Godsdienst, wetenschap en samenleving. De filosofie van dr. J.L. Snethlage
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The Critical Philosophy of Dr. Jacob Leonard Snethlage (1886-1983), is an elaboration of the well-known turn which Kant gave to philosophy, that is the transposition of the attention of the objects of knowledge to knowledge about those objects. In this sense philosophy is a theory of knowledge. Since knowledge about objects is produced within the special sciences, philosophy can be described as a critique of sciences. This method, which Kant calls the transcendental, Snethlage regards as a guarantee for the autonomy, or, what amounts to the same thing, the scientific character of philosophy.

The task or substance which Snethlage ascribes to philosophy, I want to defend, but not its scientific status.

According to Snethlage, philosophy must examine the several sciences for their possibility and structure. In general, we can state that philosophy is committed to culture, as the whole of sciences.

Snethlage's point of view can now be interpreted as follows. We draw a distinction between two levels of language, namely the level of the sciences and the level of philosophy. The sciences are occupied with the substantial world and their language can be called the object-language. Philosophy is not directly occupied with that substantial reality, but with the language in which that reality is formulated, and can therefore be regarded as a metalanguage.

Since there are several sciences, each with its own method, there also arise several symbols of reality. There would be only one reality, if there existed only one method or one science. Nevertheless it is possible to consider the same substantial object from different points of view. The language for example, in which man is being described in physiology, differs from that in psychology or in sociology. Hence Snethlage can say that the objects are only called into existence in the light of a method. This only means that a description or an explanation, or generally, a scientific statement, utilizes by
definition the language of a definite system. It may be clear, that the construction or creation of objects in science does not apply in a substantial, but in a logical sense.

Reality takes shape through the sciences or knowledge. This applies not only to complex theories, but also to simple assertions (which can be conceived as primitive theories), like 'It is raining'. Each judgement or set of judgements introduces a structure in reality. That structure varies according to the language or method a given science makes use of. The common feature of all those possible languages is, that they are directly occupied with the objects, or, generally, with reality. In this, science differs from philosophy. Philosophy does not speak about reality itself, but about the manner in which the sciences construct reality. The preceding exposition therefore, can be considered also as speaking about another language, namely the language of science.

This distinction between the objectlanguage of science and the metalanguage of philosophy, is very important. The difference between both languagelevels can be demonstrated with the help of a simple example. 'All swans are white', is a judgement from biology, in which a definite property is being adjudged to a definite set of substantial quantities. Philosophy is not focused on those substantial quantities, as biology does, but on the statement about those quantities. It will notice for example, that the statement is a universal judgement, which can never be fully justified on inductive grounds. On metalevel, a swan is not a substance, but a concept, which functions in a certain way, embedded in rules or definitions, within a definite system, etc. Philosophy therefore does not deny the existence of substantial swans, but it is not its subject. It only ascertains that the concept 'swan' has been defined in a certain way within biology, so that it must be described in the metalanguage by way of its relations with the system in which it functions.

This distinction, between the objectlanguage of the sciences and the metalanguage of philosophy, must not be confused with Popper's theory of the three worlds. The first world of Popper is the physical world, the second the world of states of consciousness, and the third the world of science and art. Snethlage, the theories, would like to separate a physical world from natural science and the truthvalue of such assertions from the existence within philosophy and art. Now, since the existence of the third world exists at all, least if we are talking about 'existence'. 'Existence' is a concept, which is not focused on physical or mental objects, but on a judgement. What one is interested in is the question of existence.

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Consequently, the starting point is not that the truthvalue of such assertions is independent of the world of science, but a logic of the statement. With the help of the metalanguage, philosophy, which is in my opinion wrong, elucidates the distinction between 'physical' and 'mental' activity. Snethlage's theory of truth. Truth is not a subject and an object, but a judgement and a criticism of the metalanguage.
states of consciousness, and the third the world of the objective contents of thought, namely the world of science and art.

Snethlage, though he did not know Popper's theories, would say that postulating the existence of a physical or mental world is not an epistemological problem, but represents statements from respectively the object-language of natural science and of psychology. Therefore the truth-value of such statements cannot be judged within philosophy. However, this applies as well to the existence of world III, that of science and art. Now Snethlage's point is not that world III exists at all, but that it is autonomous in this sense, that it exists independently of the two other worlds. This now is impossible, at least if we are to understand always the same by 'existence'. 'Existence' is a category, ascribed to physical or mental quantities by the object-language and in other words, is always dependent on a judgement. Without a judgement, there is no question of existence, or, stated differently, consciousness is always necessary, which ascertains that something does or does not exist. Consequently, the theory of Gerard Heymans, which starts from human consciousness, is not falsified by Popper's theory. The attempt by Popper to demonstrate that a judgement from the object-language (the result of a mental activity), exists independently of that object-language (the mental activity), is impossible.

Snethlage's concept of autonomy is better: the point is not to demonstrate that a judgement or theory exists independently of its framer, but that the truth-value of a judgement or theory is independent of its cause, or stated differently, there is no physical or mental independence of science, but a logical one.

With the help of the truth-concept I can now elucidate the distinction between science and philosophy, which has not been made by Snethlage, in my opinion wrongly.

First something about the truth-concept itself. Snethlage employs a coherencetheory of truth. Truth is not a relation between a knowing subject and an objective reality, but between a judgement and a system of judgements. His criticism of the correspondencetheory, as a metaphysical relation between a judgement and a
given reality, is certainly correct, but insufficient to ward off the critique that the correspondence theory wrongly makes no clear distinction between a truth-definition and a criterion.

The question 'What is truth?', asks for the conditions under which we adjudge the predicate 'true' to a judgement. According to the defenders of the correspondence theory, those conditions lie in reality and since the truthconditions are identical to the truthcriteria, we can say that the correspondence theory reduces the criteria in terms of the meaning of truth. Since those criteria are always formulated in the same objectlanguage as the theory that has to be judged, we do not refer to something outside our knowledge, or outside language, when we define 'truth', but to that knowledge itself. From this it follows, that the problem of truth is not a problem of definition, but of criterion, which consists of the question for the relations between parts of our knowledge, within the objectlanguage. This question cannot be answered by philosophy, but by the relative sciences. Not only logical criteria apply here, such as e.g. the deducibility of judgements from other judgements, but also and ultimately conventional or sociological criteria, which are applied if no further deductive inferences can be made. This fact must not be given a disproportionate negative emphasis. For the adjudgement of the 'predicate' true of false, does not alter a judgement or theory.

Consequently we see, that apparently there are criteria available within a definite scientific community for the determination of the truthvalue of a judgement or theory. Similar criteria are lacking within philosophy. Here, there is no (relative) consensus among philosophers about the truthstatus of theories. The cause of this is, that philosophy acts as a metalanguage with respect to the objectlanguage of the sciences. Philosophy not only deals with the results of the sciences, but adds something to it, through which those judgements no longer belong to the objectlanguage and consequently withdraw from the criteria of judgement, which are applicable within the sciences. As soon as a judgement is passed on a judgement from the objectlanguage, with which that judgement occupies itself no longer then some such just.

The consequence judging philosophical judgements. However, this is not so for judgements. A 'green', also puts in play, because it adds itself to the whole, where the whole is determined by natural sciences as philosophical. There is no question of philosophical judgements, that philosophical judgements follow, that philosophical judgements are consistent with each other. Besides those generally don't come under the purview, there are scientific judgements judged in principle.

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itself no longer with the substantial reality, then some such judgement belongs to philosophy.

The consequence of lacking a forum for judging philosophical theories, is that philosophical judgements are neither true, nor false. However, this is not only peculiar to philosophical judgements. A judgement like 'Gravitation is green', also puts itself outside natural science, because it adds something to the objectlanguage, with which the whole can no longer be criticized by natural science, neither will be characterized as philosophical.

There is no criterion for the determination of philosophical judgements. From this it follows, that philosophy is not an autonomous discipline. Autonomous sciences create their own contents, whereas philosophy is dependent on that which science reaches.

The characteristic of judgements which put themselves outside science (and consequently philosophical judgements), is, that they are consistent with each set of scientific theories. Besides those nonscientific judgements (which don't come under the head of scientific criteria) there are scientific judgements (which can be judged in principle by one or more sciences).

In doing so, I have defended the function which Snethlage ascribes to philosophy, namely the analysis of knowledge of things in stead of the things themselves, but rejected the autonomous status which he ascribes to that metalanguage.

In Kant's epistemological revolution apriori elements play a prominent part in both perception and thinking. With Kant, science has become a creative activity. Snethlage dropped perception as a factor of knowledge. For logically, there is nothing prior to thinking. Though Snethlage does not understand by 'thinking' a psychological but a logical category, he did not know what to do with its apriori structure, because that structure properly speaking, implies a kind of psychological definiteness.

In my opinion, this problem is solved by Popper, who also dropped 'thinking' in his philosophy of science. Popper demonstrates the superfluity of the justification of Kant's synthetic apriori, in other words how empirical knowledge can be necessary and universal. Not
justifications, but falsifications determine progress in science, with which the hypothetical character of our knowledge is clearly posed. However, Popper's theory can be criticized by noticing, that not only theories (as universal statements) are fallible in principle, but also observational judgements (as singular statements). Theories don't come into collision with reality, as Popper asserts, but with other theories.

Considered epistemologically, Popper has interpreted his theory of science wrongly. Substantial reality cannot function as final criterion in the development of objective knowledge. That reality is always translated into the object language, into a judgement which is hypothetical by nature, just like a theory. Since his concept of truth, as a correspondence between a judgement and reality, is dependent on his concept of reality, his theory of truth must also be rejected.

A considerable part of Snethlage's philosophy is dedicated to the question how theology is possible as a science. Characterizing a given province of knowledge as a science, depends on the question whether that province is autonomous, that is whether it employs its own method to create the phenomena methodically. By way of this logicalizing of chaos, subsequently there sets in a regularity, a relation, which is characteristic for this fixed province of knowledge or science.

Now Snethlage's first object is to indicate the relation which is expressed in a religious judgement. For a judgement is the starting point of each science. It is the original act of mankind: uniting what belongs together, separating what has to be separated, in short, creating order in chaos.

Now, what is the religious equivalent for the relation of causation in natural science. Snethlage locates this in the element of transcendence, that is to say, that the intention of the religious judgement's content, is to exceed the earthly world. This formal characteristic, the apriori of religion, determines the construction of an autonomous science of theology. Snethlage rejects the apriori as an invariable scientific principle. He considers it as a regulative idea, which indicates knowledge and will penetrate from our suppositions. This bears a hypothetical character, considered as including the programmaticality. Snethlage considers the regularity also organizing themselves.

Thus the point of departure is in religion. For example, in the metalanguage of religion we speak of an essential equivalence. This means that the philosophy of religion doesn't with substantial concepts and substantial questions of what we call in science: certainly be studied. For example, 'experience' in psychology or 'method' cannot form premises; consequently cannot be, in positive, nothing more than the truth of an idea.

The largest conceptual work on religious concepts and such crossings of the autonomy of the e.g. committed concepts in history, psychology or ethics will give the existence of a personal experience which religious importance concerning quantification.

In all cases, the existential relativity of the ethical method will be subordinate to a new understanding of personal experien-
which indicates the infinity of the process of knowledge and which contains an incitement, to penetrate from each supposition to more thorough suppositions. This means, that all our knowledge bears a hypothetical character and may never be considered as completed. Each hypothesis, so including the religious, can be in principle replaced by another. The Kantian apriori as an absolute principle, changes into a principle with the programmatic character of a hypothesis. Snethlage considers the diametrical transcendental relation, that is the 'God-I' relation, the regularity along which religious phenomena organize themselves.

Thus the religious judgement constitutes the point of departure or factum of the philosophy of religion. Formulated in the terms which I used: in the metalanguage (of the philosophy of religion) we speak about the objectlanguage of religion. This has the important consequence, that the philosophy of religion occupies itself not with substantial quantities, but with formal concepts and their mutual relations. Those substantial quantities, which form the object of what we call in a general term 'experience', may certainly be studied, but within those disciplines which possess an appropriate method. For example, 'experience of God' may be evaluated by psychology or anthropology, but the results cannot form premises in religious reasoning, and consequently cannot exert an influence, neither in positive, nor in negative sense, on determining the truthvalue of religious conclusions.

The largest part of Snethlage's philosophical work on religion is dedicated to combating such crossings of the border or violations of the autonomy of the science of religion, which are e.g. committed by the method of the science of history, psychology or ethics. Historism for instance will attach great importance to the existence of a historical Jezus, psychologism will derive conclusive evidence for religion from personal experiences and ethicism will judge religious importance by the ethical level of the concerning quantities.

In all cases, the religious apriori is made subordinate to the historical, psychological and ethical method respectively. Scientific principles however, are autonomous only on their own
domain and not outside it, or, formulated in other words, each principle can try to interpret all phenomena, but the truth of the conclusions is related to the system or object-language in which they are put.

For all kinds of experience obtains, that there must first be a standard or theory, before there can be any question of experience at all. A criterion must be available on account of which we can distinguish something as experience. Experience does not set up the standard, but the standard determines experience.

According to Snethlage, there cannot be any question of religious experiences at all, because theology is not an empirical, but an idealistic science. Theology is comparable to logic. Both systems are more or less arbitrarily formulated, in which ideas, concepts and judgments function to regulate experience. Theology ascribes a sense or purpose to the world of experience. This does not come about, as for example in the natural sciences or in psychology, by way of constitutive concepts, which construct the world of experience, but via regulative ideas. Theology does not call into existence contents of sensations, but ideas, which are transcendent with respect to all culture. At the same time, this last feature distinguishes it from the natural sciences or in psychology, by way of constitutive concepts, which construct the world of experience, but via regulative ideas. Theology does not call into existence contents of sensations, but ideas, which are transcendent with respect to all culture. At the same time, this last feature distinguishes it from the natural sciences or in psychology

According to Snethlage, the substantial interpretation of religious ideas, for example the adjudication of an existential being to 'God' or a historical place to 'revelation', is still a mythical procedure, in which the meaning of the empirical world is sought in the empirical world itself. Religion, which tries to ascribe a meaning or purpose to the world of experience, has as a characteristic, that it transcends experience and strives to become an absolute religion, without using motives from natural science or history; a religion, whose symbolism reconciles to nothing but the revelation of Eternity. In this sense, absolute religion is comparable with absolute art; here too there are no images or meanings which refer to another dimension of understanding; symbol and the
Snethlage, formulated in an attempt to interpret the conclusions of naturalism in experience, that the theory, before experience at all. A conclusion of which is as experience. Snethlage, there is an empirical, but is comparable to less arbitrarily concepts and experience. Theology to the world of the about, as for or in psychology, which construct via regulative into existence ideas, which are all Culture. At distinguishes it, ethics, which are not culture and to give a content the substantial ideas, for example meaning of the empirical world to ascribe a kind of experience, it transcends from an absolute from natural whose symbolism. The revelation of absolute religion is there too there are refer to another symbol and the symbolized coincide. As the meaning of symbolism of art consists in producing beauty, so the meaning of symbolism of religion consists in producing religiousness. In religion, the empirical world obtains a meaning, whereas in myth all meaning is placed in the empirical world.

What has become of Snethlage's attempt to fund theology as a science? In his pursuit of autonomizing theology, he had to get rid of all notions by themselves, but which operate heteronomously within the method of theology, such as the psychology of religion, history, philology, sociology, sociology, and so on. What is left finally, is religious dogmatics, which cannot be considered as a set of scientific judgements, for that is the condition to serve as factum of the philosophy of religion. The question 'How is theology possible as a science?' turns out to be incorrectly posed. Hence Snethlage switches to the question 'How is a religious view of life possible?'.

He carries out here, in imitation of Ernst Cassirer, the transition from the Critique of Pure Reason to the Critique of Culture. This implies that he no longer gives a theory of knowledge or a theory of science, but a kind of cultural anthropology, that is an inquiry into the structure and function of religion in the whole of cultural reality.

Once more I can elucidate this with the help of the distinction between objectlanguage and metalanguage. In his original question, Snethlage tried to say something on metalevel about the objectlanguage of religion, that is an inquiry into the conditions under which we could say of religious judgements that they produce knowledge, the characteristic of each science. From that metalevel we can say that terms from the objectlanguage are not substantial quantities, but that they are functions within a given system, in which the transformation of an element rests on the transformation of another. The phenomena described in the objectlanguage obtain their meaning thanks to their deducibility from a universal law. The 'things' are reduced to terms of processes.
Snethlage often suggests in his arguments, that the functional conception of the terms from the science of religion (inclusive of dogmatics), is a consequence of scientific progress, by which contents are no longer projected as substances in nature, but the real cause is much more radical, that is his denial of the science of religion as an empirical science. The substantial reality, the object of for example natural science and psychology, is cut off by definition. He had to do that, because in the other case the science of religion would produce knowledge, which could be produced in other sciences as well, as a consequence of which it would be no longer autonomous and would not be able to act as a separate science. The truthvalue for example of judgements about personal experiences of God or about a deity, to which a substantial reality is ascribed, is determined within natural science and psychology.

But if the judgements of the science of religion are not synthetic, they must be analytic, their truth depending on the meaning of the terms used, so that the science of religion appears to be a tautological system, viz. dogmatics. Snethlage does not pose the problem, but we can wonder to what extent dogmatics can be seen as an autonomous expression of culture. For the judgements from religious dogmatics can be formulated too for example within the art of poetry.

Besides the heteronomous character of theology, the non-criticizability (because of its tautological character) is the cause of its non-scientific character.

Snethlage's transition from the Critique of Pure Reason to the Critique of Culture, is a transition from science to a view of life. In this way he is able to establish a connection between christianity and communism. He continues to defend the christian motives, which ascribe to culture a meaning or a final goal, but he rejects the christian world of representation, which rests on the substantial interpretation of the motives. These motives, he supposes to recognize in the communist view of life. In this, the establishment of a new order and a new mankind is called for. The religious nature of communism appears from the service of society it believes and is supported by a communist community.

Therefore the question how communism as a religious form of life could be possible. Moreover, according to Snethlage, the religion, with which the specialization of the sense of a combat to gods, does not exist.

With regard to the question how people act. For politics is a rule that unity, order and phenomena. The idea of a tautological field of politics is the characteristic of its judgements. Consequently, the lie in the in judging of people characteristic of knows to accept provinces. As in discuss fruitful point of departure employ the same bourgeois democracies by scientific methods and by party strife. Scientific politics, Party acts itself and by doing opposition at the same time.

In fact, Snethlage's democracy is, that about the truthvalue norm, but an acceptance of a majority. Even replaced by a norm of opinion, this leads to the realization of the Snethlage's common
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Therefore the contradiction of atheistic
communism as a religion is only on the surface.
Moreover, according to Snethlage communism only
combats the mythical world of representation of
religion, with which it can be seen itself as a
specialization of that religion. Atheism, in the
sense of a combating of substantially interpreted
gods, does not exclude an idealistic theism.

With regard to politics too, Snethlage has
posed the question how it is possible as a
science. Politics sets itself out to achieve a
harmonious society and gives an answer to the
question how people ought to think, to will and
to act. For politics, as well as other sciences,
it is a rule that it should be aimed at creating
unity, order and harmony in a multitude of
phenomena. The idea of 'society' can be elaborated
as precisely as the idea of 'nature'. In the
field of politics too, questions about the truth
of its judgements must be answered by experts.
Consequently, the political expertness does not
lie in the independent and individualistic
judging of people. According to Snethlage, the
characteristic of our modern culture is that man
knows to accept authorities on all sorts of
provinces. As in science, political experts can
discuss fruitfully, because they have the same
point of departure and the same goals and they
employ the same method. This is contrasted with
bourgeois democracy, which is not characterized
by scientific methods of discussion, but often by
party strife resolved on irrational grounds.
Scientific politics is only possible when one
Party acts, which, as each science, criticizes
itself and by doing so is party in office and
opposition at the same time.

In fact, Snethlage's criticism of Western
democracy is, that in this not expertise decides
about the truthvalue of theories, not a political
norm, but an accidental empirical quantity, viz.
a majority. Empirical democracy should be
replaced by a normative logocracy. In Snethlage's
opinion, this logocracy has been more or less
realized in the Soviet Union. The special quality
of Snethlage's defence of practical communism
appears from the fact, that it places itself at
the service of something it sanctifies, in which
it believes and which belief it knows to be
supported by a community.
therefore, is his theoretical justification of it: not a marxist philosophy, but a kantian serves as a basis for this.

Snethlage's theory about the logocracy depends on the correctness of his analogy between science and politics. In my opinion however, this comparison is incorrect. He adjudicates characteristics to the logocratic form of government, which are not due to it, because of Snethlage's misconception of science. Snethlage supposes, that the history of science can be reconstructed rationally. According to him, science is a progressive, infinite process, in which one theory is always replaced by a more comprehensive one. Science is aimed at unity, consistency and universality.

However, these keynotions are neither in normative, nor in descriptive sense relevant to a definite science. The object of science is not producing a consistent set of theories, and the existing set of any empirical science surely does not constitute a consistent whole. On the contrary, Snethlage's criteria are applicable to theories. A theory tries to create unity in a consistent manner, in the chaos of phenomena, by reducing them in terms of a universal principle. Such a theory may be consistent with other theories, but that is no condition and, when it concerns 'well-known' phenomena, will even be inconsistent with the old theory which accounts for those phenomena. Therefore, the history of science as a whole can better be described as a concatenation of mutually partly consistent, partly inconsistent theories. And often the inconsistencies are relevant for the development of science.

Therefore the unity and universality, which Snethlage wants to realize in a party-line, is attained by founding oneself on a consistent theory and not on a science, or a set of often mutually inconsistent theories. A concept which reflects Snethlage's point of view better, is paradigm in Kuhn's sense: the whole of conceptual, theoretical, instrumental and methodological commitments of a definite community, in this case the one Party in the logocracy. For a paradigmatic community is valid what Snethlage ascribes incorrectly to the scientists in general: consensus about method and reasonable-

ness of discussion.

According to him, fruitfully when departure and the same methods lacking, we can neither, but not description of strife between science. Science develop new theories, often are intolerant of others.

It's the very paradigm accepted, impossible in a logocracy, but a function which is analogous to a set of paradigms that are.

One of the philosophy of power, possibility of an introduce in many consistency and ethics does not philosophy, but is treated. Consequently, what speaks the metal cannot give concrete state the condition as a science apparatus of concepts.

According the neither good nor of a definite forms an indissoluble not provide an is he interprets it. 'Act as if the guided in this foundations of an in your subject, the idea of unity.

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ness of discussion.

According to Snethlage, we can only discuss
fruitfully when we have the same point of
departure and the same goals and when we employ
the same method of thinking. Where these are
lacking, we can put the one opinion next to the
other, but not really discuss. However, the
description of party-strife in a democracy
mentioned before, is also a description of the
strife between the several paradigms in one
science. Scientists usually are not out to
develop new theories and according to Kuhn, they
often are intolerant with respect to new theories
of others.

It's the very fact of deviating from the
paradigm accepted by the community, which is made
impossible in a logocracy. Therefore it is not a
logocracy, but a democracy, in which more parties
function which are combating each other, which is
analogous to a science in which there exists more
paradigms that are combating one another.

One of the presuppositions of Snethlage's
philosophy of politics is the assumption of the
possibility of a science of ethics, which may
introduce in mankind's will and acting a unity,
consistency and universality. This implies, that
ethics does not constitute a branch of philoso-
phy, but is treated as an autonomous science.
Consequently, when he deals with ethics, he
speaks the metalanguage of philosophy, and hence
cannot give concrete ethical contents, but he can
state the conditions on which ethics is possible
as a science and analyse its structure and
apparatus of concepts.

According to Snethlage, an action itself is
neither good nor bad, but only in the framework
of a definite situation of which that action
forms an indissoluble element. The situation does
not provide an ethical norm itself, but does
affect the practical application of this. Hence
he interprets Kant's moral law situationally:
'Act as if the principles, by which you are
guided in this unique case, may become the
foundations of a universal law. Act objectively
in your subjective case and in conformity with
the idea of unity of the will of mankind!

The object of this law is to guarantee the
unity, consistency and universality of human
acting. The criterion for good and evil consists of the question whether the principle or maxim, to which a definite action can be reduced, in the case of elevation to a universal law, does or does not lead to inconsistencies.

My objection is, that this criterion is not purely formal. The terms of the maxims, after being translated into a universal law, must first be valued ethically before we are able to ascertain if something is good or evil. Some maxims will lead to logical inconsistencies (and will not be valid just because that), while others, although they don't lead to logical inconsistencies, still prove to be invalid, because there appear to exist inconsistencies between the interpretations or definitions of the content of the terms used.

The very valuation of the content of certain concepts refers to an ethical norm, which is already active before the moral law calls us to the formal Sollen. Snethlage wrongly assumes that some concepts have an absolute meaning, independent from a system. Therefore the ethical inconsistencies which he signalizes in some maxims, are not a result of one internally inconsistent system, but of a collision between his system and that of another.

Snethlage wants to relate the ethical judgement explicitly to actions and not to the disposition which is at the root of these actions. The last option has been chosen by Gerard Heymans. Heymans wants to trace a universal ethical criterion, via the empirico-analytical method. For that purpose an inquiry into the manner in which people judge ethically, is necessary, to discover possible regularities. We can generalize to an actual universal judgement of value, on the basis of an actual number of particular judgements of value. This universal judgement of value may function as an ethical criterion. Now Heymans's hypothesis says, that this ethical principle or criterion lies in the objectivity (in other words in the disposition) of the acting person.

Snethlage has two objections to this theory. Firstly that the ethics of disposition wrongly assumes that the disposition is known sufficiently to be able to frame the proper object of an ethical evaluation. According to Snethlage,
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modern psychology proves that the motives on the
ground of which somebody acts, can hardly be
discovered, and their purity can always be called
in question.

Further Snethlage asserts, that if we speak
of the disposition or character as the 'motive'
of an action, we use the causal principle of
judgement. This principle indicates to the
individual phenomena their objective place in
time and ascribes to that supposed beginning a
special meaning. Determinism however, does not
know such a beginning, for the motive too is
determined. It's only a moment in an infinite
chain and is motivated itself too. Hence there is
no sense in directing the moral judgement to this
special moment, to the exclusion of all other
parts of the chain. Ethics is not concerned with
the origin of an action, but with its content.

In my opinion, there is little to go against
Heymans's empirical inquiry into the regulari-
ties of the moral judgements of people. I do have
objections to the substantial advice he gives us,
that is to be objective in our moral conduct.
Here we are confronted with the problem of the
universality of moral judgements or systems, but
that obtains for any ethics as regards content,
which is linked up with the character of those
judgements. Since moral judgements are not
empirical, we have to consider them as tautolo-
gies. Another possibility is to reduce empirical
statements to normative statements, and not the
reverse, as has sometimes been tried in the
history of philosophy. Empirical statements are
only hypotheses and lack the certainty which they
often suggests to possess. As the truth of
analytical or moral statements is guaranteed by
their deducibility from the accepted axioms or
presuppositions, so the truth of empirical
statements is ensured by their deducibility from
a universal law or theory. The difference between
statements in this way consists in a difference
in degree of criticizability.

The question can be posed what kind of
relation there exists between politics and
ethics. In my opinion, ethics may be reduced to
politics, in which all actions are in principle
political actions, and therefore must be regula-
ted by the state. Or politics may be reduced to
ethics, in which all actions are individual
actions, in which should be interfered as little as possible.

Snethlage defends the former version, on the ground of the supposition of the possibility of a moral science, which is directed at the unity of the acting of mankind. Not only the actions of one and the same individual must be in harmony with each other, but also the actions of one individual with those of another individual.

With the help of the concept 'freedom', I can further elucidate the relation between ethics and politics. In Snethlage's philosophy, there is no question of freedom in a situation in which there is no social and political ordering, because here everyone makes his own laws. The consequence of this is that the set of laws of all individuals will be heterogeneous and inconsistent, resulting in many collisions between the actions of people.

In this vision, freedom does not underlie a system, but has to be generated by that system, via the regulation of the actions of individuals. According to Snethlage, the conclusive criterion has to be the question of truth, with regard to the content of those rules or laws. In respect of ventilating opinions and perpetrating actions, the limit of toleration has to be subordinate to the question of truth and not vice versa. This means, that opinions and actions are not allowed to be practised, if their falsehood or badness is established. In Snethlage's terms: the uncertainty of the bourgeois democracy has to be replaced by the certainty of the logocracy. Reducing ethics into politics results in subjecting opinions and actions to uniform principles, in order to satisfy the conditions of unity and consistency.

The opposite point of view has been upheld among others by Robert Nozick: politics is deduced from ethics. Ethics determines the limits of politics. From the state of nature, that is the situation as it would be without any form of government, he distils the rights of the individual human being and these function as a criterion in order to judge the political state. These rights can only be respected in a minimal state, which offers the citizens protection from violence, robbery, fraud, etc. In this state there is no room for a redistribution of income and wealth, based on the rights of its members.

In this vision, just the reverse stands in the sense that freedom and security stand in the state obtaining the amount of a solution of mutual parallel.

My object to stress that Nozick's, concern is not only ethics and politics. He has also changed his moral criteria, because he states that there is not possible inconsistency between ethics and politics. He states that it is not possible for politics to be generated by the freedom of another individual. In this vision, freedom does not underlie a system, but has to be generated by that system, via the regulation of the actions of individuals. According to Snethlage, the conclusive criterion has to be the question of truth, with regard to the content of those rules or laws. In respect of ventilating opinions and perpetrating actions, the limit of toleration has to be subordinate to the question of truth and not vice versa. This means, that opinions and actions are not allowed to be practised, if their falsehood or badness is established. In Snethlage's terms: the uncertainty of the bourgeois democracy has to be replaced by the certainty of the logocracy. Reducing ethics into politics results in subjecting opinions and actions to uniform principles, in order to satisfy the conditions of unity and consistency.

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and wealth, because this would mean a violation
on the rights of some individuals.
In this vision, the problem of freedom is
just the reverse of Snethlage's idea. Here man
stands in the state of nature with a maximum of
freedom and surrenders some of this as soon as
the state obtains specified powers. With this,
the amount of individual responsibility for the
solution of moral and social problems runs
parallel.
My objections to Snethlage's theories about
ethics and politics have already been formulated:
his moral criterion is not purely formal and his
political philosophy runs ashore on an incorrect
analogey of science. With regard to the relation
between ethics and politics, my point of view is,
that it is not the business of politics to remove
possible inconsistencies between various moral
views, but to regulate the actions of a community
with avoidance of collisions between the actions
of its members. Snethlage's reduction of ethics
to politics has as a consequence, that a politi-
cal system may interfere, not only there where
the freedom of action of the one is at the
expense of another, but also there where that is
not the case.
My criticism of the opposite position
Nozick's, concerns his suggestion that man should
possess rights in the state of nature. People
don't possess rights, but appropriate their
rights. These cannot be legitimized by 'natu-nal' or 'historical' deductions, but have to be
distributed in a constitutional state, by way of
agreement. Putting the 'natural' advantage of one
individual over another under restraint, is
desirable perhaps not only on a physical level
(as Nozick wants), but also on an economic level.
In all cases infringement of some pretended
individual liberties and rights is committed.
I'd like to compare the concept of freedom
with the concept of truth. As there is no
question of truth without theories and state-
ments, so there is no question of freedom or want
of freedom without systems and rules, because
otherwise these predicates cannot be predicated.
Nozick's reduction of politics to ethics has
a further consequence, that matters which concern
several individuals are wrongly left to the
individual responsibility, so that individuals
become dependent on each other's moral pleasure.

Finally an attempt to create a system can be made, in which people are deprived of the chance to cultivate a quality at the cost of others. This amounts to finding a balance between ethics and politics. John Rawls is trying to do something like that. However, his justification rests on a petitio principii. In the hypothetical order, in which rational human beings must choose in a rational manner the principles of justice, those distinctions are just wiped out which are responsible for the inequalities between people, with which justice is already done before its principles have been chosen.

In my opinion, theories and systems cannot be justified apriori, but they have to justify themselves in their functioning.

Finally, Snethlage has occupied himself with the question as to whether an objective historiography is possible. He rejects the vision in which this is not possible because the writing subject can never be eliminated. Moreover this psychological argument obtains for any scientific theory. An objective historiography does not take place if the subject has been eliminated, it is not dependent on extrascientific or personal factors, but on the characteristics of the historical theory itself: namely the question as to whether it is capable of creating logical unity, simplicity and validity of coherence.

The property of the science of history as well, that it always selects and interprets the facts, is not typical for this science, but is valid for all sciences. According to Snethlage, facts can only be selected in the light of theories. The sciences are constructed by way of a priori standards and criteria.

Snethlage's reply to the argument that laws of history cannot be formulated, because historical causality is indefinite, as contrasted with physical causality (historical events don't repeat themselves), is that of physical phenomena too it can be said to some extent that they never repeat themselves.

In my opinion, this is an unsatisfactory answer. The existence of several systems of judgement side by side does not bring about problems in Critical Idealism. The question is,
if uniqueness is to be characteristic for the historical method, whether this selfsame uniqueness does not form an impediment for formulating a regulating principle or a regularity, which is necessary to guarantee the scientific character of the system.

According to Snethlage, we don't get very far in the science of history, if we only employ the relation of causality. This relation contents itself with the deduction of a particular case from a universal law, and does not inquire after the why and wherefore of that particularity. Here, the science of history passes into another dimension of understanding, by way of posing a target, not to correct or to limit the physical laws, but to open another perspective of reality. Therefore, the teleological method can be considered as a completion to the causal method. Now history will show a pattern by employing a certain machinery of concepts, which we may call the regularity of that history. The pattern will vary, in proportion to the employment of another framework of concepts.