be deemed "ostensible knowledge" if all the terms that are contained in the given proposition are ostensible to the speaker; that is, if the speaker knows the referent of the terms in the proposition. On the contrary, in inostensible knowledge cases, for Inan, there is at least one term in the sentence that is inostensible to the subject. He even claims that "the degree of ostensibility of a whole declarative sentence is also a function of the degree of ostensibility of its constituent terms", which comes to mean that if all the terms in a sentence are ostensible to a subject, the sentence is also ostensible. However, I would like to allow for another possible way of having inostensible knowledge, which is perhaps the least noticed one of the inostensible knowledge cases. In this second case, one knows that the proposition expressed by the sentence is true, and one has ostensible knowledge of all the terms in a sentence, but the proposition as a

[2] I discuss these issues in length in my book manuscript (*Truth As Reference and Falsity As Failur*e) currently under review for publication.

> whole is still inostensible to the subject. In other words, one knows that "a is F", and both a and F are ostensible to the subject, but the knowledge of the proposition as a whole is still inostensible. (Yiğit 2016: 344)

In defense of her position Yiğit gives the following example:

> For instance, one may think that the sentence "war is painful" is ostensible to a subject since both the concepts 'war' and 'painful' are ostensible for the subject and he knows the proposition to be true. But it might turn out that the fact the proposition as a unity refers to is not actually ostensible to the subject. (Yiğit 2016: 344)

Even if one's experience of wars and one's experience of pain, taken separately, can be considered to be sufficient to make the term "war" as well as the term "painful" ostensible in their idiolect, it may, according to Yiğit, be the case that they have little or no experience of a war's being painful. In such a case though each and every term within a sentence is ostensible for the subject, the whole sentence may still be inostensible even when they come to know that it expresses a truth. This would then be a case in which there is inostensible knowledge of the proposition that war is painful, though the two constituent concepts of the proposition are ostensible for the subject. To put it in ordinary language, one may know what war is, and one may know what it is for something to be painful, but one may nonetheless not know the painfulness of wars. If so, then my thesis that when one knows a proposition, the degree of the ostensibility of the sentence that express that proposition is a function of the degrees of the ostensibility of its constituent terms. Perhaps some may think that one drawback of the example that Yiğit gives is that it appears to be too subjective (i.e. the painfulness of war). This should not be worry though, since if what she says is correct other examples can be given to support her claim that are far less subjective. You could come to know, for instance, that the sun is setting in Perugia, if a friend tells you this on the phone, but you may still wonder about it. You may have experienced sunsets in the past, and you may have seen Perugia and know a lot about it, but you may never have experienced the sunset in Perugia, or even if you have, you may still be curious about the sun setting in Perugia now. It seems that in such a case though both the terms "Perugia" and "sunset" are on the far side of the ostensible end of the scale for you, "the sunset in Perugia now" would still be closer to the inostensible end, as indicated by the fact that you may be curious about it. Once again this would be a case in which you would know that the proposition in question is true, though you would have little acquaintance with the fact that makes the proposition true. This would then be another case of inostensible propositional knowledge. Yiğit's argument then shows that the degree of ostensibility of a sentence is not *merely* a function of the degrees of ostensibility of its constituent parts. So I stand corrected.

In these cases of what I take to be inostensible propositional knowledge, Yiğit suggests that we may use another epistemic verb in place of *to know*.

> Peculiar as it might sound, one suggestion could be to adopt the use of "testify" rather than "know" whenever one merely has inostensible propositional knowledge. In other words, at the entrance of the stairway to knowledge, one should perhaps be aware that one is not entitled to say one "knows" the proposition yet, or else one should at least realize that "to know" is gradable and it is possible to increase the quality of his knowledge. So, the use of "testify" should be seen as an attempt to raise the standard of knowledge rather than a vain effort to change language. Accordingly, if I were lucky enough to have ostensible knowledge of the beauty of love, this would stipulate me to say "I know that love is beautiful"; however, being lucky enough not to have experienced the painfulness of war in my life so far, I should perhaps say that "I testify that war is painful" rather than "I know that war is painful". (Yiğit 2016: 346–347)

As I understand the reason that Yiğit prefers to appeal to the verb to testify rather than to know is because in such cases the subject does not have direct experience of a fact though he or she knows that the fact exists, and a typical way in which this could happen is when the subject knows that the fact exists by testimony. If there is such a thing as knowledge by testimony, it is usually the type of knowledge that I call inostensible. However not all inostensible knowledge is based on testimony. You may, for instance, know that the shortest spy is a spy, not because you have heard from some reliable source, but simply by inferring it from your background knowledge that there are spies, and no two people are exactly the same height. You may come to know that 98th prime number is odd, not by being told that it is so, but by inferring it from your background knowledge that all primes except 2 are odd. If you do not know who the shortest spy is, or what the 98th prime number is, then you do not know the facts that make these propositions true, though you know that they are true. In these cases, it would be wrong to say that you know these propositions by testimony. This is one reason why to testify cannot replace to know in all cases of inostensible knowledge. There may in fact be languages that use two separate epistemic verbs for the distinction between ostensible and inostensible knowledge, but it seems that English is not one of them. There are languages such as Turkish that distinguish between the two cases in reporting an event not by appealing to two separate verbs, but by using two separate modes of past tense. If you have witnessed the event in question you use one mode, but if you haven't, you use another.

Reply to Günhan Altıparmak

The fact that within the somewhat wide literature on the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement there has been very little discussion on curiosity is another good indicator of the resistance researchers have had, even if it is not at a conscious level, to philosophize on curiosity. Arousing curiosity within a P4C session is so important and central that the success of the session may be measured in terms of it. After all the purpose of a P4C session, as Irem Günhan Altıparmak nicely puts

it, is not to try to *teach* children philosophy, but rather to facilitate discussion that arouses their interest and curiosity. One normally would have expected that within the P4C literature the significance of arousing curiosity in the minds of the child is emphasized and discussed. It seems to me that Günhan Altıparmak's contributions to this effect will be very valuable. What I find most impressive in her approach is her willingness to develop new concepts. In one of our engaging discussions two novel concepts emerged that appear to be vital in laying down the criteria to determine what makes a P4C session successful. One of them is the concept of *curiosity arouser*, which relates to Lipman's notion of attention grabber; this is such a useful notion not just for P4C but for all academic work on curiosity not just within philosophy, but also other related disciplines such as psychology, cognitive science as well as both theoretical and applied educational sciences. The other concept that Günhan Altıparmak makes use of is that of *joint curiosity* which is a special instance of the notion of joint attention, widely used especially in Cognitive Science. This notion is not just an extremely important one for our discussions concerning P4C but it has a wide area of applications. It relates to issues that could be addressed by social psychologists and even sociologists, as well as cognitive scienctists; furthermore, it seems to me that it is one that would have a good use in our efforts to understand the origins of human cultures especially the rise of the sciences and philosophy. I hope and expect that with Günhan Altıparmak's efforts these two concepts will become a part of the standard P4C terminology.

Reply to Arslan

Aran Arslan dwells upon an issue that has been bothering me for quite a while. Whether a term is ostensible or inostensible for a subject is an epistemic issue that has to do with the subject's epistemic link to the referent of that term. Prima facie the distinction appears to have no semantic significance, that is whether a term is ostensible or inostensible appears to have no bearing on what proposition is expressed by a sentence which contains that term. It should not make any difference what a definite description such as "the capital of Rwanda" expresses when it appears in a sentence whether we know or don't know its referent. What we understand when we grasp the meaning of the term "the capital of Rwanda" within a sentential context ought to be independent of whether we have spent all our life in Kigali, or whether we know nothing about this city—except perhaps that it is the capital of Rwanda. The content of a term should remain unaffected by the epistemic connection a subject has to its referent. If the ostensible/inostensible distinction had semantic significance, then it would have followed that when a speaker asks "what is the capital of Rwanda?" out of curiosity, the term would mean something different from what it would mean after she finds out the answer. Furthermore, it would

have followed that two people using the same description in discourse could mean different things by their use of that term if the term is ostensible for one and inostensible for the other. Suppose, for instance, a Rwanda native living in Kigali is conversing with an American who is quite ignorant about this country; and the American asks: "what is the capital of Rwanda?" If our Rwandan guy takes the utterance of the interrogative to be sincere, then he can easily deduce that the guy does not know what the capital is, which would imply that the description is inostensible. It would have been extremely weird for our Rwandan guy to even entertain the idea that the term "the capital of Rwanda" means something different for the American given that he does not know its referent. Normally speakers of a language do not have any training in the philosophy of language, nor do they need it to have a normal daily conversation. Quite naturally our Rwandan guy will take the term to mean whatever he means by it when he uses it. For singular terms such as definite descriptions it seems to me to be extremely implausible to hold that the ostensible/inostensible distinction has any semantic significance. When we consider general terms, however, things perhaps are not that clear. For instance, when the term "helium" was first introduced as the chemical element causing a certain bright yellow line in the solar spectrum, very little was known about it, making the term highly inostensible in the idiolects of even the most experienced chemists. After helium was discovered our knowledge of this element got richer and richer, bringing us closer and closer to the ostensible end of the epistemic scale. Did this epistemic progress have any impact on what the term "helium" means? I am inclined to think not, but I am sure that there is more room for disagreement here compared to the case of definite descriptions. It seems to me that the concept of *helium* that we use today is the same concept that was introduced by Edward Frankland and Joseph Lockyer before this element was even discovered. Arguments on the other side may be given. For instance, a Kantian may disagree by claiming that the concept of helium "expanded" (a metaphor used by Kant himself) the more we learned about it. I find such views very problematic, though of course I cannot deal with the matter in more depth here.

As Arslan mentions there appear to be some special contexts in which the distinction may be said to have semantic significance. Years ago in my doctoral dissertation I had very briefly considered such contexts without committing myself to any view on the matter, and in my book I intentionally set these cases aside and did not discuss them in detail. I am grateful to Arslan for bringing this puzzling issue back to my attention. Now the contexts we are talking about here are cases in which a name is introduced by description for an object that the reference-fixer has no experience of. Both the new name as well as its reference-fixing description would then have to be inostensible for the reference-fixer. Taking the worn-out example once again, we assume

that Le Verrier introduced the name "Neptune" by fixing its referent through the description "the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus", which at the time referred to a planet that was unknown to him, making both the description, as well is the name introduced in terms of it, inostensible in his idiolect. Now it is important to acknowledge that, as Arslan notes "[b]efore its empirical discovery, the name 'Neptune' was an inostensible term for Leverrier", though "[a]fter the discovery, he could fix the referent of the name by ostension." We are of course assuming that the planet that we nowadays call "Neptune" does in fact perturb Uranus, and if so, the name before the discovery referred to the same planet that we later discovered. After the discovery the earlier reference-fixing description lost its special status; that is because we now are in a position to point to Neptune, through its image we receive on a telescope, and re-fix the reference of the name by ostension. Now it would appear that the following sentence would express a truth for Le Verrier when the name was inostensible, but later after the discovery when the term became ostensible the very same sentence expresses a falsity.

> "It is certain that if Neptune exists, then it is the planet causing the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus."[3]

I too was once convinced, just like Arslan, that in these special epistemic contexts the ostensible/inostensible distinction bears a semantic significance. Yet I now find the whole issue quite puzzling, so much so that I refrain from adopting a position.

Reply to Miščević

In his illuminating piece Nenad Miščević forcefully argues that "curiosity is the foundational epistemic virtue", a view to which I am very sympathetic. There is hardly anything he says that I would wish to argue. Perhaps there is only one issue which may be a source of disagreement. Miščević proclaims that "truth is the primary goal", a view that he has defended in previous papers as well (see his (2007)). This however, should be taken with some caution, for Miščević argues in length that "mere true belief is not the fundamental bearer". That is because, on his view, knowing is more valuable than merely having a true belief. Once again I totally agree. Nonetheless I am reluctant to accept that truth is the primary goal. Now it may be the case that for beings likes us who have a language that contains declarative sentences and the concept of truth, reaching truth is important and valuable. In that sense it may be taken to be a goal. However, saying that it is "the primary goal" seems to suggest that it is essential, in the sense that for any epistemic agent with a language reaching truth ought to be the agent's goal. This I wish to deny. The reason is that I reject the

[3] See Inan (2012) *Chapter 12 Limits of Curiosity and Its Satisfaction* for a more detailed discussion of this and similar examples.

idea that the concept of truth is essential to language. Language may have evolved differently in such a way that its basic syntactic unit to think about reality is not a declarative sentence but rather something different. Such a language would not contain the concept of truth. An example of such a possible language is what I call "Whenglish" which is a language just like English though it contains not sentences but wentences which are what we would normally call the nominalizations of our sentences. Whengllish is a full-fledged language; it has compositionality and recursion, and it has all the resources to do whatever we do with English, science, philosophy mythology etc. A Whenglish philosopher would never argue that truth is the primary goal, given that the language does not contain the concept of truth. Rather than saying that the earth is round, Whenglish speakers use its wentence equivalent "the earth's being round". While we care about our sentence "the earth is round" being true, Whenglish speakers care about their wentence "the Earth's being round" having a referent. In their language the primary epistemic goal would be, not truth, but reference. In more recent work I have argued in length that truth is nothing but a very special form of reference. Given all this I am inclined to think that if anything is the primary epistemic goal, it is reference, and not its subspecies truth. In this sense I believe that truth is overvalued. Same goes for propositional knowledge. If truth is not essential to language, neither is propositional knowledge. Whenglish does not contain propositions, given that it does not have truth-bearers. They too have the notion of knowledge, but only in its objectual mode. While we know that the earth is round, Whenglish speakers know the earth's being round. This is why I believe that objectual knowledge is far more important than propositional knowledge. Though a significant portion of Miščević's essay is dedicated to the discussion of why having propositional knowledge is more valuable than having a merely true belief, he does address the issue in terms of reference and objectual knowledge:

> I have been telling the story in terms of propositional knowledge, but it can be retold in terms of objectual curiosity and knowledge, dear to Inan. So, in the story retold, you are interested in who the new president of Croatia is. You have an inostensible description of him/her, namely "the new president". What you want is a more ostensible information, let say the name. (with all the problems that go with it, listed and brilliantly analyzed by Inan in 2012: 142 ff, in connection with the name "Kigali"). Now, with the practical joke I actually gave you the right information, its Kolinda. Still, you are not satisfied, after you hear about my actual ignorance at the time of giving the info. What is needed is the package deal: *ostensible information with some guarantee of reliability*. I cannot defend the fully isolated true belief (except going the Martin Luther WAY: here i stand and believe, ich kann nicht anders!). (Miščević 2016: 410–411)

The distinction between mere true belief and propositional knowledge can be applied to one's epistemic status with regard to the referent of a designator. In Miščević's example our subject gets the unreliable

but true information that the new president of Croatia is Kolinda. In such a case the subject may believe that the term "the new president of Croatia" is ostensible in his idiolect, in case he believes that he knows that the new president is Kolinda. Assuming that he is not justified in believing that the new president is Kolinda, this term would then actually be inostensible, making his belief that it is ostensible false. We then have a very special instance of the issue concerning whether knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. Is having the knowledge what the referent of a term is more valuable than merely having a true belief about it? Pritchard would have to say "no" (see his (2011)), and Miščević disagrees. I am inclined to side with Miščević here. In terms of various practical concerns there would indeed be no difference in value between the two cases. If our subject is, for instance, a journalist who is going to write a column in his daily concerning the elections results, it would not matter whether the term "the new president of Croatia" is actually ostensible or not. It would seem that he would produce exactly the same column regardless of whether he has an unjustified true belief that the new president is Kolinda, or whether he actually knows this. But as Miščević notes, when our subject finds out that his source was unreliable, he would be dissatisfied; in fact, a journalist would be greatly disappointed in such a case: Not only that he would never trust his source again, but he would certainly feel great relief that he was accidently given true information and did not make a fool of himself. Though it makes no difference whether the term "the new president of Croatia" is ostensible or inostensible in his idiolect at the time he writes his column as long as he gets its referent right, it does make a big difference with regard to his attitudes and emotions after he finds out later that the description was in fact inostensible. The difference can also be put in terms of curiosity. When our journalist finds out that his source was unreliable and comes to realize that he does not know that his belief that the new president is Kolinda is true, he would become curious who the new president is. Having an unjustified true belief is better than having a false belief, but it is still a form of ignorance, and awareness of this ignorance will give rise to curiosity (given that our subject has an interest in the topic.) Now, of course, one may object that if our journalist never finds out that his source was unreliable, it would seem that there would be no difference between him merely having a true belief and him actually knowing that the new president is Kolinda.

Acknowledgments

I owe my foremost gratitude to Nenad Miščević for bringing out this volume which came out of a week of a series of talks on *The Philosophy of Curiosity* in Maribor which he wonderfully organized. I thank all the authors for their contributions; I found philosophical joy in reading their articles and to reflect on the precious ideas contained in them. It

gives me great pleasure to see that philosophers have finally started paying more attention to philosophical questions concerning curiosity, a trend which I strongly hope and expect to continue to rise in the near future.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Apraxia, *Appearances, and Beliefs: The Pyrrhonists' Way Out*

FILIP GRGIĆ
Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb, Croatia

*According to the objection of inactivity (*apraxia*), the skeptics cannot live their skepticism, since any attempt to apply it to everyday life would result in total inactivity, while any action they would perform* qua *skeptics would be a sign that they abandoned their skepticism. In this paper I discuss the ancient Pyrrhonists' response to the objection as is presented in the writings of Sextus Empiricus. Sextus argues that the Pyrrhonists are immune to the* apraxia *objection because it is based on the misunderstanding of their position, that is, on the wrong assumption that they live in accordance with philosophical* logos*. To live in accordance with philosophical* logos *includes two things. First, it includes the idea that one should apply one's philosophical tenets, concepts and recommendations to ordinary human life and use it as a practical guide. However, the only item that survives skeptical philosophy, appearance, is not used in this way: its role as criterion of action is different. Second, it includes the idea that ordinary human life can be, and should be, described in philosophical terms. However, the skeptics refuse to describe their actions in philosophical terms. More specifically, they refuse to describe their actions in terms of beliefs: from the Pyrrhonists' point of view, the question "Do you have beliefs?" is misplaced, since any answer to it, affirmative or negative, is as credible as any other, since it is about something non-evident.*

Keywords: Appearances, *apraxia*, beliefs, Pyrrhonism, Sextus Empiricus.

The objection of inactivity (*apraxia*) has been one of the most serious and the most famous objections to ancient skepticism. In a nutshell, the objection is that the skeptics cannot live their skepticism, since any attempt to apply it to everyday life would result in total inactivity, while any action they would perform *qua* skeptics would be a sign that they abandoned their skepticism. The objection is important not only because it looks like an elegant, simple and convincing refutation

of skepticism, but also because the skeptics' response to it can tell us much about how to understand their position.[1]

Ancient Pyrrhonism, which was considered a particularly radical form of skepticism, was especially liable to this objection. The Pyrrhonists say that for any way in which something appears to one, or for any appearance, there is an opposing appearance, and that, due to the equipollence of the opposed appearances, they suspend judgment about whether things are such as they appear.[2] Such a position straightforwardly invited the *apraxia* objection. The Pyrrhonists' opponents objected that the skeptic is thus reduced to total inactivity, "staying fixed like some vegetable" (Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Ethicists* [*M* 11] 11.162), since suspending judgment precludes him from making any choice or avoidance.[3]

Sextus insists that the Pyrrhonists' position is immune to the *apraxia* objection, for two reasons. First, he says that the Pyrrhonists attend to appearances, which are their criteria of action. Second, he insists that the *apraxia* objection is misplaced because the Pyrrhonists are able to choose and avoid things in accordance with everyday life or "non-philosophical practice."[4] In this paper I want to clear up some interpretative problems with such a response. In Section 1 I will discuss Sextus' most elaborate treatment of the *apraxia* objection (*M* 11.162–6). My aim is to show that Sextus' response to the objection in this passage leaves open two questions: first, how is it possible to call the Pyrrhonist life "non-philosophical" if it is governed by a philosophical recommendation that we should suspend beliefs?; and second, what exactly is included in attending to appearances? In Section 2 I will tackle the latter question. In my opinion, both attending and assenting to appearances should be understood negatively, as not being able to reject them. Correspondingly, appearances are the skeptics' criteria of action in a minimal sense, namely, because they are the only items that survive both the Pyrrhonists' theoretical inquiries—for, they are not the objects of theoretical inquiry—and their practical life—for, all appearances that a Pyrrhonist receive remain untouched, i.e. she does not select one of them as being more persuasive and reject the others. Section 3 will address the notorious question of whether the Pyrrhonists have beliefs. I will try to show why, from the Pyrrhonists' point of view, this question is misplaced. As a consequence, suspension of

[1] For an illuminating recent discussion, see Vogt (2010). See also Striker (1980).

[2] "Appearances" here are taken in a wide sense, including not only the objects of perception but the objects of thought as well. For such a use of "appearance," see Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (*PH*) 2.10, *Against the Logicians* (*M* 7 and 8) 8.362; see also Frede (1973: 809–810); Burnyeat (1997: 39).

[3] Translations from *Against the Ethicists* and *Against the Logicians* are by Bett (1997) and (2005) respectively, while translations from *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (*PH*) are by Annas and Barnes (2000), occasionally with modifications.

[4] For the first reason, see *PH* 1.23, 237; *M* 7.30; for the second, see *M* 11.165; *PH* 1.226, 231; 2.102, 246, 254.

beliefs does not enter into the explanation of skeptics' action. It only explains why they fare better than the dogmatists and why they are able to achieve tranquility.

Hopefully, these considerations will help us to make sense of Sextus' claim that those who make the *apraxia* objection "do not understand that the skeptic does not live in accordance with philosophical *logos*" (*M* 11.165). They wrongly assume that the Pyrrhonists use appearances as action-guiding principles, in a way in which the doctrinal philosophers use their criteria; and they do not see that the Pyrrhonists refuse to describe their actions in terms of beliefs. Hence, in a sense, Sextus responds to the *apraxia* objection by trying to show that the Pyrrhonists are in a position to refuse to engage with it.

1

Sextus' most elaborate discussion of the *apraxia* objection is found in *Against the Ethicists* (*M* 11.162–6):

> Hence one also needs to look down on those who think that [the skeptic] is reduced to inactivity (*anenergēsia*) or to inconsistency (*apemphasis*)—to inactivity, because, since the whole of life is bound up with choices and avoidances, the person who neither chooses nor avoids anything in effect renounces life and stays fixed like some vegetable, and to inconsistency, because if he comes under the power of a tyrant and is compelled to do some unspeakable deed, either he will not endure what has been commanded, but will choose a voluntary death, or to avoid torture he will do what has been ordered, and thus no longer "Will be empty of avoidance and choice," to quote Timon, but will choose one thing and shrink from the other, which is characteristic of those who have apprehended with confidence that there is something to be avoided and to be chosen. In saying this, of course, they do not understand that the sceptic does not live in accordance with philosophical *logos* (for as far as this is concerned he is inactive), but that in accordance with non-philosophical practice (*kata tēn aphilosophon tērēsin*) he is able to choose some things and avoid others. And if compelled by a tyrant to perform some forbidden act, he will choose one thing, perhaps, and avoid the other by the preconception which accords with his ancestral laws and customs; and in fact he will bear the harsh situation more easily compared with the dogmatist, because he does not, like the latter, have any further opinion over and above these conditions.

Sextus says that the Pyrrhonists do not live in accordance with philosophical *logos*. Philosophical *logos* includes dogmatic philosophical systems. More specifically, as is suggested by the words "further opinion" at the very end of the passage quoted, it includes the idea that action and passion involve holding beliefs about what is by nature good or bad.[5] Since the Pyrrhonists insist that they have no beliefs about what is by nature good or bad,[6] their opponents—doctrinal philosophers or

[5] This is the source of the dogmatists' disturbance: see *PH* 3.236; *M* 11.158–61.

[6] Sextus actually argues both that nothing is good or bad by nature (see *M* 11.68–95, 110, 118, 140; *PH* 3.178, 182) and that the Pyrrhonists suspend judgment about

dogmatists—conclude that they either do not choose or avoid anything (that they are inactive) or that, if they do, they abandon their skepticism (that they are inconsistent).[7]

An obvious response to such an objection is to reject the assumption that choosing and avoiding require beliefs about what is good or bad and to insist that the Pyrrhonists are able to choose and avoid things on different grounds. This is precisely what Sextus does in the passage: he says that the Pyrrhonists choose and avoid things in accordance with non-philosophical practice. Thus, if a Pyrrhonist under a tyrant's control refuses to commit some horrible act—say, to kill her parents—the account of what she has done does not include any consideration that has to do with a preferred or privileged status of some of her beliefs. She has just decided to save her parents because this is what her laws and customs tell her to do. In terms of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, she has decided to save her parents because doing so has appeared best to her. Her following laws and customs of her society is not based on any belief, but is, presumably, just a way of following appearances. This is why Sextus says that appearances are the skeptics' criteria of action (*PH* 1.22). There are two groups of problems with such a response.

(1) The Pyrrhonists suspend judgment about whether there is something that is by nature good or bad. Ordinary people, who are engaged in non-philosophical practice, do not suspend beliefs, and do not just follow appearances. Sextus is aware of the fact that ordinary people choose or avoid things because they believe that they are good or bad, and that non-philosophical practice is actually heavily permeated with dogmatic beliefs, especially political, moral and religious beliefs.[8] Hence, "non-philosophical practice" can refer only to life as it is after the Pyrrhonist reform, that is, after the Pyrrhonists have eliminated all beliefs from it. But then the question arises not only as to how such a life is possible but also why it can be called non-philosophical. For, one might object that to lead a life without beliefs is to be governed by a philosophical *logos*, that is, by a philosophical theory which recommends suspension of belief. To be sure, Sextus does not view Pyrrhonism as a philosophical theory, but rather as a kind of ability (*PH* 1.8). However, even if we grant this, it is still not clear how can the exercise of skeptical ability be called "everyday practice."

whether there is something good or bad by nature (see *PH* 3.182, 235). I need not enter into this complicated issue here. See Machuca (2011a).

[7] There are, of course, some important differences between the inactivity charge (or, as Vogt (2010: 166) calls it, the plant charge) and inconsistency charge, but they need not be discussed here.

[8] Thus he says that "both ordinary people and philosophers think ... that there is such a thing as good and bad ... yet are at war with one another as far as specifics are concerned" (*M* 11.44). Likewise, when introducing the first mode of Agrippa, he says that both ordinary people and philosophers are involved in disputes about the proposed problem (*PH* 1.165). See also Frede (1997: 22).

In other words, it seems that, even if the Pyrrhonists were able to show that life without beliefs is possible, they could not consistently maintain that they (a) live in accordance with common preconceptions of ordinary people; (b) suspend judgment about whether these preconceptions embody beliefs about what is good or bad by nature; and (c) nevertheless claim that they live in accordance with *non*-philosophical practice. Suppose, to take another example, that a Pyrrhonist lives in a society whose laws and customs forbid incestuous relationships. She will obey these laws and customs and will not engage in incestuous relationships, but she will suspend judgment about whether incest is something bad by nature, as she is aware of the opposing arguments, advanced by some members of the Stoic school, that incest is not objectively bad, but indifferent (see, for instance, *PH* 1.160, 3.205; *M* 11.192). However, her justification of the claim that she follows non-philosophical practice had better not include her suspension: for why would life which consists in obeying the laws and customs *and* suspending belief be considered non-philosophical, as opposed to life which consists in, say, obeying the laws and customs because of belief that they embody what is objectively good? The standards of what counts as non-philosophical practice cannot be ones that a non-philosophical community would not recognize as such, and it is hardly credible that in this regard the Pyrrhonists would fare differently from members of other philosophical schools. Hence, since they do have a position towards good and bad—suspension of judgment—which can be properly called philosophical (though not dogmatic), it seems that, if they hold (a) and (b), the Pyrrhonists cannot hold (c) as well.

(2) According to the skeptical stance presented in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, the skeptics just attend to appearances. The problem with this comes to light in the tyrant example, which serves to stress the inconsistency of the Pyrrhonists' position.[9] To stress the inconsistency of the Pyrrhonists' position, the (unknown) author of the objection could have pointed to *any* action performed by a Pyrrhonist and argued that it contradicts the Pyrrhonists' proclaimed lack of beliefs. In the quoted passage, he points instead to a very harsh situation: a person is forced into a condition over which she has no power. She must either commit a horrible deed, say, kill her parents, or refuse to do so and face up to death. Her situation is thus doubly uncontrollable: she is involuntarily put into this condition, and whatever she does, she is forced to do. She does not even have a choice between doing *x* and doing something else instead: she must either do *x* or refrain from doing *x*. But regardless of what she does—and this is the crux of the objection—she must make a choice and thus prefer one option over another. Stated in this way, the example stresses the epistemic predicament in which a Pyrrhonist, by attending to appearances, finds herself. She is also involuntarily exposed to appearances, and her assent to appearance is also passive.

[9] A similar example is found in Diogenes Laertius 9.108. See Bett (1997: 174–6).

However, her acting on appearance must involve a decision, since she does not have to act on that appearance. If it appears to the Pyrrhonist that it is hot, she cannot resist but must assent to this; but if she then moves to a colder spot, her action is preceded by a decision to act according to this appearance. Hence, assent to appearances is not sufficient for action, just as being involuntarily forced to commit a horrible deed or not is not sufficient for action. Thus, it seems that the tyrant example already presupposes the Pyrrhonist framework as is developed in the first book of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, and that the author of the example makes a further objection, namely, that to say that the Pyrrhonists just attend to appearances is not a satisfactory response to the *apraxia* objection because to assent to an appearance is not yet to act on it.[10] Sextus' laconic response to this further objection suggests that he thinks that it is also based on the misunderstanding of the Pyrrhonist position, and that the Pyrrhonists' insistence on attending to appearances does provide a satisfactory response. It has been left unexplained, however, what is included in attending to appearances so that they can serve as the criteria of action.

Thus, to appreciate Sextus' response to the *apraxia* objection, one should answer two questions: first, how is it possible to call the Pyrrhonist life ordinary, non-philosophical life, given that it seems to be governed by a philosophical recommendation that we should suspend beliefs?;[11] and second, how is it possible to live without beliefs, just by attending to appearances? These are big questions, especially the second, which is among the most debated topics in Pyrrhonian scholarship. I will attempt to show that both questions require a single answer. I will first, in Section 2, discuss Sextus' idea that appearances are the skeptics' criteria of action and then, in Section 3, address the notorious question of the skeptics' beliefs.

2

In the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* Sextus addresses the *apraxia* objection in his discussion of the criterion of skepticism:

> That we attend to appearances (*tois phainomenois prosechomen*) is clear from what we say about the criterion of sceptical persuasion. "Criterion" has two senses: there are criteria adopted to provide conviction about the reality or unreality of something (we shall talk about these criteria when we turn to attack them); and there are criteria of action, attending to which in everyday life (*kata ton bion*) we perform some actions and not others—and it is these criteria which are our present subject. We say, then, that the criterion of the sceptical persuasion is the appearance, implicitly meaning by this

[10] In saying this, I do not want to suggest anything about the complicated problem of the chronology of Sextus' writings.

[11] Or that suspension of belief is a matter of psychological necessity; for a recent discussion on whether suspension is to be understood psychologically or normatively, see Lammenranta (2008).

> the impression (*phantasia*); for it depends on passive and unwilled affections and is not the object of investigation. (Hence no-one, presumably, will raise a controversy over whether an existing thing appears this way or that; rather, they investigate whether it is such as it appears.) Thus, attending to appearances, we live in accordance with everyday practice (*kata tēn biōtikēn tērēsin*), without holding opinions (*adoxastōs*)—for we are not able to be utterly inactive (*anenergētoi*). This everyday practice seems to be fourfold, and to consist in guidance by nature, necessitation by feelings, handing down of laws and customs, and teaching of kinds of expertise. (PH 1.21–3)

At first glance, Sextus' point is clear: the Pyrrhonists are not inactive because they have criteria, appearances, on the basis of which they take or avoid some course of action. What is less clear, however, is in what sense exactly can appearances be called criteria. Sextus says that appearances are criteria of action, "attending to which in everyday life we perform some actions and not others."[12] As opposed to the elaborate distinction of various senses of the criterion of truth (*PH* 2.15–6; *M* 7.31–4), he is silent about what it means to say of something that it is criterion of action.[13]

The criteria of truth, which the Pyrrhonists repudiate, are supposed to discriminate between what is real and what is not real, or between what is true and what is false. Correspondingly, we can assume that the criteria of action should serve as guides in the Pyrrhonist's life by discriminating courses of action which she will take and those which she will avoid, that is, that they are judges in cases of conflicts. Such an account, however, is not satisfactory as it stands. We may grant that the Pyrrhonist will follow appearance when it is in conflict with some doctrinal belief. We may also grant that, faced with the conflict among appearances, she will not turn to a higher judge or authority to resolve it, but will adhere to appearances themselves. It is not clear, however, how she will decide which appearance she should follow.

Sextus' discussion might suggest that his account of the fourfold regime of everyday life is meant, among other things, to delineate a domain of appearances which are in accordance with non-philosophical practice or everyday life and which will guide the Pyrrhonists' actions.[14] Sextus goes on:

[12] See also *M* 7.29; at 7.30 appearance is said to be the criterion of choice and avoidance.

[13] His discussion of Arcesilaus' (*M* 7.158) and Carneades' (*M* 7.166–89) criteria of action is not of much help either. Brennan (2000: 67–9) argues that the four elements of everyday practice (*PH* 1.23–4, discussed below) are conceived by Sextus as criteria of action (Brunschwig 1994: 236 is more cautious), but the text does not support this. Sextus does suggest (*M* 7.33) that the first two groups of the criteria of truth ("every measure of apprehension," e.g. sight, hearing, and taste, and "every technical measure of apprehension," e.g. cubit, scales, ruler, and compass) are "the everyday" (*biōtika*) criteria, but they should not be confused with the criteria of action.

[14] Thus, for instance, Vogt (2010: 174): "Not every passively experienced impression guides the sceptic's action. Rather, only those passively experienced impressions that go along with an ordinary way of leading one's life do so. Thus, appearances can do the work of a practical *criterion*."

> By nature's guidance we are naturally capable of perceiving and thinking. By the necessitation of feelings, hunger conducts us to food and thirst to drink. By the handing down of customs and laws, we accept, from the everyday point of view, that piety is good and impiety bad. By teaching of kinds of expertise we are not inactive in those which we accept. (1.24)

So, on this interpretation, being affected by the object of perception or thought; being hungry or thirsty; following laws and customs (or, more generally, common preconceptions); following instructions in arts—these are all ways of how one can be appeared to in accordance with everyday life, and it is by attending to *these* appearances that the Pyrrhonist lives. Moreover, it may be argued that the above account of the fourfold regime stresses the passivity which characterizes the Pyrrhonist's attitude toward appearances: just as she involuntarily assents to appearances, so she is a passive subject of natural and societal forces.

There are two problems with this interpretation. First, such an interpretation leaves open the question what the Pyrrhonist will do in cases in which all relevant appearances belong to this supposedly acceptable, action-guiding domain of appearances. For, in such cases, no appearance is privileged so that it can serve as a judge. We may grant that, if it appears to the Pyrrhonist (a) that she is hungry and that there is a sandwich in front of her, and if it also appears to her (b) that a philosophical argument to the effect that three-dimensional bodies (or external world, for that matter) do not exist is sound, then she will certainly assent to (a), which belongs to the class of "everyday practice." But she may also be torn between conflicting appearances which both belong to this class: she may be hungry and passively attracted to the sandwich but also accustomed to involuntarily follow a law that forbids her to eat on this particular day.

Second, the only ingredient of the fourfold regime that can be straightforwardly understood on the model of what is going on in involuntary receiving appearances is the second on Sextus' list, necessitation of feelings. Sextus himself makes this clear in his discussion of the relationship between Pyrrhonism and the Methodical school in medicine (*PH* 1.237–41). One similarity between the two schools concerns the fact that the Methodics follow appearances in their practices. To explain the similarity, Sextus first reminds the reader that the Pyrrhonists follow the fourfold regime of everyday life (1.237), and then argues that "everything which the Methodics say in this vein can be brought under the necessitation of feelings, either natural or unnatural" (1.239). Thus, he clearly distinguishes the necessitation of feelings from other ingredients of the fourfold regime, thereby suggesting that a correspondence between what is going on in receiving appearances and holding on to the fourfold regime exists only as far as this ingredient is concerned. Furthermore, when speaking of the nature's guidance, he is not referring to the involuntariness by which the Pyrrhonists are affected by the objects of perception and thought, but to the plain fact that we are beings naturally endowed with the capacities for percep-

tion and thought. The same holds for handing down of customs and laws: the emphasis is only on the fact that the Pyrrhonists live in a particular human society, and not on the process by which they internalize its laws and customs. Finally, "by teaching of kinds of expertise we are not inactive in those which we accept" does not suggest that it is the special kind of training—which consists, perhaps, in automatically following the instructions or something like that—that enables the Pyrrhonist to be an expert in her profession. It rather suggests only that the Pyrrhonists are engaged in various kinds of expertise and that this is due to the instructions they receive just as anyone else.

Hence, appearances are not criteria because they are judges in cases of conflicts. In addition, the fourfold regime of everyday life is not meant to be a list of privileged kinds of appearances, that is, those which are action-guiding for a Pyrrhonist. It is rather a list of typical human characteristics and activities which a Pyrrhonist performs without beliefs, just by attending to appearances. To see in what other sense the appearances can be called criteria, we should consider in what sense the Pyrrhonists "attend to" (*prosechein*) to them.

In the preceding chapter (1.19–20), Sextus has offered several arguments against those who say that the Pyrrhonists reject appearances. The chapter on criteria quoted above, judging from its first sentence ("That we attend to appearances is clear from what we say about the criterion of skeptical persuasion"), seems to be a continuation of that discussion. Sextus suggests that a further reason to insist that the Pyrrhonists do not reject appearances is the fact that they are the Pyrrhonists' criteria of action. Moreover, the only explanation of the Pyrrhonists' attending to appearances and of their being criteria of action found in the chapter on criteria is in terms of the Pyrrhonists' inability to reject them: in 1.22 Sextus just restates his reasons why the appearances cannot be rejected from the previous chapter (1.19). Hence, it seems that attending to appearances should be understood negatively, as not being able to reject them. Indeed, this is also the way in which *assenting* to appearances is understood by Sextus. Assenting to an appearance is not described in terms of forming a mental item (like belief) or in terms of acting according to appearance, but in terms of inability to reject it: if it appears to the Pyrrhonist that *x* is *F*, her assent to this seems to consist only in her inability to say "I think that it does not appear to me that *x* is *F*."[15] Thus in *PH* 1.13 (more fully discussed below, pp. 453–6) Sextus says: "The sceptic assents to the affections forced upon him in accordance with impression—for example, he would not say, when heated or chilled, 'I think I am not heated (or: chilled)'."

In view of this, it may seem strange to say that appearance is the Pyrrhonist's *criterion* of action. For, we would expect that criterion of

[15] Hence, I do not agree with Vogt when she says: "in his positive description of what the sceptic does in forced assent, Sextus does not cite an utterance, or a kind of belief; he cites an action. The sceptic drinks, rather than saying 'I am thirsty'." (Vogt 2012: 657) But I agree with her overall conclusions.

action proposed by a philosophical school to be an item to which an adherent of the school can positively attend in her everyday life and which can serve as a guide in action. Obviously, if there is nothing more to attending to appearances than not rejecting them, then the Pyrrhonists' appearances cannot be such criteria. In what sense, then, can they be called criteria?

There is a difference between the Pyrrhonists' and the dogmatists' attitude toward appearances in action. The dogmatist, in a sense, also cannot reject the appearance: if it appears to him that he should save his parents, he cannot say "I think that it does not appear to me that I should save my parents." However, he lives according to a philosophical *logos*; thus, in order to make a choice between conflicting appearances, he will apply his own criterion of action and investigate, as Sextus would put it, "what is said" (*PH* 1.19) about each of the appearances, to see which one of them is action-guiding in accordance with the criterion. As a result, he will, in a sense, reject one of the appearances, in that he will act according to another; his philosophical *logos* will, as Sextus would put it, "snatch the appearance from under his very eyes" (1.20).

The situation of the Pyrrhonists is rather different. The Pyrrhonist philosophy consists of continuous inquiry (*PH* 1.1–3), that is, of making oppositions of appearances and thoughts which lead to suspension of belief. Hence, their philosophy cannot provide a guide or standard which they can apply in their practical affairs. Indeed, any attempt to directly implement Pyrrhonist philosophy in ordinary life would render them inactive.[16] At the same time, they do not want to insulate their philosophy from ordinary life. Pyrrhonism cannot avoid being understood as a recommendation as to how to live, especially because it aims to show how to achieve a tranquil life.[17] Hence, to engage in practical life *qua* Pyrrhonist philosophers, they can only hold to something that is not subject to their inquiries, and these are the appearances. For, in theoretical contexts, when discussing the so-called non-evident things, the Pyrrhonists do not investigate appearances, but what is said about appearances (*PH* 1.19). Hence, just as the dogmatists' criterion, whatever it is, remains free of dogmatic scrutiny, so the Pyrrhonists' appearances also remain free of skeptical scrutiny.

The appearances survive not only the Pyrrhonists' theoretical inquiries but their practical life as well. In practical contexts, all appearances the Pyrrhonist receives remain untouched, since she does not investigate what is said about them. Suppose it appears to the Pyr-

[16] Sextus actually warns that Pyrrhonism may lead to inactivity: see *PH* 1.226: they follow ordinary life "in order not to be inactive"; see also *M* 7.30: the skeptics must have some criterion of choice and avoidance "so as not to be completely inactive and without any part in the affairs of life."

[17] That the idea of insulation of skepticism from life cannot be found in ancient world is forcefully argued by Burnyeat (1997a), who insists that insulation is "a phenomenon of our time" (94). See also Bett (1993), who argues that things are more complicated. In Grgić (2011) I argue for a qualified version of insulation.

rhonist that her ancestral laws and customs require that she should save her parents and that it also appears to her that, because of the tyrant's cruelty, she cannot save them. She will assent to both of these conflicting appearances—for, she cannot reject either of them—but she will act on only one of them. The difference between the dogmatist and the Pyrrhonist concerns the fact that the reason why the Pyrrhonist has chosen, say, to save her parents has nothing to do with philosophical *logos*. Since the Pyrrhonist does not investigate what is said about appearances to see which one is true or more persuasive given some further epistemic or moral standards, she can just say that she has chosen to save her parents *because of her ancestral laws and customs*. The dogmatist cannot say just *that*; he will appeal, tacitly or explicitly, to some further criterion and hence live according to philosophical *logos*.

3

Another ingredient of Sextus' description of the Pyrrhonists' life is their living *adoxastōs*. To live *adoxastōs* is to live without *doxasta*; and *doxasta* are not just any beliefs, but heavily loaded doctrinal beliefs. In particular, they are beliefs based on judgments about something's being good or bad by nature (*M* 11.142).[18] Now, the dogmatists would strongly object to the very idea of leading an ordinary life without holding *doxasta*. They would insist, for instance, that it is not possible to live happily without doctrinal beliefs about the universe, gods, or human nature. Moreover, they might object that, after the doctrinal beliefs have been removed as in a Pyrrhonist life, a kind of life that would result could not be called ordinary, since some of these beliefs, especially moral and political beliefs, are so deeply rooted that to abandon them is to abandon ordinary way of living and to live governed by certain philosophical assumptions.

These are serious objections to Pyrrhonism. The Pyrrhonists' life certainly differs from life of other people, since other people do not live without opinions. However, if the dogmatists were to base the *apraxia* objection on this characteristic of the skeptical life, the Pyrrhonists would have a ready answer. For, it is at this point that they could make a dialectical maneuver and say that, just as they may be required to account for the possibility of living *adoxastōs*, so the dogmatists may be required to account for the possibility of a life based on *doxasta*. Then they might say that since there is an undecidable dispute among philosophers about everything *doxastos*, the dogmatists are left without

[18] See *M* 11.141–2: "Of things which are said to be good and bad ... some are introduced by opinion (*kata doxan*), some by necessity. By opinion are introduced whatever things people pursue or avoid in virtue of a judgment (*kata krisin*)." When Sextus says that the Pyrrhonists' goal is tranquility in matters of opinion (*en tois doxastois* or *en tois kata doxan*) and moderation of feelings in things forced upon us (*PH* 1.25, 26, 30), by "matters of opinion" he means primarily "things which according to opinion are good or bad"; see *M* 11.144, 147.

a foundation from which they could argue that living *adoxastōs* is impossible. In other words, they might insist that the dogmatists should first identify a set of beliefs necessary for life, and since they heavily disagree about that, their objection is baseless.

While Sextus does have resources for such a dialectical strategy, he does not use it in a straightforward manner. However, its weaker version is found in *Against the Ethicists* 114–8, where he argues that adopting the dogmatists' framework entails either inactivity or disturbance. For, suppose, with the dogmatists, that choosing *F* and acting on it include the belief that *F* is good by nature, and suppose, with the Pyrrhonists, that there is an undecidable dispute among philosophers about what is good by nature. Now, if the belief of every party of the dispute is true, then it is true to believe that *F* is good and also true to believe that *F* is not good, and this, if we accept the dogmatists' assumption, makes life impossible. On the other hand, if it is only the belief that *F* is by nature good that is true, then *apraxia* is avoided, but life based on this belief is full of disturbance, as Sextus regularly insists (*PH* 1.27–8; *M* 11.112–7). Hence, if, as a dialectical concession, the dogmatists' framework is adopted, the best policy is to suspend judgment about whether there is anything good by nature.

The doctrinal beliefs—beliefs based on certain theoretical assumptions—are not the only kind of beliefs. There are also common-sense or non-doctrinal beliefs, which do not seem to entail dispute. In addition, the terms "belief" and "to believe" may be used to refer to various sorts of things. In standard sense, to believe is to take something to be true. But there is also a looser sense, according to which to believe is just to be disposed to act in a certain way. *Prima facie* there seems to be no reason why these other kinds or senses of belief could not be ascribed to the Pyrrhonists. Consider, for instance, the following passage by Michael Frede:

> If someone steps into the house, and we ask him if it is still raining outside, and he, without hesitation, answers that it is, we would regard this as an expression of his belief that it is still raining. ... There is no reason to suppose that the sceptic, if asked such a question, would not answer either yes or no; and there is no reason to suppose that the sceptic would mean anything different by his answer than anyone else. ... It is true that the sceptic does not believe that it is *really* still raining. His answer is not grounded in some insight into the true nature of things, an insight such that reason could not but give the answer it does. ... His answer, rather, tells us only what seems to him to be the case; if we ask *him*, that is how it strikes him. In this respect, his answer does not differ from that of the man on the street. (Frede 1997: 22)

If we characterize the Pyrrhonists' life as a life governed by common-sense, everyday, or non-doctrinal beliefs, along the lines of Frede's account, then Sextus' response to the *apraxia* objection amounts to saying that the dogmatists wrongly think that the skeptics do not hold common-sense beliefs, which are sufficient for action. On the other

hand, if we don't ascribe to them such beliefs, then the question recurs of how it is possible to live without them. Hence, we should address the notorious question of whether the Pyrrhonists have non-doctrinal beliefs.[19]

A key text to consider is in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.13–5, where Sextus discusses the question "Does the skeptic dogmatize (*dogmatize-in*)?" This passage may be taken to suggest—and it has been taken in this way by some scholars—that there is a sense of the term "*dogma*" in which it refers to non-doctrinal belief which can be ascribed to the Pyrrhonist, so that her mental life is, after all, describable in terms of certain kind of beliefs (see e.g. Frede 1997). Sextus says:

> When we say that sceptic does not dogmatize, we do not take "*dogma*" in the sense in which some say, quite generally, that *dogma* is acquiescing (*to eudokein*) in something; for sceptic assents to the affections forced upon him in accordance with impression (*tois gar kata phantasian katēnankasmenois pathesi sunkatatithetai*)—for example, he would not say, when heated or chilled, "I think I am not heated (or: chilled)". Rather, we say that sceptic does not dogmatize in the sense in which some say that *dogma* is assent to some non-evident object of investigation in the sciences; for Pyrrhonist does not assent to anything non-evident. (1.13)

On the one hand, Sextus' main objective in the passage is negative: he wants to argue that the Pyrrhonists do not dogmatize. Since the Pyrrhonists make certain assertions about philosophical *dogmata* and, moreover, themselves propose certain formulas (e.g. "I determine nothing") which may give the impression that they are forms of dogmatizing, it is important to him to make it clear that these practices do not count as signs of dogmatizing, and that in this respect, Pyrrhonism differs from other kinds of philosophy. In addition, which is perhaps a minor point, Sextus' discussion in the first book of the *Outlines* is very methodical and organized, with chapters proceeding in an orderly manner. At the end of the preceding chapter, he says that the Pyrrhonists' method of putting accounts in opposition has as its result the fact that they do not dogmatize (1.12), and a reasonable sequel of this is to ask what it exactly means to say that they do not dogmatize.

Yet, on the other hand, such an organization may suggest that Sextus has in mind a positive agenda as well. For, in the next two chapters he discusses whether the Pyrrhonists belong to a school (*hairesis*) (1.16–7), do they study natural science (*phusiologein*) (18), and, as we have seen, what is the criterion of their skepticism (21–4). The Pyrrhonist position on these questions depends, among other things, on senses of the terms *hairesis*, *phusiologein* and *kritērion*: in certain senses, they do belong to a school, study natural science and have a criterion, and in other senses not. Moreover, he says (1.16) that the Pyrrhonists' position on the question of whether they belong to a school is

[19] The literature on this topic is vast (see Frede 1997; Burnyeat 1997; Barnes 1997; Brennan 2000; Fine 2000; Perin 2010; Vogt 2012). A recent survey is found in Morison (2014).

similar to their position on the question of whether they have *dogmata*, and likewise with the question of their studying natural science (1.18). This might suggest that Sextus' objective in 1.13–5 is not to deny that the Pyrrhonists are dogmatizing, but to establish that in one sense of the term "*dogma*" they do have *dogmata* and in another they do not.

Note, however, that the sense in which one might say that the Pyrrhonists dogmatize is not explained in positive terms. Unlike his accounts of the Pyrrhonist school, their pursuing natural science and having a criterion, Sextus does not say that, since *dogma*, in one sense of the term, is a certain kind of assent, and the Pyrrhonists do give such an assent, they therefore have *dogmata*. He also does not say, as one would expect if he really wanted to say something positive about Pyrrhonist *dogmata*, that, since to express the assent is to say "I think (believe) (It seems to me) that *p* (that I am affected in *p*-way)," the Pyrrhonists normally use such phrases and thus, in a sense, dogmatize. Rather, he says that they "would *not* say, when heated or chilled, 'I think I am *not* heated (or: chilled)'" (see on this Barnes 1997: 75; Vogt 2012: 656). Thus there is an important difference between this and those other cases.

It is obvious, as Sextus stresses a little later (1.13), that the Pyrrhonists do not have beliefs about the so-called non-evident things, that is, roughly, things which can be known only by means of other things. Can they have beliefs about evident things, or those that can be known by means of themselves, like the fact that it is day or that I am writing? It seems that they cannot, for several reasons.

First, the distinction between evident and non-evident things is of dogmatic origin (cf. *PH* 2.97), and the Pyrrhonists need not be committed to it. But even if they make a concession to the dogmatists and accept the distinction, they can insist that they cannot have beliefs about evident things simply because the dogmatists make everything non-evident. This is because the dogmatists maintain that nothing is in fact known by means of itself, but always by means of other things, say, affections that it produces in us: "when fire has been brought to me and I have been warmed, I take the condition in me as a sign that the externally existing fire is warm" (*M* 7.365). Hence, since warmness of fire needs a sign to be known, it is a non-evident thing and Pyrrhonists cannot have a belief about it. Moreover, even if, as a further concession, the Pyrrhonist admits that there are some evident things, then, to have beliefs about them, she should have a criterion on the basis of which she would assent to some of them as true (see on this *PH* 2.95; *M* 7.25; see also Barnes 1997: 77–8). The Pyrrhonists, however, suspend judgment about whether there is a criterion of truth. Hence, they cannot have beliefs either about evident or about non-evident things, and since the distinction between evident and non-evident things is exhaustive, the Pyrrhonists cannot have beliefs about things. Furthermore, Sextus also says that if you hold a belief, then you posit (*tithetai*) the object of belief as real (*PH* 1.14). It is not quite clear what is the exact mean-

ing of "posit" here. However, it seems natural to suppose that positing something is preceded by assent. Since the Pyrrhonists do not assent either to non-evident or, as we have seen, to evident things (given the dogmatists' criteria for being an evident thing), and the domain of what is real is exhausted by the evident and the non-evident, they do not posit anything as real, and hence, do not have beliefs. Finally, if—given the dogmatists' criteria—to believe is to take something as true, then the Pyrrhonist, to believe something, must at least have some concept of what is true, or about the truth-bearer. Yet the Pyrrhonists insist that they cannot have such a concept, because of the unresolvable dissent that exists among the dogmatists (*PH* 2.80–94; *M* 8.1–140).

One might object that such line of reasoning can show only that it is the dogmatists, not the Pyrrhonists, who cannot have beliefs (see on this Brennan 2000: 67). For, if one assumes that having a belief includes a host of background ideas such as the classification of things in evident and non-evident, the need for a criterion of truth, resolved dispute over the truth-bearer, etc., then indeed one cannot have beliefs, including such ordinary beliefs that it is day or that I am writing. If one consistently follows these dogmatic requirements for having a belief, then neither the dogmatists nor, indeed, anyone else can have beliefs. Likewise, for instance, if one follows what the dogmatists say about human beings, it would follow that human being is inconceivable or even does not exist (*PH* 2.22–33). For, to have a concept of human being, there should be an agreement among the dogmatists about the definition of human being, and about the body and the soul, but there is no such agreement. This, of course, does not prevent the Pyrrhonists and ordinary people, who are not committed to philosophical conceptions of human being, body and soul to say of themselves and of others that they are human beings. Likewise, both the Pyrrhonists and ordinary people can have a belief that it is day or that I am writing because they are not committed to the dogmatists' requirements for having a belief. It is the dogmatists who, by advancing contentious theories, abolish beliefs, human beings and other ordinary things.

These considerations may be taken to support the idea that, after all, there may be a sense in which the Pyrrhonists have beliefs. While their beliefs need not include the ingredients required by the dogmatists' account, they must include *something*, and this cannot be subject to skeptical scrutiny. Indeed, this seems to be assent, for the Pyrrhonists, as Sextus says in the passage quoted, "assent to the affections forced upon them by appearances" (1.13). Hence, it seems that the Pyrrhonist's belief includes only assent. As I have said, a comparison with the neighboring chapters from the beginning of the *Outlines* may suggest that Sextus' objective is not only to identify the sense of the term "*dogma*" according to which it is not true to say that the Pyrrhonists dogmatize, but also to maintain that they do have *dogmata*. To have a *dogma* is to assent to something, and the Pyrrhonists assent to their affections; hence, they have beliefs about their affections, or about how

they are appeared to (see Fine 2000; Perin 2010: 59–85).

There are two groups of reasons that speak against such a conclusion. Some are specific and some are more general.

Note, to begin with specific reasons, that the Pyrrhonists may be seen as being caught in a trap. On the one hand, they unqualifiedly insist that they do not dogmatize: this is the conclusion of the previous chapter of the *Outlines* (1.12). On the other hand, as Sextus says, the most general sense of the term "*dogma*" is "assent" or "acquiescing" (1.13), and the Pyrrhonists, of course, cannot quarrel with this. Hence, if they unqualifiedly insist that they do not dogmatize, they seem obliged to admit that they do not assent to anything, which makes their position hopeless.

There are two ways in which the Pyrrhonists may evade the trap. They may admit that, by giving assent, they have *dogmata*. Sextus, however, does not say this; more importantly, he can easily avoid such conclusion, by admitting that the Pyrrhonists give assent (by not rejecting the appearances, as we have seen in Section 2) but suspend judgment about whether their assent should count as *dogma*. For, *dogma* is a non-evident thing, as there are several different definitions of it found near the beginning of the *Outlines* ("acquiescing" (1.13), "assent to some non-evident object of investigation in the sciences" (*ibid.*), "assent to something non-evident" (1.16)). Hence, an affirmative answer to the question "Do Pyrrhonists dogmatize?" will be given only by those dogmatists who think that *dogma* includes only assent. Sextus cannot *deny* that Pyrrhonists dogmatize, since the question of what should count as *dogma* is still open for him. For the same reason, he cannot give the affirmative answer either.

This leads to some more general reasons why we should be suspicious of the idea that the Pyrrhonist position can be described in terms of beliefs, regardless of how exactly we understand the notion of belief. As we have seen, this idea is supported by the fact that the Pyrrhonists are not obliged to accept the dogmatic requirements for believing something. These requirements make a cluster of closely connected notions: the notion of the distinction between evident and non-evident things, the notions of the criterion of truth, reality, truth-bearers, etc. There is no reason why we shouldn't include in this cluster the notion of belief as well, which is also theoretical notion like other notions in the cluster. For, if we argue that the Pyrrhonist is not committed to the view that there is a criterion of truth to believe something, then there is absolutely no reason why we could not argue that she is not committed to the view that beliefs, of any kind, play a role in account of human life. From the Pyrrhonists' point of view, the question of their dogmatizing is misplaced. It is the dogmatists who insist on answering the questions "Do Pyrrhonists dogmatize?" or "Do they believe that it is day?" because it is they who take it for granted that the notion of belief is indispensable in the explanation of human action. The Pyrrhonists

do not share that view. They may say that any answer to these questions, affirmative or negative, is as credible as any other, since it is about something non-evident.

4

Thus, Sextus' aim is to challenge the very idea that human life should be described in terms of beliefs. If a Pyrrhonist says that she lives without beliefs, or that she takes some course of action and avoid other without beliefs about what is good or bad by nature, we can take her to mean one of two things. On the one hand, she can be taken to mean that she has psychological resources other than beliefs to perform ordinary human actions. If this is what she has in mind, then she has a difficult task to show that it is indeed possible to live in this way and that such a life is not based on a philosophical *logos*. I do not think that this is what Sextus is doing. On the other hand, she can be taken to mean that she refuses to describe her actions in terms of beliefs because such a description is philosophical *logos*, and this, I believe, is all that Sextus intends. To say that a Pyrrhonist's choice to save her parents is in accordance with non-philosophical practice is just to say that there is a perfectly good explanation of her action which is not based on any of the dogmatic theories of human action. The explanation of her action includes only her decision to act in accordance with customs and laws, but *not* the fact that she suspend beliefs. Suspension of beliefs, as far as the Pyrrhonist's practical life is concerned, explains why she fares better than the dogmatists and why she is able to achieve tranquility.

Hence, the Pyrrhonists are immune to the *apraxia* objection because it is based on the misunderstanding of their position, that is, on the wrong assumption that they live in accordance with philosophical *logos*. To live in accordance with philosophical *logos* includes two things. First, it includes the idea that one should apply one's philosophical tenets, concepts and recommendations to ordinary human life and use them as a practical guide. However, the only item that survives skeptical philosophy, appearance, is not used in this way: as I have tried to show in Section 2, appearances are criteria of skeptical practice in that the skeptics do not reject any of them in their life. Second, it includes the idea that ordinary human life can be, and should be, described in philosophical terms. However, the skeptics refuse to describe their actions in philosophical terms. All that is needed to describe a Pyrrhonist's action is to point to a pattern of the fourfold regime of everyday life: when she is hungry, she eats, when she must decide whether to save her parents or not, she follows the laws and customs, etc.[20]

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[20] I am grateful to two anonymous referees for *CJP* who provided useful comments and criticisms on an earlier draft of this paper.

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Croatian Journal of Philosophy
Vol. XVI, No. 48, 2016

Book Reviews

Katherin A. Rogers, *Freedom and Self-Creation: Anselmian Libertarianism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 248 pp.

This is a thoroughly splendid book on a splendid topic of free will! In a novel and very interesting way, St. Anslem's (of Canterbury) theory of free will is (re)formulated and put amidst ultra-contemporary debate; not only this, Katherin Rogers, in her version of Anselmianism about freedom of the will, strives to show how this kind of theory has certain advantages over other theories of freedom of the will and, accordingly, freedom of action. Almost needless to say, Rogers's, following St. Anselm, put forward the theory from the theistic Christian perspective. I consider her exposition of St. Anselm very clear and her (re)formulated arguments on the basic foundation of St. Anselm's theory very persuasive, as well as her own development of additional arguments for the agent-causal libertarianism. According to Rogers's, agent-causal libertarianism derived from St. Anselm, and supplemented with some contemporary tools that retain Anselmian spirit, can have more explanatory power with less theoretical entities. In other words, Anselmian agent-causal libertarianism, Rogers claims, is more parsimonious than other contemporary versions. St. Anselm put forward his theory and arguments about the freedom of the will and responsibility in the most explicit way in the texts *De libero arbitrio*, *De casu diaboli*, and *Cur Deus homo*.[1]

Let's take theory and arguments in order of the Kathrin Rogers's book. It begins with two arguments that are aimed to undermine compatibilism, showing that notion of the freedom is incompatible with notion of determinism. The first is so-called "The Divine Controller" argument and the other is "Wager" argument.

The Christian doctrine holds that everything that is different from God depends on God, so there can be nothing that has existence independent of God. God is also omnipotent. So we can imagine the following scenario. Though we can analyse the attribute of omnipotence in different ways, it is certainly possible that God can cause human beings' choices. If that would be so, then choices that human beings make are not their own choices, they do not make them on their own, but they are made by somebody else, namely God. If so, then each and every choice is fully determined by God.

[1] Katherin Rogers uses her own translations from Latin from *Anselmi Opera Omnia*, edited by F. S. Schmitt, Rome and Edinburgh: Friedrich Fromann Verlag, 1936–1968.

So, human beings' choices, and accordingly, actions that follow, would be fully determined by the factor other than them and on which they would have no control. Their choices would not be "up to them". We could also say that these choices would only "happen" to them (even if from the subjective point it would seem, but it would only seem, that the choices in question are their own); and if something just happens to me without any possibility that I have any kind of control or influence on that what happens, then this what happens is not free at all from the point of mine as an agent. If that would be the situation, then corollary is that human beings would not be responsible for these choices and actions. Rogers stresses parallels of this argument with other contemporary "controller" or "manipulation" arguments, but differences also. So, compatibilists, which embrace determinism, could not at the same time consistently claim that though actions and will of agents are fully determined, they can still be morally responsible and could have done otherwise than they in fact did.

Wager argument for libertarianism parallels in form, but just in form, Pascal's wager argument for the existence of God. Assume that a compatibilist, accepting determinism, considers that what happens, happens inevitably, so has a relaxed attitude towards morality. Let's suppose that you have to choose either compatibilism or libertarianism. You score +1 for your benefit, you score –1 for suffering harm. Believer in compatibilism scores +1 if compatibilism is true, but being tempted to moral laxness he scores –1, so score is 0; Believer in compatibilism scores –1 if compatibilism is false and –1 for being tempted to moral laxness, so in this case score is –2. Believer in libertarianism scores –1 if libertarianism is false, and scores +1 for not being prone to moral laxness, so the score is in this case 0. Believer in libertarianism scores +1 if libertarianism is true, and scores +1 for not being prone to moral laxness, so the score is in this case +2. Overall, it is better to bet on libertarianism than on compatibilism. This is not a definitive argument for libertarianism but points strongly in favour of libertarianism according to Rogers.

After relatively briefly reviewing event-causal and agent-causal libertarianism and setting stage for Anslem's view and Anselmianism, Rogers continues and warns us that we have to differentiate three meanings of *voluntas* in st. Anslem's writings. These are: *voluntas* instrumentally conceived as a faculty of the soul; *voluntas* in the second sense is that what moves will of an agent to what is a suitable object for an agent; third sense of *voluntas* is the *actual use* of the will.

In chapter three, Rogers explicates Anselm's and Anselmian libertarianism. It is a sort of agent-causal libertarianism. Agent makes, when freely deciding, so-called *a se* choices. How does he do it? Fisrt of all, everything that is different from God is created by God and depends on God. So how can genuine and free choice and following this choice, an action be free and dependent on subject, e.g. human being which is created by God and different from Him? It can be in the following way. God created human beings, and God created all motivating states, processes and elements that precede the choice of human beings. But human beings are created as (more or less) rational beings. So, they can come in the situations that are such that only one action can be made at time t, but there is a possibility for executing

at least two mutually exclusive actions at t, at the same time: so, only one can be performed—human being, as a rational being, must decide which action will be performed at t. This situation is called a "torn condition". It is a necessary condition for making *a se* choice. Especially significant situations are moral situations—where agents are torn between different morally significant options. So, libertarian request is fulfilled, there are alternate possibilities facing an agent. They "set the stage" for an agent and they are produced by God. But the choice an agent makes is something that the agent truly makes by himself. Choice itself is not imposed or made or influenced by God. Choice is an operating of the agent, so it is agent-causal. However, Anselmian variant of agent-causation is different from contemporary agent-causation. In contemporary versions, an agent causes choice—choice is caused, but agent, as a cause of a choice, is not caused. An agent is "uncaused cause", as a substance, in most contemporary versions of agent-causation. St. Anselm and Anselmians as Rogers is, do not require this or any other special sort of causation. Though it is up to the agent what he will choose, he does this choosing by "per-willing" one of the options that is created by God. "Per-willing" means that an agent is aware of both or several opposing motives, options, and possibilities which are open for him and what to do at t, but he wills one "through to the point of intention". Rogers adds that per-willing for one option entails overriding all the other options. In this way, an agent causes indetermined choice but no special powers or causation are required.

Chapter four explicates three consequences of such kind of libertarianism. The ontological status of choice is that it has a structure of an event; it is not neither state, nor a "thing". The grounding principle requires that true proposition about the choice which is made by an agent is grounded in the very choice itself, in its making by an agent. By making *a se* choices an agent makes his or her own character; *a se* choices enable us that we can make our personal characters by ourselves.

Chapter six considers Frankfurt-style counterexamples to the Principle of alternate possibility in assessing responsibility and how Anselmianism can fare here, and so it provides some interesting solutions; however, since literature on this topic is enormously vast, I shall skip it and I shall focus on chapters seven and eight which deal with the problem of luck for libertarianism. The problem can have several instances, but mainly consists in the following: since it is the case that noone has control over random events, then an agent does not have any control over that what happened randomly, so random events cannot be freely done events. If something just pops up in the consciousness of an agent randomly, then, even if it has a form of an intention or looks like a decision, it is an event over which an agent does not have any control and so is not done freely. It is just sheer luck that it happened (to the agent). In the language of possible worlds, it seems that libertarianism is committed to the following: If in world w1 an agent—say Catherine, deliberates between A and B, and, freely in libertarian sense, decides in favour of action A at time t, so it was not determined which decision Catherine will make until time t, then there is a possible world w2 in which, under the same circumstances until time t, Anne freely decides in favour of B (instead of A) at time t. What explains the difference between two possible

worlds—why Catherine decides for A in w1, and why Catherine decides in favour of B in w2 in otherwise completely the same worlds unil time t? It seems that there is nothing which can explain this difference—it can be said that these decisions are due to sheer luck. It is just luck in one world that there is a decision in favour of A and just the same holds for B. But if it is so, then decisions for A and B are not freely made because what happens by luck, no one has in control and if someone is not in control of something, then someone does not have freedom over that. Some of the libertarians try to resolve the problem by invoking the probabilistic causation. For them, we can assign probabilities (ranging from at least a little bit more from 0 to at least a little bit less from 1) to making decision for A or B or for any number of possible decisions that can be made in some condition. Rogers tries, pretty much successfully, to show that assigning probabilities, in both interpretations (propensities or relative frequencies) is in fact inapplicable to explain libertarian decisions and choices. Regarding possible worlds, she shows that possible world apparatus do not add anything new to the luck objection classically posed already by, say, St. Augustine or Hobart.

To recapitulate, Anselmian *a se* choice is made by the agent by per-willing one of the options available to him or her simultaneously and an agent is thus responsible for that choice and for acts that follow the choice. Choice is truly done by an agent and not by anyone or anything else, not even by his or her previous desires; there are no any necessitating factors or causes. It is up to the agent to choose A instead of B, simply by per-willing A; in other words, this per-willing agent causes choice of A, but itself it is not caused by anything. So, the agent that makes a choice in that way is fully responsible for the choice. There is no any kind of luck in making *a se* choice by "per-willing".

This kind of making choices is self-creation of an agent, which means that they build their characters on their own. So, Rogers considers that those who advocate the luck objection against libertarianism do not properly grasp choices, character and responsibility and their connections explained by libertarianism, in this case Anslemian libertarianism. Luck objection has no force, at least against Anselmian libertarianism.

My recommendation is that you have to read this book by your free will, (make *a se* choice to read it) and, if you are not already a libertarian, to become one, because libertarianism is the one and only, and by necessity, the right solution to the problem of free will.

DAVOR PEĆNJAK
Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb

Andrea Borghini, *A Critical Introduction to the Metaphysics of Modality*, London—New York: Bloomsbury, 2016, vii + 224 pp.

Using modal notions, such as *possibly*, *might be*, *allowed*, *must*, *necessarily*, etc. seems to be an inevitable practice of our daily life, as well as, our scientific and philosophical discussions. Even if we do not believe in the existence of modal facts *per se*, or in their semantic transparency and logical consistency, their adoption to our vocabularies seems to be more than expedient.

Andrea Borghini's *A Critical Introduction to the Metaphysics of Modality* is about the various philosophical theories of modalities that are on the table in the contemporary debates. Actually, her book is the very first monograph written in a concise textbook-style on the current theories of *modality* and not just of *possible worlds* that are closely related to *almost* all discussions of modality.

A very specific narrative of twentieth-century analytic philosophy could be written about philosophers' attitudes towards the modalities: a wide range of arguments might be reconstructed from skepticism to maximal and critical acceptance of such notions as possibility and necessity. The book of Borghini is written with respect to these two notions: six chapters are about what is possible—with a hint on necessities—and one is about necessity *per se*. (Though this might be considered as extremely unbalanced, this practice was quite widely shared also in the last fifty years among the different approaches to modality.)

Altogether the book consists of eight chapters and a preliminary introduction. The seven chapters on the theories of modality (I will come back to the fist historical chapter separately below) are organized in accordance with a classificatory figure adapted in the volume (see p. 17). The first question addressed by Borghini is whether modal notions express concepts or not. If one answers that they do not, she ends up either with skepticism or expressivism. The *par excellence* modal skeptic is W. v. O. Quine, but Borghini discusses Peter van Inwagen's epistemic skepticism and the so-called radical modal skepticism. What is shared among them is that they suspend their judgments of given modal sentences for various reasons. The other option, modal expressivism, "takes sentences containing modalities to express the speaker's conformity to a certain conventional way of regarding the non-modal content of the sentences" (65).

Though modal skepticism and expressivism are typical non-cognitivist options of the field, one might not want to do without the truth and falseness of modal sentences. In that case, one shall accept the other horn of the conceptual dilemma, namely that modal notions express concepts. The question is, of course, whether these concepts are irreducibly and genuinely modal concepts, or they are reducible to something else. Walking the first line, one ends up with a version of modalism (pursued by Graeme Forbes, Charles Chihara, and Jonathan Lowe) varying in how the ultimate nature of modal facts is conceived.

Fearing some conceptual and metaphysical disaster of admitting irreducible modal facts to our worldview, one shall try to reduce genuine modal notions to other ones. Here one has again two typical choices: either use the machinery of possible worlds or try to do without it *in a sense*. Accepting possible-worlds talk one might choose (i) modal realism, (ii) ersatzism, (iii) fictionalism, or (iv) agnosticism.

Modal realists, like David Lewis, accept both possible-worlds talk and the ontological commitment to possible worlds; they regard them as concrete, spatiotemporal entities, just like our world (92–102). Ersatzists accept likewise the talk and the ontological commitment but dispense with concrete worlds in favor of various abstracts representations of the ways our world could have been. Both fictionalism and agnosticism admit the usefulness of possible-world talk, but they are antirealist or agnostic regarding the existence of other (either concrete or abstract) worlds than ours. They developed various ways of how we can talk about possible worlds without committing ourselves to the existence of those worlds that we talk about and utilize in our analysis of modal expressions.

Finally, as Borghini shows (157–172), though "[p]possible worlds suit the two modalities of necessity and possibility and are in accordance with the semantics suggested to complement both [quantified modal logic] and [Lewis's] counterpart theory" (159), many would not admit possible worlds beyond the purely logical theories of modality. The most recent account of possibility and necessity utilizes only what is to be found in our *actual world*: the ersatzism is also known as actualism, the *new modal actualism* (or hardcore modal actualism) is more radical in leaving behind all talk and ontology of possible worlds, dealing only with "talk of modalities that are possessed by individuals, such as essences, dispositions, or other modal properties" (158). Individual and property essentialism, along with dispositionalism is introduced in other to present the most tenable options of the book.

Borghini's discussion is closed with a short chapter on the notion of necessity and necessary existents as developed by Timothy Williamson (185–186), approaching also the relation of grounding (182–184), Meinongianism (187–190), and impossible worlds (190–192).

These chapters are well-written and well-structured: they are organized around four basic questions that always recur in the context of the theories of modality that are on the table: (1) *What does it take for a certain situation to be possible?* (2) *What does it mean to say that a certain situation is possible?* (3), *How do we come to know that which is possible?* (4) *What sort of entity is a possible entity?* In fact, (2), (3), and (4) are just the semantic, epistemic, and metaphysical sub-questions of (1), that is, of the "The Problem of Possibility" (3). Since the book is an introduction to the *metaphysics* of modality, (1) and (4) are the most favored questions, though occasionally (2) and (3) are also treated by the author. The various solutions (nineteen after all) provided by the different modal theories are gathered together at the end of the book (195–197), helping thus the reader to keep up with the main points of a given theory among the many arguments and reasons pro and contra of it.

According to Borghini (196–197), there are two main lessons to be drawn from the discussion of the metaphysical theories of modality. Firstly, at the moment no one can provide a full-blown theory that is able to entirely reduce the modal vocabulary to any type of non-modal vocabulary. It is a further question whether the non-reductive character of the various theories provides a fatal blow to possible-worlds theories, especially to modal realism, which main theoretical advantage supposed to be its alleged reductive approach. If "*some modal entities are nonetheless here to stay*" (196), one might temp to restrict her attention to the actual world and dispense with all of the possible-worlds talk and machinery in the philosophically relevant discussions.

The other lesson is that *"a piecemeal approach to the metaphysical (and, arguably, philosophical) analysis of modality has the best payoffs*" (197). Borghini seems to suggest that the different modal theories should be apt for different versions of modalities, like deontic, alethic, nomic, and metaphysical. Fair enough—though one shall weigh the costs and benefits of the pluralistic and monistic/unified accounts.

What need to be emphasized are some misleading and quite unnecessary features of the book. Borghini's first chapter, which supposed to be a historical overview, is everything but a historical overview in the usual and relevant sense of "historical overview". The author discusses the well-known views and paradoxes of Parmenides and Zeno, the theories of Aristotle, the Megarian School, the Arabic and Scholastic traditions, and the considerations of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Hume. The list is quite impressive, especially given that the overview is twenty-five pages long (it is already the longest chapter)—counting the numbers, one might see that most figures got half of a page or just two-three pages.

If one may argue that such histories are histories of problems and not exegetical inquiries (thus legitimating the quite general and broadly conceived treatments), then one could expect that these figures and their solutions will occur later in the text—that is not happening, after all. Though Borghini notes that "it is difficult to understand the work of a prominent contemporary author in the field, David Lewis, without reading Hume's work" (45), it is quite debatable whether in what sense could Hume be relevant for the discussion of Lewis or whether Lewis ever studied Hume in details, or just mobilized the Humean insights of his teacher, Quine. It is quite possible that one could be a good Lewisian or could solve some problems of Lewis without ever encountering herself with Hume's philosophy.

After all, however, a story is needed, of course, but the reader may have found it more useful to get a narrative of the twentieth-century history of the modalities. Quantified modal logic and its possible-worlds semantics caused many debates on both sides of the Atlantic and across Europe, and dealing with it in a more detailed manner could have helped the reader to appreciate their contemporary estimation. Perhaps then one should not face such admittedly bizarre sentences, as "[t]oday, we can claim that the conceptual machinery of possible-worlds semantics enabled an analysis of the various modal expressions, and of their conceptual ties, that is much more profound than the analyses provided by any other society or civilization up until this point" (88).

Despite the historical parts, Andrea Borghini's introductory textbook is a useful and thorough reading for anyone interested in the current analytic-philosophical theories of and approaches to modality. It is the most up-to-date and comprehensive survey of those options that one shall weigh when enters the contemporary debate. The pleasure of choosing between the theories is, as Borghini says (197), of course, ours.

ADAM TAMAS TUBOLY
University of Pécs and Hungarian Academy of Sciences[1]

[1] Supported by the ÚNKP-16-4-II. New National Excellence Program of the Ministry of Human Capacities.

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Barber, A. 2007. "Linguistic Structure and the Brain." *Croatian Journal of Philosophy* 21 (7): 317–341.

Williamson, T. 2013. *Identity and Discrimination*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

ISSN 1333-1108
9 771333 110001