

Address delivered by the Director of the Physicotechnical
Institute of the Soviet Scientific Academy.
(published on 2.6.1950 in Prawda, Leningrad.)

The level of ideological education in the scientific research institutes had been very low until recently. The Marxist-Leninist theory has been scarcely studied. There were many who allowed idealistic and cosmopolitan provocations to pass without comment.

Too long were idealistic thoughts openly expressed in our Physicotechnical Institute. And at the same time, the possibility of a fruitful application of the Marxist method to natural sciences was denied.

These idealistic errors, committed by some scientists, were not subjected to a searching and serious critique.

The protagonist of these idealistic assertions was Professor Frenkel, who showed a negative attitude towards dialectic materialism and went so far as to act as a mouthpiece for the views of bourgeois-physicists in some of his writings. The ~~Secret~~^{nat} of the Physicotechnical and Polytechnical Institute has now subjected Professor Frenkel's views to a sharp criticism. As a result of this discussion, Professor Frenkel has admitted his ideological errors and declared in a statement his conclusion that in the natural sciences and especially in physics, the Marxist-Leninist theory is of decisive importance. He promised to correct these openly admitted mistakes in his future work and to re-write some of his textbooks in the spirit of materialism. We consider this declaration to be a great achievement of our Party administration, which found the means of showing such an eminent scientist as Professor Frenkel the right path. Our duty in future will be to assist Professor Frenkel, in order that he should not stumble again.

(Translated from "Physikalische Blätter", 1951/Heft 2, p. 68)
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Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy.

1. In my first three lectures I have given a survey of man's intelligent performances which led up to the formation of social lore. I described three kinds of social lore: the cognitive, the practical and the interpretative. These terms were intended to be used rather as mere headings than as proper descriptions of the matter to which they referred. The cognitive group comprised a widely spread assortment of intellectual performances from natural science to music, the link between these two extremes being formed by mathematics. These mental activities have it in common that they are directed towards objects rather than persons. While natural science is primarily interested in objects which are given by experience, mathematics enjoys greater freedom to create its own objects regardless of experience and thereby forms a bridge to music and abstract painting. Under the heading of 'practical' lore I have comprised the whole normative framework of society, its law, its moral values and social intercourse, its political constitution and civic wisdom. These are all interpersonal acts of intelligence. The third group contains such combinations of cognitive interpersonal intelligence as we have in history and literature. This is the field of the liberal arts by which mankind studies man.

I have pointed out that no reference to these great systems of social lore is unambiguous unless it accredits or discredits the claims made by them and have urged that to justify this distinction is the task of philosophy, which it must undertake in defence of the vital interests of *the* minds.

In preparation for this task I have sketched out a series of logical levels and observed that if philosophy is to provide the ultimate justification of the acts of intelligence on which it reflects, it must occupy the highest logical level situated above them and even try to take into account a further indefinite sequence of reflections concerning its own justification.

Then I took stock of the limitations imposed on the scope of philosophy as a branch of scholarship. Of all possible intelligent actions the scholar is restricted to one, namely speech, and among all moods of speech he may, once more, use only one, namely the indicative mood. *Moreover*, his topics are restricted to matters of general interest and on these he must make statements of public facts. We may call these limitations the conventions of objectivism.

seems obvious
It ~~strikes the eye~~, that within the restrictions imposed on it by objectivism, philosophy cannot possibly fulfil the formidable task of justifying the whole realm of valid thought. Yet such a conclusion would so sweepingly contradict the critical principles on which our modern civilisation believes itself to be founded, that what may seem obvious at first sight has to be meticulously argued in detail if it is to be made secure as a firm ground for a new programme.

For this purpose I concentrated in the first place on a narrow but distinctive section of the position under review. I turned to declaratory statements of fact and particularly to the system of such statements which form the body of modern observational science. Science claims to be objective and to represent the only objective approach to matters of experience. If that is true, any systematic justification of observational science which is to satisfy the claims of objectivism must be in terms of observational science; but since this procedure would carry forward the scientific method it could not possibly justify the scientific method itself. Therefore, if anybody doubted that the results of empirical science are uniquely determined by evidence, there could be no answer to this within the restrictions imposed by objectivism. The task of philosophy appeared to be blocked within the framework of objectivism at a decisive point.

To resolve this impasse I made a step in the direction which I shall presently outline more fully in this Lecture.

I pointed out that the claims of observational science - and indeed of all factual statements - to be strictly objective, must be reduced, to allow for the part played by the force of personal conviction in constituting such statements. Indeed, all declaratory sentences (including mathematical propositions) should be re-cast for the purpose of accuracy in a fiduciary mode, which makes it clear that such a sentence stands for an allegation made by the speaker or writer of the sentence. Once it is accepted that the correct form for all assertions hitherto expressed in declaratory sentences is to include the fiduciary prefix 'I believe', the whole framework of objectivism is abandoned in principle. For there is then no pronouncement left that would claim for itself the fulfilment of objectivist standards and the way may be opened for a philosophy facing a reduced task with greater freedom of action. It would no longer have to account for a non-existent measure of objectivity in science, nor limit itself to modes of speech which imply that it claims such objectivity for itself.

Clearly, to admit that the scope of ^{our} ~~pass~~ intelligence ^{essentially} ~~is so narrowly restricted~~ ^{falls short of objectivity}, and to grant at the same time such vast and indeed paramount responsibilities to the force of our personal convictions, ^{is a serious departure from} ~~runs counter to~~ the whole critical endeavour pursued by modern thought since its emancipation from ecclesiastic authority. ^{Yet I think that the} ~~Before proceeding further in~~ ^{historic survey which I gave in my last lecture} ~~this direction I tried to recall in my last lecture this~~ ^{has clearly shown that since Hume the critical} ~~historic process, at least in the way it struggled to accredit~~ ^{movement was riding for a fall. In} ~~the strictly objective character of science~~ ^{we saw} ~~this survey seemed~~ ^{to indicate} that the progressive self-criticism of science both in its empirical and its deductive branches, had led to philosophic positions which ^{were} ~~are~~ objectivist only in form, while in fact they relied for such conviction as they command ^{the} on anterior belief in the validity of science. The very efforts which have been made to avoid admitting this fact, have made it increasingly clear that the attempt of the scientific movement to repudiate altogether the Augustinian acceptance

of belief as the primary act of intelligence, has proved logically untenable and that science itself can be said to exist only to the extent as we declare our belief in its worth and validity.

When I gave to these Lectures the subtitle - 'A Quest for a Post-critical Philosophy' - I had in mind this turning point. The critical movement which seems to be coming to an end today was perhaps the most fruitful effort ever sustained by the human mind. The past four or five centuries which have gradually ~~encompassed~~ encompassed the almost complete destruction of the mediæval cosmos have enriched us by incomparable treasures. Think of our painting, our music, our science, our philosophies; ~~think of our Prayer Book, and our great political life; our novels, our history, our medicine and all our technical devices; look at our Florence, our Paris, our Oxford and our New York ...~~ If the light of the mind could be observed by the eye, a distant astronomer watching the earth during this period would have mistaken it for one of those new-born stars which release the energies of a pervasive internal commotion in the brilliance of a million suns. No wonder that this great mental ^{eruption} ~~commotion~~ may be approaching at last its logical completion. ~~The incandescence of modern thought had fed on the combustion of the Christian heritage in the oxygen of Greek rationality. We have still plenty of oxygen left, but are running out of fuel. Dark burnt-out patches of intellectual death are spreading over the surface of our planet. Finding nothing more to feed on, the critical movement has exhausted its creative functions and has begun to destroy its own foundations. The task of a post-critical philosophy is to rescue our minds from this peril. I shall urge that it can attempt this only by assuming a frankly fiduciary character. - It must profess as well as analyse; it must be prophetic as well as analytic.~~

pause.

But before ~~going~~ taking another step
in this direction let us make sure once
more of our foothold by re-formulating
the self-contradiction of the critical movement.

There exist scientific statements and these are of
two kinds, empirical or deductive. The first constitute the
natural sciences, the second the science of mathematics,
including formal logic. ~~It is the distinctive mark of~~
~~scientific statements that they compel acceptance without~~
~~appeal to any personal authority. 'Nullius in verba'; or~~
~~in other words, "no statement is accepted merely because some-~~
~~body affirmed it" - this was the device accepted by the~~
~~Royal Society at its foundation. In fact~~ No statement can
claim acceptance in science except on the ^{plea} grounds of having
been scientifically proven. ~~This remains true no matter how~~
~~far we may reduce the status of scientific proof and that of~~
~~science itself. We may freely admit that no proof - whether~~
~~based on experience or on mathematical demonstration - can be~~
~~absolute, and we may allow scientific laws to be regarded as~~
~~mere descriptions or convenient summaries of the facts, and~~
~~mathematical theorems as mere tautologies - this would in no~~
~~way alter the fact that you cannot claim to have made a~~
~~contribution either to observational science or to mathematics~~
~~except on the plea of having proved the affirmations which you~~

~~accept the conventional ^{rules} governing the function of an~~
~~academic lecturer. I declare that I shall not~~
~~in any way limit myself to strictly~~
~~objective statements. While I shall continue to argue my points~~
~~and adduce evidence for my affirmations, I shall wish it to be~~
~~clearly understood that in the last resort my statements always~~
~~affirm my own beliefs. Neither science, nor any other of the~~
~~great intellectual systems which I accept as binding on me, can~~
~~be justified either by statements of fact or in terms of~~

~~are putting forward.~~ An assertion which is admittedly unproven may be regarded as a personal view or, if known to be accepted by a considerable group of people, may be described as a dogma and possibly condemned as mere superstition - but in any case it can never be said to form part of science.

The logical analysis of science has revealed, however, that the concept of scientific proof is applicable only within the framework of a system of implied unproven affirmations. While ~~it is not clear~~ ^{we cannot say precisely what} ~~but what exactly~~ these affirmations are - either those which form the framework of mathematics or those which underlie natural science - the necessity of accepting some such unproven framework is ^{clear.} ~~obvious.~~ Moreover, there is no reason to assume that the affirmations contained in this framework are self-evident, and they are not in fact considered indubitable. The acceptance of any scientific proof implies therefore the acceptance without proof of a system of bare affirmations of a largely indeterminate character.

However, if the acceptance of any proof requires the acceptance without proof of some presuppositions from which the proof is ultimately derived, it follows that the principle of rejecting any unproven statement implies the rejection also of all proven statements. An objectivism which denies acceptance to any bare unproven assertions must deny acceptance both to natural science and mathematics. And since it is itself unproven it must deny acceptance also to itself.

3. ^{Here lies the starting point for my proposed abandonment} ~~I propose therefore to abandon the principles of~~ ^{logical} ~~objectivism and shall accordingly,~~ ^{for breaking} ~~break through to a certain~~ ^{accordingly also} extent the conventions hitherto governing the functions of an academic lecturer. ^{I declare that I shall not} ~~I do not intend to~~ limit myself to strictly objective statements. While I shall continue to argue my points and adduce evidence for my affirmations, I shall wish it to be clearly understood that in the last resort my statements always affirm my own beliefs. Neither science, nor any other of the great intellectual systems which I accept as binding on me, can be justified either by statements of fact or in terms of

deductive inference, since these can never form an ultimate logical level. If an ultimate level is to be attained it can only consist in an explicit declaration of my personal beliefs.

I believe that the functions of philosophic reflection consist in bringing to light and affirming as my own the beliefs implied in such of my thoughts and practices which I believe to be valid. Accordingly, my aim should be to discover what I truly believe in and to formulate the basic convictions which I find myself holding.

I believe that philosophy must re-establish itself under this new charter. It is true that by becoming openly fiduciary, philosophy assumes a liberty of action which might prove dangerous. But I believe that these dangers are inherent in the condition of human thought matured by the critical process of the past centuries. This process has endowed our mind with a capacity for self-transcendence of which we can never again divest ourselves. We have plucked from the Tree a second apple which has mortally imperilled our knowledge of Good and Evil, and we must learn to live henceforth in the glare of the new analytical powers which we have thus acquired. Humanity has been deprived a second time of its innocence; and been driven out of a Garden which ^{was} at any rate, a Fool's Paradise. Innocently, we had trusted that we could be relieved of all personal responsibility for our beliefs by ~~relying on~~ objective criteria of validity, and ~~by~~ our own critical powers ~~we~~ have shattered this absurd hope. ~~When~~ Struck by our sudden nakedness, we may try to brazen it out by exhibiting it in some profession of nihilism. That has been done in various forms during the past 100 years from Max Stirner to Paul Sartre. The other alternative, which I ~~shall~~ ^{am} ~~suggesting,~~ ^{suggesting,} endeavour to pursue, is to accept once more a personal responsibility for the deliberate holding of beliefs. We may thus gain the power of professing openly the beliefs which could be tacitly taken for granted in the days before modern philosophic criticism had achieved its present incisiveness. This is certainly dangerous, but its peril is inherent in the condition of man and is not avoided but only concealed by a screen of objective pretences.

Benjamin Constant

all an article
by the author of
L'homme Revolté

4. It might have been more proper to state this ^{position} from the very start of my Lectures. I have preferred to postpone the declaration to this stage where its significance may be more understandable. But this necessarily involves a revaluation of all that has been said before. I wish explicitly to disclaim for it the quality to which in my belief no reasoning should ever aspire; namely that it proceeds by a logical process, the acceptance of which by the expositor and his recommendation of which for acceptance by others, include no element of his own personal convictions. In fact the whole vocabulary which I have used in describing intellectual performances is pregnant with implicit beliefs that are denied by important schools of psychology. I spoke there, for example, of animals acquiring understanding of a maze and deriving therefrom an indefinite range of particular inferences. I accepted the existence of emotions in other persons and of communications between persons. I mentioned the intellectual beauty which suffuses the body of such mental achievements as science, etc. I spoke respectfully of law and popular wisdom. These references have expressed some of my strongest beliefs before I even began my argument. My vocabulary has begged from the start a whole range of highly controversial questions. I want to point this out now and take the responsibility for having done it.

5. My decision to embody my philosophic outlook from the start in the vocabulary in which I couched my argument, was taken in the conviction that such a frank admission of

my preconceived beliefs is consistent with these beliefs and indeed flows inevitably from the conscious holding of any system of fundamental unproven beliefs. These should be broadly indicated at the beginning of a philosophic work and must be henceforth taken for granted and continuously relied upon in the course of the argument which develops and expounds them.

An example of a logically consistent exposition of fundamental beliefs is that of St. Augustine's Confessions. Its first ten Books contain an account of the period before his conversion and of his struggle for the faith which he was yet lacking. Yet the whole of this process is interpreted by St. Augustine from the point of view which he reached after his conversion. He seems to recognise that you cannot expose an error by interpreting it from the premises which lead to it, but only from premises which are held to be true. His principle 'credo ut intelligam' expresses this logical requirement. It says, as I understand it, that the process of examining any topic is as much an exploration of the topic as an exegesis of our antecedent beliefs in the light of which we approached it; it is a dialectical combination of exploration and exegesis. Our antecedent beliefs are continuously re-considered in the course of such a process, but only within the scope of their own fundamental premises.

6. The axiomatisation of deductive sciences - like geometry or arithmetic - which initially states certain fundamental axioms and undefined terms, which are henceforth to be used without ever arguing in favour of their acceptance, is a modern counterpart of St. Augustine's method. The similarity to the Augustinian position has been deepened by the result of Gödel's work of 1931 which proved that no system of axioms can completely comprise the premises of arithmetic and that any system which is broad enough to serve as a basis for deducing the simplest arithmetical rules will present us with an inexhaustible range of problems beyond its own scope. This corresponds to the position accepted by St. Augustine in respect to his own beliefs; as he recognises that the revelation

of Christ which he embraces is of indeterminate scope and raises an indefinite range of problems beyond human understanding.

The axiomatisation of arithmetic, falls short in logical consistency of the Augustinian position, by failing to acknowledge explicitly the fiduciary status of the premises laid down by it. Their true character is actually disguised by their presentation in form of bare declaratory sentences which, though stated without proof, reveal no personal act responsible for their pronouncement.

7. I have said that I shall break here with the tradition of science and modern critical philosophy by abandoning from the start, as self contradictory and therefore absurd, the ideal of strict objectivity. I acknowledge accordingly that I am professing here my own personal convictions. I shall try to explain later why I believe that in doing so I may hope to fulfil, to the measure of my ability, the obligations arising from the situation in which I find myself. At the moment I am anxious to make it clear that there is a meaning of the word 'objectivity' which I accept as significant. It has its place on what I have called Level One where there are mathematical proofs, scientific demonstrations, judicial findings, newspaper reports. On this level the conception of fairness, of unbiassed and disinterested enquiry command respect. We may speak here of detachment and indeed demand it in various peculiar senses prescribed within different approaches. Take the juryman, the judge and the member of parliament. In a certain sense all three should be equally disinterested. None must accept bribes or practise favouritism. But while the jury and the judge must come to their decision without fear or favour, the politician in parliament is to some extent responsible for safeguarding particular interests. The position of all three is quite different in respect to the law. Whatever the jury may think of the interpretation given to the law by the presiding judge, it must set aside its

opinions on this matter and bring in its verdict on the basis of the judge's instructions. The judge in his turn must put aside his opinions about the rightness of the existing law and give his rulings in accordance with the law as it stands, though he may and should interpret it freely within certain limits. Lastly, the politician is responsible for judging the law itself and reforming it or maintaining it unchanged as he deems right. Each of the three must make up his mind within a pre-existing constitutional framework which is different for each. So long as we ourselves accept these several frameworks as valid, we shall not describe their acceptance on each respective proper occasion as bias or prejudice, but will derive on the contrary our standards of fairness or objectivity, and our criteria of bias or prejudice, from one of these frameworks in respect to the particular occasion to which it is appropriate.

The conception of objectivity which serves as our rule in deciding fragmentary issues within a relatively fixed and implicitly granted framework, always depends on our ^{logically antecedent} ~~previous~~ acceptance of this framework; this conception can therefore have no bearing on the task of reflecting on the framework ^{in order to criticize or justify it.} itself. It is the nature of all ultimate reflections that they can recognise for their own guidance only such rules which they themselves have accredited. My ultimate reflections must be a compass to themselves.

But when I accept responsibility for the pointings of my own compass my speech must become frankly fiduciary; ~~for I~~ ^{then} undertake ~~then~~ a task which transcends scholarship and should not be performed under the cloak of scholarship.

The true function of philosophy ^{in this view} is to teach what the philosopher believes. But only a philosophy which teaches that we may accept unproven beliefs can perform these functions without discrediting its statements by their own content. And ^{also,} again, conversely, since I say that my affirmations can be completely expressed only and should be always taken to stand in the fiduciary form "I believe p", I am entitled on these grounds to speak of what I personally believe.

are maxims logically
antecedent?

logically
antecedent?

10
Transfer
critique of Behaviourism
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8. I have hitherto based my argument almost entirely on the position of mathematics and natural science within a framework of fundamental objectivism. And even this reference has so far been quite cursory. A demand for strict objectivity ^{does not} conflict ~~not~~ only with the ^{basic} ~~very~~ fact that all science is based on some set of fundamental beliefs for the holding of which objectivism gives no warrant, ~~xxx~~ ^{It} ~~This demand~~ ^{also} penetrates ^{far} at many points, beyond this and reaches the very substance of science, passionately insisting on a particular approach to the subject of enquiry, which ^{alone} ~~is~~ recognised as objective and scientific. This tension makes itself ~~strongly~~ ^{any} felt to some extent in ~~the~~ study of ~~any~~ biological functions when the question of their purpose is to be described. Though every biologist speaks of organic functions and is guided in his researches by the assumption that every part of the living body is likely to have some function, his acknowledgment of such final causes is grudging and somewhat uneasy. But the tension becomes sharper and its nature is, it is easier to appreciate, the nature of this tension ^{open and extensive} at a higher stage of enquiry where it has led to ~~serious~~ ^{never ceased} controversies. Such controversies have ~~incessantly raged~~ between psychologists since the beginning of this century when Bethe and von Uexküll in Germany issued their objectivist manifesto, which repudiated the use of any words referring to states of mind - such as memory, emotion, volition, understanding - in formulating the results of experimental psychology. Watson's behaviourist manifesto followed in the United States in 1912 and today, it would seem to me, the behaviourist approach has still - or perhaps one may say once more - the strongest appeal on psychologists.

Clark L. Hull in his 'Principles of Behaviour' (1943) has formulated this doctrine most forcefully. He admits that we may understand other people's - and even an animal's - behaviour by imputing to them such feelings and motives as we would have in their places. He would even allow us ^{to use} such methods for casting about in a preliminary fashion for a ^{comprehension} ~~notion~~ of what these persons

in his view

are doing, but the final result can ^{in his view} be strictly scientific only if it entirely eliminates such results of 'subjective intuitive performances'. He deploras the almost irresistible tendency of ours to think of other people and of animals as conscious beings, feeling and reacting as we do. "The only cure (he writes) for this unfortunate tendency to which all men are more or less subject is a grim and inflexible insistence that all deductions take place according to the explicitly formulated rules stating the functional relationships of A to X and X to B. This latter is the essence of the scientifically objective. A genuinely scientific theory no more needs the anthropomorphic intuitions of the theorist to eke out the deduction of its implications than an automatic calculating machine needs the intuitions of the operator in the determination of a quotient, once the keys representing the dividend and the divisor have been depressed." "Objective scientific theory is necessary because only under objective conditions can a principle be tested for soundness by means of observation."

Notice the words 'grim and inflexible' by which we are urged to repudiate as scientifically unsound any knowledge of our fellowbeings that we acquire of them as our fellowbeings. Only by reducing them to robots with which we have nothing whatever in common - says Hull - can we be said to understand them objectively, that is genuinely. On this kind of knowledge must we ultimately rely in order that our knowledge may be uniquely ² determined by the evidence. For only then have we got rid of all personal responsibility for believing what we do, and of this responsibility we must rid ourselves at all cost.

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9. Yet this passionate attempt made by psychologists to ~~exercise~~ ^{exorcise} any conception of consciousness from their picture of animal and human behaviour, is but a small sample of the paramount urge of modern man to restrict his acceptance of reality to a minimum, requiring no effort of belief on his part to uphold it. I have said in my last Lecture that when man loses his capacity

consciously to accept a belief as a belief, and bases his intellectual self-respect on the anxious avoidance of any ~~explicit~~ ^{however carefully concealed} fiduciary commitment, he adopts a variety of alternative positions which, while widely divergent in content, are but several expressions of the same deliberately cultivated deficiency. There is not a particle of our civilisation which does not show some symptoms of this basic deficiency and the mere catalogue of these symptoms would fill a volume. Yet some illustration of the kind of disorders, to which a rehabilitation of belief should offer a remedy, must be attempted ~~however sketchily~~ at this point. And as a very rough guide we may classify the conditions in question under the three headings of Futility, Inhumanity and Confusion.

10. If it is the purpose of philosophy to fulfill by careful deliberation our ultimate responsibility for expressing our ^{actual} ~~basic~~ beliefs, then a philosophy which restricts itself to objectivist standards must necessarily remain futile. It can analyse the linguistic procedure by which beliefs are formulated, but can never embrace and profess any beliefs. The hope that by such linguistic analysis all philosophic problems may eventually be dispelled might not have appeared extravagant at a time, such as the turn of the ¹⁹ century, when our civilisation seemed a smoothly running concern and was certainly not seriously challenged by any sharp philosophic antagonists. At that time we could regard our essential beliefs as founded on ^{pure} ~~mere~~ common sense. Hence by translating philosophic problems into simple terms of common sense, we could expect to expose their artificial character and ^{perhaps dissolve them} ~~manage to keep philosophers out of mischief~~ ^{altogether}. But if today, when what appeared as unquestionable common sense a generation ago is exposed to annihilating criticism from every side, philosophers still restrict themselves under the spell of objectivism to the analysis, purification and classification of linguistic usages, one is reminded of a surgeon who would go on ^{eternally polishing} ~~indefinitely cleaning and sharpening~~ his ^{instruments} ~~knives~~ in the hope that this will eventually cure his patient, ~~suffering from cancer~~.

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A linguistic programme which would limit philosophy to analytical observations that are irrelevant to our beliefs and ignore the problems about which we have to make up our minds all over the range of our responsibilities, is essentially futile.

g. Yet it is not its paralysing effect on philosophy which is the major menace of objectivism to the modern mind. The greater danger - the danger of inhumanity - lies in the urge to re-cast our basic beliefs in terms which are regarded as objectively established. In my previous Lecture I pointed out some of the disastrous results which ensued when this purpose was pursued in respect to science by what I called the scientific theory of science. A similar endeavour has been carried ~~out~~ on with perhaps even more serious consequences in respect to traditional morality, law and political theory. I must cast a brief glance on this here in order to acknowledge the important part it plays in the motivation of my programme.

The moral responsibilities of man can be cast in the form of objective observational statements, ^{only if we} ~~by~~ identifying our judgement of what is right, with ^(an observation description) ~~a~~ prediction of what is ^{happening} ~~going~~ to happen. ~~anyhow~~. In this manner scientific language can be used for the purpose of affirming a set of personal convictions anonymously and irresponsibly. The process operates a supposedly self-propelled engine of scientific demonstration to affirm our beliefs with the compelling authority of science. This is modern scientific totalitarianism. Throughout ~~its~~ public life, in the conduct of the government, the administration of justice and ~~the~~ the shaping of public opinion through every available channel, the moral concepts of good and evil, are defined by the seemingly objective terms of historical necessity; 'right' being identified with forces which will necessarily conquer and 'wrong' with those which will be defeated. Such a transposition of moral convictions into mechanical terms imparts to them the inflexible and merciless character of an impersonal force. ~~The~~ A Christian fanatic who identifies himself with an all-powerful beneficent God may be blind and cruel, but not as blind and cruel as the man acting on behalf of an all-powerful beneficial historic necessity.

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~~beneficial~~ historical necessity. For a Christian will still respect moral forces, while to the historical materialist the elimination of any assumption of such forces from history and political theory represents the very essence of scientific enlightenment. It seems indeed inevitable that whenever moral action is identified with the operation of objectively defined forces, moral aspirations are cut off from the springs of personal conscience and are turned into mere fuel for the propulsion of a blind mechanical process. When applied in this manner, the scientific method sanctifies naked force as the ultimate good. ^{and thus must perpetrate a} ~~This amounts to the~~ total inversion of man. In such a man physical force is no longer justified by morality, but has gathered on the contrary all moral ^{motives} ~~forces~~ into itself, ^{so that force} ~~and~~ is now exercised as an embodiment of, and a complete substitution for morality. ^{This seems useful to sequel but belongs of 2nd Series.}

10! There is a vast middle-ground between the irrelevance resulting from a strict application of objectivism in philosophy and the sanctification of violence resulting from the complete substitution of objectively defined ends for the directives of human conscience. This consists of a great volume of contemporary writings by psychologists and sociologists, who analyse human affairs within the framework of observational terms which avoid any mention of good and evil. ^{great} A ~~good~~ deal of fascinating and often ^{from instructive} ~~useful~~ information has been gained by this method, but there is real danger of confusion, if not worse, when it is made to function in place of moral judgement. I can only illustrate here very briefly this tendency which today is rapidly becoming dominant in the discussion of human problems.

The first point to observe is that the detachment of the social scientist or psychologist is always essentially incomplete. While they deal with primitive societies for affairs of which they feel no responsibility, their moral responses are effectively subdued, but as soon as they pass on to the observation of their own society they inevitably give

expression to their moral judgement, even though they continue to use the observational framework which offers no rational grounds for them. As an example I may quote so distinguished a writer as Ruth Benedict who insists on a most rigorous detachment from any fixed moral standards in the comparative study of different social patterns, yet when she comes to speak of the American businessman's way of life, inveighs passionately against its moral shortcomings in the form of the scientific observation that no system of social values, of which this way of life is an instance, has ever gained more than temporary acceptance. *(sophism which would invalidate all codes of morality is used against one which the author repudiates.)*

I can see little to be gained and much that can be lost by aiming at scientific detachment in the study even of the more primitive societies. Cruelty, treachery, the bullying and grinding of the weak are evil practices. Why should we construct a conceptual framework from which these condemnatory terms are eliminated and replaced by supposedly neutral terms like competitiveness, aggressiveness, etc? It seems to me that the social anthropologist who, equipped with this vocabulary, describes without any signs of repulsion some most vicious and corrupt primitive people, denies them his sympathy in their problems and is likely to miss by his scientific acceptance of the existing pattern any internal ferment which might struggle against its evil features. And again, when the anthropologist treats other tribes of almost saintly gentleness and sensibility on the same footing of detachment, he sacrifices to the scientific pose the beneficent influence which we might gain from such an example if we regarded it with the respect and affection that is due to it. *X*

Actually, in his own ambiguous way, the anthropologist (whose work I am here using as an illustration) keeps his moral sentiments lurking behind the scenes. They are manifested to some extent already in the desire to find out the causes which lead to such extremely disparate culture-patterns. The reason is found within a psychoanalytic framework in the difference of upbringing in early childhood. A gentle *deep sense of community from Africans.*

Navant

*in a broadcast discussion
2 Nov. 1957
Professor Kenneth Little said
that we may learn a*

character is supposed to ensue if nothing is ever denied to the infant and no habits of cleanliness are imposed upon him, while 'aggressiveness' is the inevitable consequence of refusing any wish to him or enforcing any restraints on him.

The moral sentiments disguised behind these austere unfeeling terms, unhesitatingly spring to life the moment the social psychologist applies them to the contemporary scene. Not for a moment does he regard lynching, the torture of prisoners or the mass-extinction of the Jews as just another culture pattern, equal in their right to the practices of kindness, tolerance and peace. It quickly turns out that he detests oppression and cruelty, and loves justice and mercy as much as his unscientific fellow-man. But his objectivism forbids him to say so in these terms. In his study of primitive people cruelty, oppression, injustice, were called 'aggressiveness'; or by some other strictly observational name. These names are again ~~applied~~ ^{now} applied as before, but are ~~suddenly~~ charged with the ~~full~~ ^{would} force of condemnation which their objects deserve. Nor ~~is~~ ^{would} the social scientist ^{be} in the least embarrassed by ~~this~~ ^{an} exposure of his lack of detachment; for a public which has learned to distrust its ~~moral beliefs~~ ^{traditional morality} is only too eager to receive ~~them~~ ^{it} back from his hands in a scientifically respectable wrapping. It will look up to the social scientist for two reasons, both for his moral sentiments and for his pretence of lacking them.

This masquerade is not harmless for it replaces a delicate moral vocabulary - which appeals to our conscience - by a clumsy scientific nomenclature which makes us look for clinical remedies. A term like 'aggressiveness' can be used to condemn or deplore almost anything that we dislike. Wars, revolutions, ideological conflicts are indiscriminately huddled under the heading of 'aggressiveness', without any question being asked as to the justice, right or truth of either side or about our duty

(in regard to these.)

~~in this connection.~~ We retire instead to the height of scientific detachment, from which the whole scene ^{of historic conflict} appears as one vast promiscuous brawl and whence we can view with equal superiority the figures of Hitler and Churchill, of Stalin and Attlee, as persons afflicted with the same unfortunate aggressiveness. Which may cause us to reflect that all these troubles could have been avoided if these men and their followers had in their infancy been nursed whenever they felt hungry and not been subjected to any early discipline.

Owing to the good sense of social anthropologists, social psychologists, etc. and of the public responding to them, this scientific masquerade may cause comparatively little harm. The men who fought the Battle of Britain did not stop speculating on the early repressions which generated the aggressiveness of the German airmen. And modern parents seem actually to respond more readily when taught by psychology that their children need a sense of security, than following their traditional duty to provide them with a peaceful and loving home. But nevertheless, this objectivist disguise of our moral deliberations is bound to be degrading and cannot fail to be mischievous to the extent to which it is not futile.

11.¹⁵ The rehabilitation of belief by a fiduciary philosophy may hope to restore the balance between observation and moral judgment in our approach to human affairs. For this we must learn fully to countenance the emotional liabilities incurred by believing. Belief is a desire; a cognitive desire: it implies the wish of seeing my belief corroborated. If I believe *p* and it turns out that *p* is false, this is a blow to my person, of which a belief in *p* forms part. For by the refutation of *p*, I loose the hold which I had felt to possess on the subject of *p* and am thus deprived of a power in which I had hitherto mentally indulged.

*Dishonouring of
liquidated
opponents in 1984 and
Huxley's description
of inquiry execution
Dicos! Dicos!
It shows in the spiritual flesh.*

May Law and public opinion

A solitary belief lacks force and reality; a belief is corroborated if others will come to agree with it. Therefore the desire to see our beliefs verified inevitably makes us desire also that others should share them. To believe p involves to some extent the desire to belong to a community of believers in p.

This is strictly true in respect to interpersonal beliefs which imply the desire of creating a society of believers. A belief in the reality of legal justice or of a public opinion guided by principles of fairness and mutual respect, affirms the possibility of a certain form of society; and insofar as the terms 'justice', 'fairness', 'mutual respect' implicitly commend what they refer to, the expression of my belief in them is a plea for a society which relies on these things I declare to be both real and good. My belief justifies the establishment of an independent judiciary and of a free press, and implies a defence of these institutions where they already exist. Indeed, as a rule such abstracts as reality of law, fairness and mutual respect, can be said to be believed in only to express our affection for a community whose practice ^{approximates} ~~can be described~~, however inadequately, ~~as~~ ^{rule} ~~relying on the reality~~ of law, fairness and mutual respect. My profession of these beliefs may be little more than a philosophic summary of my patriotic devotion to the civilisation which I am determined to defend.

Once the social rootedness and responsibility of all our conceptions regarding human affairs is clearly envisaged and accepted, we shall cease to aspire at a detachment which would lead to altogether meaningless results if ^d adhered strictly to its programme, and which must rely for making any effective contact with its subject on an ambiguous and often extravagant use of its conceptions.

12.¹⁴ However, a fiduciary philosophy which professes a belief in the reality of truth, justice, fairness or any other universal principle is in danger of involving itself in a

why believe if we know
the truth? how believe if
we don't? *Parmore's*
review of L. 7 C)

And of arriving at a conception of
man as a machine or as a
subject governed by historic necessity,
which deprives him of ^{causal} responsibility
initiative and makes him appear incapable
of ~~unfit~~ for acquiring and holding
valid belief.

logical paradox. If such things were universally real, then we could discover them by an objective and detached enquiry and there would be no justification left for expressing personal beliefs, admittedly animated by our desires and by the interests of a community to which we belong and wish to belong. But actually we cannot affirm these things to be real except in the form of a profession of our belief in them, which is interwoven with a whole realm of inarticulate cravings, both personal and communal. Nor can I evade the issue by taking the validity of these principles simply for granted; for even if I could neglect my own philosophic scruples, I would have to reply to a formidable challenge which calls in question the existence of any such universals. So that if I am to uphold these at all, I am thrown back on affirming them as my personal beliefs, even at the risk of appearing to admit that they are merely the ideology of a particular group which upholds them as part of its group interests.

Objectivism - we have seen in the previous Lecture - involves itself in self-contradiction by setting up criteria of validity in the light of which there remains nothing valid - not even the setting up of these criteria. Fiduciarism seems to be in danger of defining its own position in a manner which deprives itself from the justification of expressing its belief in any objective terms. It is the task of the conceptual reform to be undertaken in these pages to find a manner of expressing a belief in the existence of something, which will allow me to countenance my belief as a belief, without discrediting its content or the act by which I affirm it.