

**WORLDVIEWS, QUANDARIES AND
THE QUEST FOR ONTOLOGY**
Preliminary Considerations

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1. *Classical metaphysics and interdisciplinarity*

As classical metaphysics amply shows, problems of unity and diversity are central issues in any endeavour to construe, establish and justify a unitary picture, view or interpretation of the world as a whole. Generally speaking: if unity didn't exist, how could diversity be unified; and, if diversity didn't exist, what would be the point of unification? But, granting diversity *de facto* and unity *de iure*, whatever their final delineations and characteristics turn out to be, how is one to proceed successfully in a quest that more often than not verges on paradox, if it is not downright impossible? Last but not least, why should such an endeavour figure on the intellectual agenda at all, and, what's more, as a fundamental issue at that? We'll not insist on the notorious impasses, as they emerged first of all and most brilliantly in Plato's *Parmenides*, the problem of unification confronts us with. Suffice it to state that the issues of the one and the many, the same and the other, continuously have been the headache of those philosophers who have been considered to be the most serious and the most profound. And let's simply add that the "death of metaphysics" may be conceived with some reason to be but the final stage of the disease. Classical metaphysicians are intellectual invalids: their health, i.e. their common sense, has been impaired. Moreover, it may be assumed, with some reason as well, that the cause of this lamentable situation essentially, and paradoxically, has to do with the very success of classical metaphysics itself, as it was, partially at least, transformed into the sciences, natural and human alike. Accordingly, it seems plausible to

contend that the classical issue of monism and pluralism as such has been replaced progressively by the putative “unity of science” on the one hand, and by the effectively growing diversity of particular disciplines on the other. Whereas in classical times the unity sought for inevitably was designed to unify a diversity almost unknown, the consequence being that we were almost overwhelmed by “unity” writ large, in modern times we appear to be overwhelmed by diversity thoroughly explored, the consequence being that unity almost seems out of the question. In this sense, the quest for interdisciplinarity — multi-disciplinarity being a special issue itself, will not be touched upon in this context — may be considered to be the rightful heir of old and worn-out metaphysics. One might hope the change has been all for the better, because already in the beginning of the 19th century endeavours to put the quest for unity on a sound basis have been made, initially by thinkers promoting “inductive metaphysics”, as was evinced e.g. by the by now unknown German philosopher C. Chr. Fr. Krause in the “analytic” part of his “system”. And, for sure, the issue has been enlarged enormously — but perhaps to the point of being intractable. It is more poignant than ever, as diversity diversified has made us, as it seems, irretrievably fragmentary — perhaps to the point of extinction. And finally, we have at our disposal most powerful methods of synthesis for the material at hand — but perhaps to the point of making it unrecognizable. Everything, apparently, has changed. And yet, one has the weird impression that everything, nevertheless, has remained quite the same: generally speaking, modern moves of unification prove to be exactly analogous to classical ones.

This state of affairs, however, is not to be wondered at. For, after all, there are but two possibilities. Either the quest for unity derives its paradigm from one or another special discipline and domain, or one insists on taking an overview of all of them as it were from the outside. The first move is “reductionism”, as e.g. “physicalism” was for Logical Positivists. And the second is... God knows what, and consequently “classical” metaphysics in a new guise, as e.g. “monads” were a unifying concept for Leibniz. But what about it? Suppose, for the sake of argument, that we have reduced biology to chemistry, and chemistry to physics. What would that mean? Apparently, that the domain of physics is in fact larger than it was ever thought to be. But what difference such a move would make, if it were to succeed at all? Would such a “reduction” eliminate the difference, or even reduce it? By no means. It would make

no difference at all, no difference at least as far as human orientation in the world is concerned. To put the point somewhat ridiculously: snow is the same as water, and sure it is, and yet, all motorists know quite well that they remain as different as ever, even if they are “thought” to be the same. So what’s the point of reduction? For the same reasons, even if “central state materialism” were true, nobody in his senses ever would concede that the lived experience of his love, being like a red, red rose, is the same — even if, on reductionist principles, indeed it were — as, say, a neuronally conducted positively feedbacked electrical current. Knowledge of this kind, even if valid, wouldn’t be of any help in deciding to go in, or not, for the miseries of loving. So what’s the point, as far as orientation of man in the world is concerned? Otherwise said, for all practical purposes reduction “from below”, so to speak, seems to be a false move from the start. And the same seems to be true as well for “classical” approaches of the matter at hand, as they safely may be characterised as reduction “from above”: if everything is “monadic”, or water, or whatever else, the seemingly tenacious and irrepressible difference, e.g. between water and love and snow and neurons, and everything else as well, is not, all things considered, in the least touched upon. Whichever procedure of unification is applied, everything seems to remain precisely what it was: when it is different, as different as it was; when it is identical, as identical as ever. Succinctly put, whatever the force and the success of unification, i.e. of “reduction”, whatever the dialectics and dynamics the one and the many engage in, they remain as irreducible as ever they happened to be.

This is strange. The more so, if we consider the fact that precisely because diversity is so manifold, human beings on behalf of their orientation in the world apparently require the unity sought for. Most strange, however, is the fact that, even if unification is successful, it proves to be quite irrelevant. At least it is so, if “unification” is taken literally. And it must be so taken, because that’s what “reduction” is all about. For if it didn’t “literally” reduce the “many” to the “one”, how could it be of any help? It couldn’t have any palpable effect at all. Yet, if it succeeds, it hasn’t either. As may be clear by now, whether we are in for metaphysics or for interdisciplinarity, an awful dilemma arises. For our orientation in the world unity is required because diversity exists. Yet, if the world is unified, i.e. if diversity is eliminated, this unity proves to be irrelevant for our orientation. We have a problem, we solve it, and, if

effectively we do so, the solution proves to be beside the point. The problem in question is as much left alone, as the “one” and the “many” remain diverse. We as well might leave the quest for unification at its own devices. It seems to be misguided anyway.

Yet, it is not difficult to see what’s wrong. The preliminary condition of the quest is the existence of diversity. On behalf of the unity of our orientation the “unity” of the world is required. For otherwise the unity of orientation sought cannot be but fake, or inefficient at least. Consequently, on behalf of orientation in optima forma the unity must be real, i.e. it requires effective “reduction” of the many to the one. However, if this really is the case, if the unity of the world is effectively realised, the preliminary condition — the existence of diversity — is no longer in force, i.e. it is eliminated. And consequently, there is, or rather was, even initially, no question of orientation at all, and accordingly, no need for the quest of unity. In short, the problem has not been solved. Rather, it has been dissolved. But, as it exists, and needs to for the question simply to arise at all, the answer provided has been beside the point all along. And therefore, it is irrelevant, as indeed it proved to be. As long as orientation is in order and diversity exists, “unity” — in a sense yet to be clarified — is required. But, if orientation is required, “unity” — whatever that may mean — is but helpful if and only if diversity is left as it is. Therefore, unification, literally conceived, is indeed misguided from the outset. Yet, presumably, it cannot be conceived in any other way. For, as orientation is required for action, and action — effectively being what it is — is always “literal” in the world, whatever its diversity, the “unity” of orientation must be conceived to be as “literal” as the “unity” of the world... in order to be effective. Nobody ever actually killed or loved anyone, so to speak, figuratively or metaphorically. Man is oriented or he is not. And if he is, he is literally so. Consequently, classical metaphysics, the quest for the unification of diversity, because of its diversity, is misguided from the beginning, and — for the same reason — interdisciplinarity, the quest for the unity of all disciplines, because they are many, is so as well. We’ll better give up.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to do so. Interdisciplinarity, the quest for “unity” in orientation, or metaphysics for that matter, cannot be given up, and yet they cannot be conceived — as we saw — either “from below”, as in most modern endeavours, or “from above”, as in most classical ones. For in both cases, they prove to be trivial. And they are

trivial, because, traditionally speaking, they needs must be “literally” conceived. And that’s as much impossible as it is counterproductive. Yet, traditionally speaking, they cannot be conceived “figuratively” or “metaphorically” either. If “hard science” exists, as nuclear bombs convincingly attest, there’s “hard reality” too, and that’s the reality we have to be oriented in, whether we’re bound to love or to kill. And that’s reality, if anything is. Words may be fictitious. Indeed, most of them are. But reality, humankind, and orientation are not. And consequently, metaphysics and interdisciplinarity, if they are to be what they presume and need to be, the quest for all-round, i.e. unitary orientation in the world, better be not either. But, if so, what are they? For human beings, for finite, partially self-organising, epistemic entities in the world, the answer seems simple : they are neither “ante rem” nor “post rem”, they are “in re”. To take this stance, and whatever it implies, is, in our opinion, the only way to eschew the final emptiness of the enterprise. Accordingly, what follows is an ontological outline of preliminaries required to put metaphysics and/or interdisciplinarity on a new footing that will be able, let’s hope, to safeguard the quest for unity from the charge of triviality.

2. *Ontology and civilisation*

Nobody will deny that humanity on the eve of the third millennium has manoeuvred itself into a critical position on a global scale. Man, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, actually finds himself in a highly dangerous, even in a catastrophic condition. Certainly, one might be inclined to pretend — the more so the situation seems to get worse — that our plight is critical indeed, but merely because it is a vice in fashion, i.e. an affectation, cultural, intellectual and even artistic, and consequently something “interesting”, as one is wont to say, something permanent but at the same time evanescent: all in all, simply cultural “dressing-up”. But are we not, in fact, like Adam and Eve, naked once again for ourselves and before the world, whatever garments we put on to hide our perplexity? For this neutralisation, or rather, more exactly, this trivialisation of the crisis we are in for — and this also is a vice in fashion — is, if not indecent, at least somewhat dishonest. It’s no use beating about the bush. In fact, two observations impose themselves. First, the crisis is fundamental: the totality of our Greek, Judaic and Christian civilisation and, in particular,

its philosophical tradition from Plato to our day, is, one way or another, put into question in a radical fashion. This civilisation and its tradition are even put to trial, naturally however before a tribunal — philosophical or not — the authority and competence of which is most vague and consequently highly contestable. A state of affairs which, evidently, doesn't prevent the accusation from being the more insistent. Let's face the facts: our civilisation, while conquering the whole world with its Industrial Revolution, is patently incapable of solving in a satisfactory way the conflicts and problems it has thereby generated. "To keep the conversation going" is without doubt a fine thing to do. But the question is not whether or not we are going to have conversation. The question is primarily: "Conversation about what?". And finally: "To conclude what?", and: "How to do something about it?". There's no virtue in talking merely for the sake of talking. The virtue — if ever there is — is in what you decide to do and, even more, in the consequences of what has been done accordingly. Wisdom and foolishness are final. Moreover, and secondly, the crisis is universal: actually all non-European civilisations, great and small, are as incapable as we are of solving the conflicts and problems they are confronted with. Certainly, those problems and conflicts have been imposed upon them, one way or another, as a consequence of the "imperialism" — a word merely convenient — of our own civilisation. But there they are, and no civilisation can afford to negate or to neglect them without thinking and acting itself out of existence. For short, traditional societies are as impotent as we are as far as satisfactory solutions are concerned. Perhaps, at this juncture, an hypothesis may be proposed: the crisis is fundamental and universal precisely because it can pertinently be compared with the transformation which has overtaken humanity some ten thousand years ago — a transition that took about two thousand years — from our paleolithic to our neolithic state. The so-called Industrial Revolution — the very revolution of our times and the only one that, catastrophe aside, seems to be really irreversible — has landed us in a position of transition, even in a "liminal" state, which without exaggeration may be called "epi-neolithic". Indeed, if we limit ourselves to what has been called "philosophy", i.e. to the fundamental categories and concepts we used to have to interpret and organise human life, it is clear that in all cultural traditions we know of, they are manifestly neolithic in origin and in intent. Consequently, whatever we are culturally, is in essence neolithic. And those concepts and categories,

foundational and justificative, are, in this time of times, naturally and unmistakably incapable of elaborating and establishing what may be called a “worldview” which could provide us with satisfactory solutions for the “post-neolithic” conflicts and problems that are ours. In other words, it is as necessary to remake “philosophy” as it is necessary to remake the world we live in, if ever we love to be. Humanity is in search of itself. And it must find itself, or, more exactly, it must invent itself anew, if ever it wants to survive. Indeed, nothing can be more evident than this, if it is true, as Whitehead once said, that our philosophy is nothing but a series of footnotes to Plato, and if, analogically, all non-European philosophy is but a series of footnotes, immense and proliferate, to literary texts one used to call, for diverse reasons, “sacred”. Such, in consequence, is the state of humanity and its predicament to date in the world at large. But how are we to solve the gigantic problems of this very absence of perspective and how are we to controvert this all-round disorientation? That is the question which, if we are not merely satisfied with talking, is fundamentally and universally ours. However — and this remark must be deemed essential, as it concerns the cultural status of “philosophy” as such — do we really need “philosophy”? Isn’t it possible to dispense with it altogether? Isn’t philosophy, as it was traditionally conceived, simply “intellectual folklore”, as much so as our belated and worn-out neolithic civilisations which we have had and to our detriment still have, and which cannot serve any purpose but to convince us that, humanitarian considerations notwithstanding, they must be put out of service as soon as possible? The answer to this “metaphilosophical” and “metacultural” nihilism is extremely simple, not to say astonishingly banal. If we weren’t, as Schopenhauer said, “metaphysical animals”, “crisis” wouldn’t be in fashion, it couldn’t be real, and even the word “crisis” wouldn’t exist. The phenomenon as such would be inconceivable, not to say, downright impossible. Man wouldn’t be the “problematic” species he incontrovertibly is. He would be an animal like all others, for the simple reason he wouldn’t have any “culture” in the full sense of the word. But, as we all know, the history of mankind from its very beginning, even the history of “Homo Neanderthaliensis” makes for the contrary. Man has been made such that he cannot bypass his — partial — self-determination. And, indeed, this fact is the basis of what may be called his “cultural state” and its implementation in a civilisation, and, if we limit ourselves to the “generating kernel” of this characteristic

of his being, his “philosophy”, i.e. his answer to the fundamental, universal and ineluctable question: “What to do with life, with this “gap” between two non-entities, which presumably is unique, of which he must make sense, and for which, consequently, he must find a content that ideally will justify him — all passion spent — in saying :”Thus it has been well”? To give no answer to this ultimate question is to go in for barbarity in the first place and finally for nothingness as such. Man cannot live, he cannot survive, without an answer to this question which, by nature, is what traditionally has been called “philosophy”, a world-view, and therefore essentially “ontology”. But, once more, how to get out of the impasse we, avatars of culture, find ourselves in?

3. *The ethics of interdisciplinarity*

Let’s agree then — were it but for the sake of argument — that man as a cultural animal cannot do without a view of the world which provides him with a more or less explicit and putatively convincing answer to the primordial question of his being and of his awareness of the world and of himself. For, if this were not so, the question of philosophy wouldn’t and couldn’t occur. Man would have no problems at all, and a fortiori the search for solutions would be futile. Non-problematic man couldn’t but solve problems that really were none, and consequently they couldn’t have but solutions that were none as well. “Philosophy”, just like “culture”, would be but fiction, even innocent fiction at that. However, as we all know, culture and philosophy aren’t that easy-going, free-wheeling and empty. The problems are quite real, whether they are real indeed, or false or even fictitious, just as solutions can be real, false or finally fictitious. This inexorable fact then is the first abutment, even the “point of no return”, of all “problems of orientation”, of all “worldviews”, of all “philosophy”, and in particular of any “ontology” whatsoever. And such an ontology needs must be foundational. It is absolutely necessary that this perspective on man and his world be established on a firm and convincing base, that such foundations can be justified, in fact that such ontological foundations indeed procure and justify the ontology of the world and of man in the world, that man and the world effectively are what the ontology in question says they are. But why this justification, this “foundation of foundations”? Wouldn’t it be preferable, infinitely

preferable even, simply to acquiesce in the worldview at hand, whatever its contents, as it presents itself, in lieu of trying to justify it at all, were it but for the simple reason that such an endeavour seems to be contradictory, and consequently downright impossible? Indeed, the ultimate nature of ontology — the systematic exposition of the fundamental and universal characteristics of all being and of man in particular — and the elementary structure of all foundational procedures of necessity imply that such an attempt — and this is well-known — immediately runs up against either *petitio principii* or *regressus ad infinitum*. Let's be clear about it. The ontology in question is verily "ontological", and in this case the justification of the foundations it proposes cannot but be found in the very ontology itself. In consequence, if the ontology is really ontological, it cannot be justified but by itself: man and the world are such and such... because — holy simplicity! — that's precisely what they are. On the other hand, if the ontology is not what it ought to be on its own premises, it will require a foundational move until one reaches the ultimate foundation of man and the world, the "true ontology" so to speak, and consequently an ontology which, once again, proves its own truth simply by being what it is. Ontologies, one might surmise, cannot be justified: they are but proposed, posed and expressed as such, and as such they impose themselves... or they do not. Or, to express ourselves somewhat less dogmatically, they are nothing but proposals, which are accepted or which are not, and as such an ontology is nothing but a choice, and therefore, immediately, nothing but a preference that, philosophically speaking, is simply arbitrary. If one cannot acquiesce in this lamentable state of all "ontology", *regressus* is inevitable, and in consequence, one needs will come inexorably to the conclusion that no ontology whatsoever is ever what in principle it ought to be. All thinkable ontologies are dreams. And in so far as man cannot dispense with them, he inevitably will be a dreaming animal that never will or even can wake up. And this state of affairs is, indeed, the fundamental, universal and subterranean theme of all endeavours at ontological justification, as is attested by the history without end of the dogmatical and sceptical quagmires, as we know them to date, sad and depressing as they are, of all philosophical justificatory procedures or, rather, of all temptations of this abortive kind. It would indeed be preferable — as we said — to part company with illusions of this kind and to be contented with whatever view of the world is available, even if this view is merely a convention stumbled over

and — precisely because it is but that — nothing else, after all, but a vice in fashion. For, ontologically speaking, it cannot be otherwise. It appears there can be no other solution: quintessentially poppy makes for sleep because it has the virtue of drowsiness. And here we are then, at the end of the 20th century, at the eve of a new era, of “postmodernity”, or, to be somewhat more precise, at the eve of a pre-post-neolithic period. Nevertheless, the apparent impossibility of any alternative notwithstanding, this solution, or rather “dissolution” of the problem of human self-determination in the world — which is, whatever we may pretend to the contrary, as old as philosophy itself — is radically unacceptable. The reason, the unique reason even, why this is so for any honest man and for all men of goodwill, seems at first sight not to be philosophical at all. However, if one looks more closely into the matter, the reason in question turns out to be eminently philosophical, even ontological par excellence. In fact, it is the existence pure and simple of human suffering, and, more precisely, the existence of needless suffering, the gratuitous misery of life that could have been avoided... if we had at our disposal philosophies not that careless as far as foundations are concerned and a bit less silly as far as the ideas are concerned they were and are wont to subscribe to.

Let’s explain. There are too many ontologies and too many worldviews in circulation, they are irreconcilable, and, what is worse, none of them can provide us with “conventions” that, to simplify matters somewhat, are on a par with the period and its troubles. The consequence of this “state of nothingness” is threefold. First, these ontologies, in the civilisations they happen to be the ontology of, create problems, even fatal ones, which after all are problems only because they have but been engendered by the ontologies in question, and by nothing else. They are fictitious, but they are. This is the general problem of prejudice, illusion and self-deception, individually and collectively made real. These problems — culturally characteristic — are unsolvable, not because they effectively are so — for they are not even problems in the real sense of the word — but precisely because they are illusory. And accordingly they are unsolvable a priori, for, being mere make-believe, any solution in principle is a solution in kind. But naturally — self-fulfilling prophecies being, as one might expect, somewhat malevolent — the ensuing suffering in the cultural milieu concerned is doubtlessly real. This misery is needless and gratuitous but, as might be expected, not in the least less painful for that.

On the contrary, precisely because it could have been avoided, it is much more painful, to the point of being unbearable, than the suffering which proves to be inevitable, even if that suffering is — as generally is the case — accidental. In short, suffering of this kind is unacceptable as such. Secondly, there are intercultural problems which, as culture is necessary but at the same time conventional, cannot be solved, even if in principle a solution is possible, because by convention and consequently fortuitously the cultural milieus concerned are incompatible on the contentious point. Understandably the inevitable result of this sore state of affairs is that such a contradiction cannot be solved but by violence, i.e. by the destruction of the conflict as such, and accordingly, evidently and effectively, by the suffering, if not the death, of the unhappy people who, because of their cultural identity and their historical position, are, so to speak, caught up in the snare of their own undiscussable conventionality, which — all things being said — finally proves to be somewhat inconvenient. These problems are as fictitious as the ones lately considered — though it is possible in this case that a satisfactory solution may be found — but they are and remain unsolvable, as it were, by the “magic” of cultural illusion, so that, by convention, finally there is no other solution available for the antagonists than to knock out the brains of those who happen to have got other conventions in their heads. The phenomenon is well-known. And the problem is, more often than not, in theory fictitious, theatrical and accordingly staged, but in practice bloody most of the time. That’s a pity, but so it is. And precisely because it is so — whereas it could be otherwise — this needless and gratuitous suffering is once more unacceptable as such. Thirdly, actually any traditional cultural milieu and consequently its ontology is confronted with real problems, whatever their origin, which — and, in the light of what has been said earlier, this is highly plausible — cannot get solved in a responsible, practicable and satisfying way within the framework of the ontological premises involved. It follows that these ontologies, traditional and conventional as they are — and there are no others — either propose solutions which, as often happens, really are none, which inexorably leads, once again, to suffering in principle needless and gratuitous, or else procure no orientation at all, and consequently leave people in the dark without any indication, not even an heuristic one, which, the solution being haphazard, statistically leads, once more, to suffering in general needless and gratuitous. And, in consequence, unacceptable. Evidently,

the true reason for this triple misery is the fact that these ontologies — the foundational ideas and categories of culture — we conceived and developed in our neolithic past — and one is bound to refer to the problem of justification and to the patent impossibility of devising a solution for it — simply are arbitrary. Humanity never was orientated in the world and in itself in an appropriate, rigorous and consequently justifiable way. Culture, and in its wake ontology, the premises of human orientation, i.e. self-programming, has never been anything but patchwork, and neolithic patchwork at that. One ought to make an end of it. But, once again, how? And, in fact, must one do so? Why not accept this suffering — if it is suffering indeed — ... by convention? There is, as far as I know, no convincing answer to this, let's concede it bluntly, rather outrageous question. The only thing that can be said about the subject simply is that anyone who asks this question and gets rid of it by shrugging his shoulders, is a man devoid of goodwill, and, moreover, a being showing off an indifference that verbally is superhuman but that in fact is downright illusory. Mankind is not made of such hard stuff. In contradistinction to the infrahuman, the superhuman is beyond our ken. Such a question therefore simply is not worth answering. It follows that the problem of ontology is ineluctable for humanity at large and for all of us in particular. The problem effectively exists, and in consequence it is and must be envisaged. But, again, how is it to be solved?

4. *Ontological prerequisites*

Before proceeding with the exposition of the move we shall propose, it will be useful and even necessary to clarify two points. First, we have to explain the origin of the ontological impasse that apparently proved to be unavoidable. And secondly we have to determine what an ontology must be like and what can be expected from it. Now, it seems to us that the "point of no return" indicated earlier is the key to the solution of both problems, which, moreover, are intimately connected. Let's see why.

The fundamental and universal problem of philosophy and consequently of self-programming is, as was said, the following: "What is to be done with the interval between birth and death?". This question is ultimate and it is unique. Any other question or query, any other problem is secondary and derivative. In other words, only this problem really exists as such:

de facto and the iure it is the sine qua non of any problems whatsoever. If this question didn't exist, no others could be posed, they would be inconceivable or at least they inevitably would lose all urgency and pertinence. Now, ontology, it is thought, has to provide us with the outline and the premises of such an answer, and in consequence is itself secondary in a certain sense: insight into the universal and fundamental structure of the world and of man in the world is but interesting, possible and at the same time necessary for us, if and when, and only if and when, this unique question, which in the last resort essentially is an ethical one, is effectively real. Ontology comes second, its importance is derivative, it is conditional, plainly and completely, upon the human necessity for self-determination. That's the primordial question. And it is unique: there are no other questions of the same kind. However, this self-programmation precisely presupposes the "self-referentiality" which, in so far as it is imagined to be total, is at the origin of the ontological impasse indicated above. Man is the only animal that can commit suicide, not only really but also intellectually. It follows that no possible and acceptable ontology can be unconditional in the traditional all-including sense without immediately running into the quagmire of dogmatism and scepticism. One has to conclude therefore that a possible and putatively valuable ontology needs must be conditional and that it cannot without contradiction be otherwise conceived. Nevertheless, ontology needs must be unconditional as well, if, indeed, one has to interpret it as the exposition and explanation of the universal and fundamental categories of the world and man. How then to proceed in order to establish an ontology that presumably must have it both ways? To resolve this new impasse — which is in fact but the metaphilosophical and therefore also, immediately again, philosophical form of the problem — we have to ask ourselves which characteristics an ontology must have and which functions it has to fulfil in order to provide an acceptable answer to the primordial, vital and moral question of our human condition, namely the question of programmation, however partial, as it is implied in human culture in general. Now, it seems to us that a pertinent ontology, i.e. one that in principle can provide us with a real and consequently putatively practical answer, must satisfy at least three conditions.

First, evidently, the ontology required must be — as the term itself indicates — effectively ontological, i.e. it must establish and exhibit canonically the essential nature and characteristics of all possible entities

in the world and of man in particular. This formulation simply states the definitional requirement of the pertinence, the generality and the foundational character of the endeavour as traditionally conceived, and in this context it need not be commented upon: they are the trade-mark of ontology as such, or the discipline simply has no point to make.

Secondly, more importantly, the ontology must be epistemic as well. Indeed, the universal and fundamental structure of all entities evidently and necessarily implies that this structure must be at the same time the fundamental and universal structure of all epistemic subjects. In other words, the ontology of the world immediately must be the ontology of all knowledge of the world, of all we know and of all that presumably can be known. If this was not the case, the ontology wouldn't be what it ought to be: the complete and adequate system of all elementary categories of all entities of the universe. It is obligatory that all that is ontologically true of the world is immediately true also of all knowledge of the world, especially of the ontology in question itself as "knowledge" of the world. And this necessity implies that the ontology be not only the ontology of the world and of all knowledge of the world, but also that, from an epistemological point of view, it must be, so to speak, "epistemically accessible". In fact, it is man as an epistemic subject who, on the basis of his initial question about his orientation and accordingly his self-determination in the world — however partial — must search, find, elaborate and establish the ontology he needs. It is evident therefore that the ontology he provides himself with must be accessible epistemically, for otherwise it wouldn't and couldn't be his: the ontology couldn't be thought and accordingly it couldn't even be expressed. In other words, if the ontology in question really is the ontology of the world, if it is indeed what it must pretend to be, it is necessary that it must be possible to deduce from the ontology that it is accessible, that it can be known in its entirety by an epistemic subject in the world for whom this ontology effectively is the true one. This requirement too is an a priori condition of all possible ontology. For, if not, the ontology would be inaccessible for the epistemic subject concerned, and consequently — even if true in an absolute sense — illusory and arbitrary. Ontology is onto-epistemic or it simply doesn't exist. There must be identity between these two levels of reality and, moreover, this identity must be complete. Indeed, if one has to know — as one ought to — that the ontology really and indubitably is the ontology of the world, if one wants it to be — and one must want

this — certain, adequate and complete, the ontology must be a priori, i.e. the essential nature and structure of all possible and thinkable or, rather, of all thinkable and possible worlds. In other words, the ontology must be accessible in its entirety a priori, and consequently onto-epistemic identity is required as such. Being and thinking must have the same fundamental characteristics: the ontology of the entities of the world exactly and rigorously must be, and it cannot be anything else, the ontology of all possible epistemic subjects in the selfsame world as well. It is clear however the converse does not hold: although all ontology must be epistemic, not all epistemology is, nor can be, ontological. Their relation is asymmetrical: their unity is but ontologically true. Indeed, if this unity did not exist, either the ontology in question wouldn't be accessible, or it wouldn't be complete, as the epistemic subject as such wouldn't be included in the ontology. The subject would be, so to speak, outside the universe of the ontology in question. And this fact evidently would falsify a priori the ontology concerned. Moreover, the consequence of this necessary unity is that the ontology must be unique. If not, it wouldn't any longer be at the same time the ontology of the world and of its epistemic subjects. Moreover, the ontology in question cannot include anything else, for, in this case, it wouldn't any more enunciate the essential characteristics of all thinkable and knowable beings, but at most the ontology of a class of entities. It would be more than necessary, and consequently, ontologically speaking, superfluous. It would be a regional ontology or the ontology of a particular world, the characteristics of which couldn't be derived from the ontology *qualitate qua*. And it cannot include less, because, in this case, it wouldn't be sufficient to characterise all entities, all being and all thinking. Consequently these requirements imply the uniqueness of ontology. No ontology can be accessible but one that characterises in general all knowable ontic and epistemic entities. And ontology cannot be conceptualised in any other way: its generality excludes plurality and the requirement of thinkability excludes all variation. The ontology envisaged — and it must be envisaged to answer our primordial question — needs must be onto-epistemic, necessary and sufficient, unique and unified. Moreover, it is precisely this onto-epistemic requirement that paradoxically makes for the conditionally unconditional nature of ontology as such. Indeed, an ontology like this, that is provably the only one that possibly can satisfy our ontological needs, i.e. our need for orientation in the world, could very

well not be — in an absolute sense — the ontology of the world and of its epistemic subjects “as they are in themselves”. But this hypothesis cannot in any way embarrass us. It simply doesn’t concern us. For such an hypothesis — that always and everywhere can be made — is empty, for the simple reason that it is epistemically inaccessible. It could well be that the world in itself and its epistemic subjects might be “totally” otherwise than we, epistemic subjects in the world, could ever think or ever could be aware of. But we will never know this. And it is provably impossible that we ever could. Such hypotheses therefore are, as it were, excluded from the world. They are onto-epistemically empty, because in principle they have nothing to do and they cannot have anything to do with the initial and central motive, with the primordial point of no return of our philosophical and cultural query, i.e. the problem of our orientation in the world. An ontology designed to answer such questions cannot guide us either in the world or in ourselves. It is superfluous, and, as far as real problems are concerned, it is non-existent. That’s the reason why the ontology required, which is at the same time possible and necessary, is conditional. Its primordial condition is, to put it bluntly, the acceptance of the world and of man in the world, i.e. the acceptance of the problem of human orientation and of cultural self-programmation. If man accepts to live, if he, as an ontic entity and as an epistemic subject, accepts the world and his position in it, he is at the same time obliged to accept this onto-epistemic ontology, that is theoretically — and as we shall see in fact as well — the only one that in principle can provide him with a real and effective orientation in the world, which — precisely for this reason and for this reason alone — is in principle capable of satisfying his needs as a human being in the world. This does not mean, as we already said, that this privileged — because uniquely accessible — ontology is objective in an absolute sense. But it is objective relatively so, as it were, as it is the inevitable ontology of an entity in the world that is at the same time an epistemic subject in the universe. And it is in this world, whereof he is part and parcel, that he is in need of ontology. For in another world such questions are beside the point. Ontological queries are exclusively real and even imaginable in the interval of life, between birth and death. The rest, if there is such a thing, is inaccessible in principle. It follows that this onto-epistemic ontology is conditional in a precise sense. It presupposes a choice, namely the acceptance of existence as such in the world such as it, eventually, turns out to be. In conse-

quence, it presupposes what may be called — I don't know of any better term — a certain "religiosity": the religiousness that accepts a priori, fully and unconditionally the fact of being in the world, consequently the acceptance of birth, life and death, without any "absolute" ontological or, for that matter, classical religious "explanation" or "excuse" whatever. In other words, the ontology required implies that our existence and more generally the existence of all entities in the world and of the universe at large is an inexplicable mystery, even that it is inappropriate to try to explain it, because such an explanation — if ever, and miraculously at that, it were possible — would be patently superfluous, simply because by definition it would serve no purpose whatever and would in any case lead us nowhere. Such an ontology wouldn't and couldn't orientate man, nor any entity whatever, in the universe it is part and parcel of. Rather, as we shall see, it would catapult such entities out of the universe altogether. Ontologies of this kind — and here we essentially have to do with the ontologies that traditionally have been elaborated, especially in our European cultural history — are perhaps, in an absolute sense, true. Nobody knows or can know. But for the same reason they make no sense either. They are epistemically inaccessible in the world and, moreover, as such they have no power of orientation in any conceivable sense. From this point of view, i.e. precisely because of their implicit or explicit transcendence, they are congenial to real suicide that from the beginning doesn't accept birth, life and death as such. Philosophically they are a form of intellectual suicide, and one of the most insidious at that. Indeed, they don't and can't orientate really and effectively, they can by definition only do "as if". And, for this reason, they are but illusions in the full sense and, moreover, illusions which are superfluous by their very nature. No wonder that most of our cultural heritage, and of neolithic culture at large, has been and is up to now merely make-believe, that however, like all self-fulfilling prophecies, made and make itself true in history as it, factually, verily was and is.

In the third place, and most importantly, this conditional unconditionality implies that the ontology required for effective orientation is not only factual but normative as well. It is evident however that from the ontological point of view simpliciter the question of normativity simply cannot arise. Such normativity — and the primordial and elementary religiosity of the epistemic entity accepting to live and die attests to this — would be inaccessible. The world is, so to speak, as Charles S. Peirce would

say, “absolute chance”. It is fortuitous, and if, in one sense or another, it ought to be, it is certain that this “must” and/or “ought” escapes us completely and by definition. Such thoughts are, traditionally speaking, godlike — if they are anything at all — and as such they are not accessible to epistemic entities which are part and parcel of the world. But epistemically, for a subject that up to a certain point has to programme itself, the question of normativity is essential. Indeed, it is essential, the ontology is normative or it simply doesn’t exist, precisely because it is conditional. In other words, as ontological queries exist, it is necessary, factually and normatively, in so far as the question of ontology is posed, that the ontology that is effectively possible and putatively our own, be not only factual but normative as well. For it must be possible, for the question of ontology to arise in the first place, that consciousness as such, and ours in particular, be capable of thinking that it is not bound by the ontology that in fact is ours. In other words, thinking must be capable of misrepresenting itself and the world. This is an error, but this error — that, as one may surmise, must be attributed to vicious, i.e. “total” self-reference which implies the collapse of all ontological endeavours and of all ontology as such — is comprehensible precisely and exclusively in the framework of the onto-epistemic ontology as it has been outlined above. Indeed, in this ontology, it is precisely an epistemic subject that is maximally flexible — and this implies self-reference — that can in principle know its world and itself in an optimal way, and that, for this very reason effectively is in search of ontology in the first place. In other terms, it is the necessity of the ontological query as such, which implies that the epistemic subject this ontology is required for can imagine that it can transcend its proper ontological conditions, i.e. that it can construe and, as we shall see later, will construe ontologies that are not its own, ontologies that for him cannot be true in so far as they are — from its real ontological point of view — not accessible. In other words, if there is to be, for any epistemic entity whatsoever, an ontological problem to be solved, the entity needs must be capable of “illusion”. And that’s precisely what was and is the case almost always and everywhere. If this were not so, there wouldn’t be an ontological problem, no problem of orientation, no culture, no civilisation, and consequently no philosophy at all. Everything would be evident, i.e. it simply would be what it is without more ado. The ontology required, if ever it is required, therefore

is normative by definition. Otherwise it couldn't have any function at all. But, as there is onto-epistemic identity ontologically speaking, there is by definition factual and normative identity on the ontological level, but not necessarily, far from it, from the epistemic point of view. On this level ontological conditions are patently and completely normative. It is precisely because the ontology is, factually speaking, the ontology of the world, that the knowledge of this world in this world can be erroneous, can even be erratic, and that, in consequence, the real ontology of the world — apparently as far as consciousness and thinking are concerned — can be neglected, negated and denied by its epistemic subjects. If this was not so, once more, there wouldn't be any ontological problem as such — and it exists — and, moreover, there wouldn't be any epistemic problem as well. In fact, ontologically the possibility of error would be excluded. But evidently, and not only from an epistemic point of view but ontologically as well, this possibility is ontological or, to be more precise, it is — as it ought to be if this view is right — onto-epistemic as such. For any ontology of the world it is, indeed, of necessity required that it must include the possibility of epistemic error. For otherwise there wouldn't be any problem at all. For ontology, in so far as it has, and must have, normative implications, there must of necessity possibly be epistemic error, just as there is possibly factual failure and collapse on the ontological level. Therefore it is precisely the onto-epistemic parallelism and identity outlined above which guarantees the ontological fact that any epistemic entity in the world is normatively subject to the onto-epistemic conditions of the universe, namely that there is possibility of epistemic error and of ontological failure, and that, moreover, for any epistemic entity ontic collapse in principle is and in practice ought to be avoided epistemically as far as possible, precisely because for the ontology required its point of no return effectively is, and cannot be anything else, but our effective and successful orientation in the universe and in ourselves.

To conclude, no ontology whatever is possible, i.e. is effectively capable of satisfying its function, if it is not ontologically and epistemically provably true, necessary, sufficient, unique and, moreover, epistemically normative.

5. Ontological requirements and conditions of detriivialisation

Let's formulate these requirements alternatively. A world, and man in the world, cannot be thought of but under conditions that make for the fact that they are problematical. This requirement synthesizes the claims ontology must satisfy in order to be possible at all. In other words, it is a priori. Indeed, if one wants there to be a problem of orientation for man in the world — and this is a consequence, as we saw, of elementary religiosity — it is absolutely necessary to accept this ontological stance. Moreover, it precisely exhibits the conditions we need in order to be orientated in the world at all. In other words, these requirements are not only the conditions needed for there being problems as such, they are at the same time the basis and starting-point of any possible solutions of all problems whatsoever. In consequence, it is precisely this ontology, let's call it the ontology of "conditions of detriivialisation", i.e. this unique and unified, onto-epistemic and normative ontology, that founds and explicates the conditions required for there being any problem whatever. Alternatively said, there is no other ontology possible but one that founds and explicates the "dramatic" character of the world and, at the same time, the "problematic" character of all consciousness and thinking as such. If there is to be man in the world, if there is to be a question of orientation, i.e. of culture, civilisation, philosophy and consequently ontology, it needs must be that man in the world, that the world for man and man for himself, are subject to the necessary and sufficient conditions required for consciousness and thinking to be "problematic" and for the world and its entities to be "conflictual". These conditions consequently will be the universal and fundamental characteristics of all entities that are conflictual and problematic and, moreover, they will be, for that very reason, at the same time the preliminary onto-epistemic conditions of all "being there" and of all "being so and so". This, then, is the ontology required — its metaphilosophy is its philosophy — and there can be no other, first because all "being" that doesn't satisfy these conditions is not problematical and/or conflictual and therefore is and must be unproblematical and/or unconflictual as such, and secondly because this ontology precisely and exclusively is the prerequisite of the existence of all "conflicts" and all "problems", and consequently of all problems of orientation, especially of man in the world. Indeed, it is clear that non-problematical and non-conflictual entities don't pose any problems at all, and

consequently don't require any solution either, and, last but not least, don't and cannot require any ontological considerations at all. Entities of this kind don't have and cannot have any importance whatever, they cannot have any significance and, what is more, they are — a priori — epistemically inaccessible, at least — and even by definition — for entities that effectively are conflictual and problematical. Succinctly said, entities of this kind are not part and parcel of the world: they are “otherworldly” in principle. Such, to summarise, are the conditions of all ontology, of all worlds, or, alternatively said and generally speaking, of the only possible ontology and the only possible world. It must be insisted upon that these “conditions of detriivialisation” are the only possible ones — they are “absolute” immanently — because any ulterior specification wouldn't have the generality required by all ontology as such. All supplementary conditions of conflictual and/or problematical “being there” and “being so and so” are specific: they delimit, if they really exist and are elaborated, as such at the most a “regional” ontology. And an ontology of this kind, however interesting, is not conceivable a priori, but only a posteriori, i.e. it presupposes the “givenness” of the world as it is, concretely and regionally, epistemically accessible for a subject. For short, the only thing one really knows, but then a priori and with certainty, is the fact — the “absolute chance” event — that there is effectively “conflictuality” and “problemacity”. This is the only philosophical content, and contention, that is accessible a priori and in its entirety, precisely because it simply explicates the necessary and sufficient conditions, the conditions of detriivialisation, of problemacity and/or conflictuality as such. Ontology therefore is at the same time philosophical and metaphilosophical as it is ontological and meta-ontological as well. Moreover, and this is of the utmost importance as far as orientation is concerned, it must be pointed out that any activity, any action, and all thinking and thought is theoretically and practically, and of necessity, subject to these onto-epistemic conditions of detriivialisation. In fact, if a conflict exists, if a problem is posed, it is clear that a solution, theoretical and practical, is really none and cannot be one, unless it is arrived at under these conditions. Any other solution, theoretical and/or practical, i.e. a solution that doesn't respect these conditions, that denies or neglects them, is and cannot be but an illusion and, moreover, an illusion a priori. What is more, if the conflict and/or the problem in question is described in a manner that in any way violates these conditions, even the problem

and/or conflict concerned is, for that very reason, illusory a priori. It is fake: it is a pseudo-conflict and/or a pseudo-problem, and nothing else. Now, it is provably so — though we cannot go into the details here — that the large majority of the ontological solutions of our “metaphysical tradition” and of other neolithic traditions as well are, more or less, in essence precisely of this kind. Our philosophical and religious “gods” do not and cannot, in principle, describe and/or explain anything. They merely mix things up and make for confusion. Moreover, that’s the reason too why the ontological quest of man inevitably and immediately runs into the impasse of regressus ad infinitum and petitio principii. In fact, classical ontologies essentially don’t satisfy the conditions of detri-
vialisation. If they were true — as they needs must intend to be — there wouldn’t and couldn’t be any conflicts and/or problems at all. And if there are problems and/or conflicts — and this is effectively the case — these so-called ontological solutions are at the same time, and for the same reason, de facto and de iure epistemically inaccessible, transcendent and, consequently, worthless. For — and that is an unavoidable consequence of their nature — they cannot make for orientation in the world, they can, almost postmodernly, merely pretend to do so. They cannot fulfil their function — their only function — and they cannot do so a priori. In short, they are but cultural illusions or, inversely, illusions of culture, i.e. of auto-determination and self-programmation, that generally and most of the time are not recognised as such. And — and this is our final point — precisely these conditions of detri-
vialisation and the ensuing but at the same time primordial problem of orientation qualitate qua can explain this baffling, weird, yet comprehensible and widespread phenomenon of “cultural illusoriness”. Indeed, if there is to be any problem and consequently any ontological problem, at least, as we have said, “error” must be possible. It follows that, ontologically speaking, an ontology, the putatively true essential vision of man and the world, can be false. And this cannot be the case, if it is not ontologically possible that conditions of detri-
vialisation can be ignored, neglected or even denied by an epistemic and, consequently, ontic entity. Therefore, it is necessarily so, ontologically, that there are, or at least can be, ontic and epistemic subjects which can think and act in a trivial way, because, implicitly or explicitly, their ontology — their view of man and the world — is, indeed, empty. Moreover, ontologically speaking, this state of affairs is the only possible source of error: any ontology that in its universal and

fundamental structure of the world, in its categories and their relations, in its premises and presuppositions violates all, some or even one condition of detrivialisation is provably, for that reason alone, *de facto* and *de iure*, trivial. In other terms, any ontology of this kind is false *a priori*, or rather — if it isn't false from an "absolute" point of view, and possibly, in an absolute but at the same time incomprehensible sense this may be the case — it is false for us "absolutely", because under conditions of detrivialisation such an ontology of necessity is epistemically inaccessible and consequently necessarily unfounded and, for that reason, simply arbitrary. The less one knows about the world, the more one can think of it. And if one knows nothing about something, one can, more often than not, think everything about it. It's simply the night all cows are black in, which, for that reason, can have any color whatever. In other words, it is in principle "absolutely" impossible to justify in any convincing way any ontology of this kind. And that is, indeed, and once more, the case with many a traditional ontology we have established and elaborated in the neolithic epoch of our history. However, in this context — in order to avoid the argument "tu quoque" of traditional foundationalism — we must insist on the fact that the conditions of detrivialisation are not "evident" in any classical sense. The ontology required isn't either. And it cannot be, in contradistinction to the "absolutes" of classical ontology, which are, for that very reason, empty *a priori*. Classical ontological queries and results are indeed erroneous in principle, because any ontological and therefore foundational endeavour must be initiated and executed within and solely within the framework of the conditions of detrivialisation, whereas contrary to this requirement these ontological endeavours aim at "unconditionality" as such, at "absolutes" which, under conditions of detrivialisation, are inaccessible in principle, i.e. under conditions that guarantee that in fact there are problems at all and, consequently, ontological problems into the bargain. In other words, if classical ontologies were true, there wouldn't be any conflicts and/or problems: these ontologies would be, as it were, "natural" in the full sense, or "innate", if one prefers that term. Consequently, they wouldn't be problematical, they merely would provide "given" solutions, pre-programmed as it were, automatical and ineluctable. And, evidently, this is not the case at all. In consequence, it appears that man is an animal capable of construing, entertaining and believing illusions about himself and the world, and that classical ontologies are notorious and privileged

examples of this kind of intellectual and cultural self-deception. Again, it appears that ontology is but possible on the condition that man accepts to be an entity in the world, for then, and only then, problems and specifically the problem of orientation, philosophy and ontology can arise at all. But, as man happens to be the most flexible of epistemic subjects, i.e. is most subject to self-programmation and auto-determination, as, in other words, his consciousness and his thinking are the most self-referential of all — so that he maximally can get to know himself and his world, he is at the same time most liable to illusion and — in so far as he imagines it is effectively possible to generalise this self-referentiality to make it total and complete — he can feign and in consequence even believe that he is an autonomous subject opposed to the world in its totality, i.e. he can imagine himself to be an epistemic subject outside the world as such. However, it is quite clear that, if this stance wasn't illusory, man wouldn't be any more part and parcel of the universe, and that accordingly there wouldn't and couldn't be no longer any question of conflicts and/or problems, simply because there wouldn't and couldn't be any problem of orientation at all. For, if man were not part and parcel of the world, what for the devil would and could he be orientated in? It is precisely this absolute generalisation without any limits whatever of a particular situation — the partial self-referentiality of the consciousness of man and consequently his partial autonomy in the world — that brings about the trivialisation of man and of his problem of orientation and therefore, eminently, the trivialisation of his authentic problem of ontology. It is, moreover, this generalisation too that originates the a priori unsolvable problem of dogmatism and scepticism, as is evinced by the weird problem of ontological justification within the framework — if one may call it so — of classical queries of orientation. It seems, finally, that this vicious generalisation and its concomitant trivialisation is ultimately grounded in a desire for “absolutes”, or in an “absolute” desire, in one form or another. And this desire is, as we have already suggested, comprehensible, even though it is, in our opinion, inexcusable. It is in fact clear that for a being that can be mistaken, that can err, nothing can be more desirable than an orientation that guarantees there aren't and can't be conflicts and/or problems for which there is no solution, at least in principle: to be able to solve all conflicts and problems, if one has any and doesn't know beforehand which will occur, is a state of affairs de-

voutly to be wished. However, an orientation of this kind does not exist and under conditions of detrialisation, our human condition, it is thoroughly and patently impossible for such an orientation ever effectively to be: it simply is unimaginable. For, to be quite sure that there are no unsolvable conflicts and/or problems, to be quite certain that all possible conflicts and/or problems indeed do have a solution, for short, to imagine that "tragedy" is or can be excluded absolutely, one needs must have an adequate and complete view of the world in its totality and consequently of man in the universe at large. But naturally, a view of this order of grandeur is but thinkable and possible really if, and only if, the epistemic subject concerned effectively has a position outside the universe as such. And, in consequence, there wouldn't and couldn't be, for such a subject, real conflicts and/or problems, for, being otherworldly, there wouldn't and couldn't be any question of orientation left. Otherwise said, man and the world, the "drama" of man and his world, wouldn't and couldn't concern it any more. The adequate and complete solution of man's orientation in the universe, and consequently, the "absolute" solution of his ontological query therefore is, as was already said, logically merely a contradiction in terms, ontologically mere make-believe and, last but not least, practically mere "cultural" magic. Any solution of this kind is, moreover, not only trivial but inaccessible as well, and, what is more, in fact superfluous too if, what is worse, it doesn't turn out to be noxious into the bargain. The "Absolute", any absolute whatsoever, is an illusion, and the search for such absolutes is illusory as well. There can be only man as a conflictual and problematic animal, and therefore need and quest for ontology to make sense of his and anything's "being here" and "being so", under conditions of detrialisation, i.e. on the condition that there are in principle — as in fact is the case — unsolvable conflicts and/or problems, especially, and a priori at that, the unsolvable problem of an adequate and complete, i.e. absolute and therefore perfect orientation in the world. The "Absolute", whatever its content, is ontologically impossible, and epistemically it is, if in an "absolute" sense it would exist, inaccessible in principle in the universe as it is and as it is bound to be conceived by any conflictual and problematical being such as man paradigmatically is.

6. *Conclusion*

Required conditions, necessary and sufficient, for man to have a need for orientation in the world, can and must be the said conditions of detrivialisation. Moreover, they are at the same time the only “absolute”, i.e. conditionally unconditional prerequisites of all real, effective orientation as such. And these conditions are unique. However, it is possible for man to ignore, to neglect, even to deny them, precisely because he, above all entities, is in need of orientation. And this possibility is an implication of the fact that under conditions of detrivialisation there is indeed, for some entities in the universe, a need for orientation and consequently a problem of ontology. But, if he takes this stance, man is immediately in a position, however fictitious, outside the world, and accordingly his search for absolutes as such, first in principle and then in fact, implies that he ignores and denies or even refuses the world and his place in it. Otherwise said, he feigns himself to be a “metaphysical rebel” and, paradoxically, he has no “religion” at all. But man and the world being what they are, being — under conditions of detrivialisation — not necessary in an absolute sense, this possibility of denial, in essence “the denial of death”, exists. Absolutely speaking indeed, the “Absolute” could exist. But, under the said conditions, such an absolute, whatever its nature, is rigorously inaccessible in the world. The final and fatal result of this “denial of death”, which is at the same time the “denial of man and his world”, consequently the privileged manifestation of irreligiosity as such or, inversely, the most conspicuous want of immanent religiosity, is the trivialisation of the world and of man in the world and accordingly the trivialisation of his problem of orientation. For short, it is nothing else but philosophical suicide, simply because it is an illusory view of the world while pretending to be a perfect one. In other words, the refusal to accept these conditions effectively boils down, initially *de iure* and in the long run *de facto* to saying that “death is life” and conversely that “life is death”. This is absolutely absurd, trivial and empty, if anything is. And it means nothing at all. But such an attitude, in a universe that is but conceivable under conditions of detrivialisation, is possible and, moreover, more than once, factual. That’s, again, the reason why the ontology required is conditional. It ultimately depends on a “religious” attitude in an elementary sense: the acceptance as such of oneself and the world. But, if one has decided to be, one is bound, by the same move,

to accept these conditions as the ontology and, for that matter, the interdisciplinary framework uniquely required for the effective orientation of man in the world, as they are essentially given and as they eventually can be known. In consequence, just like ontological endeavours, the quest for interdisciplinarity cannot be conceived along classical lines as these of necessity boil down to emptiness: all interdisciplinary endeavours have to be worked out within the selfsame conditions of detrialisation for the simple reason that the demand for synthesis, for the "unity" of the world, is as conditional upon the problem of orientation as ontology itself ever was and is.

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