

Symbolic Forms as the Metaphysical Groundwork
of the Organon of the Cultural Sciences

Symbolic Forms as the Metaphysical Groundwork
of the Organon of the Cultural Sciences:
Volume 1

By

Israel Bar-Yehuda Idalovichi

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P U B L I S H I N G

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Volume 1,
by Israel Bar-Yehuda Idalovichi

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For a good number of years my thinking about human knowledge and reality, and specifically about creating a new *organon*, has been dominated by several intertwined theories. The seeded idea that saw its growth in the form of this book is the unshakable conviction that the only way by which a new apparatus of philosophy, an *organon*, could be created is by harking back to the vast sources of imagination, inspiration, memory, knowledge and *mimēsis*. This study seeks to reclassify and restructure the history of ideas and the philosophy of culture through a wide-ranging and novel use of a new organon. It does so by radically revising standard interpretations and theories of all branches of philosophy, and by providing an intellectual and philosophical foundation for the new organon of the cultural sciences. Various systems of thinking, powerful methods of science, art, humanities and philosophy have been converted into symbolic forms. Based on the groundwork of the symbolic forms, a metaphysical apparatus/system has been set up – i.e., the organon of the cultural sciences. A further objective of this study is exposing and elucidating the underlying aesthetical, epistemological, logical-conceptual and ontological structures that account for creating a comprehensive, all-encompassing synthesis, which would lead to the organon of the cultural sciences. This book has been written in the belief that the study of cultural, scientific, artistic, linguistic, mathematical, theological, anthropological, etcetera problems can be philosophically illuminated and elucidated and, vice versa, the study of philosophical problems can be expected to be illuminated by the vast phenomena of the cultural sciences.

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PROLOGUE

Noch nicht, und doch schon! (Not as yet, and yet already!)

—Hermann Broch, 1976, p. 61

Philosophy and the organon of the cultural sciences

The essential approach taken by this study is, primarily, a systematic-metaphysical analysis, which engrafts within it the possibility of creating an organon of all cultural sciences, based on symbolic forms. It is a systematic-metaphysical work, which focuses on multiple systems and methods of philosophy, science, art and humanities, with the purpose of delineating the development and realization of the symbolic forms of all cultural sciences. Being faced with the necessity of constructing solid philosophical foundations for the organon of the cultural sciences, and of avoiding any conceptual, methodic or pragmatic traps, has caused us not to rely merely on distinct analytical or logical methods. Hence, in order to attain the comprehensive, creative, universal objectives of the organon of the cultural sciences, it is necessary to utilize as many systems of thought as possible. In principle, this study is an intrinsic attempt to follow a speculative line of investigation and formation, with the purpose of reviving and implementing the initial and vital *telos* of philosophy – namely, the eternal struggle to accomplish the highest possible degree of the world’s knowledge and self-knowledge.

Over and above all other factors, the emphasis in this study will be on the extensive and wide-ranging realm of philosophy. The classical definition of philosophy is “science of sciences”; it is an essential, all-inclusive, wide-ranging science, which can exclude nothing. Hence, this research is guided by the perpetual attempt to achieve the classical ideal of philosophy to create a comprehensive metaphysical system, which will stimulate and restore the authority of philosophy as the science of sciences. Philosophy comprises knowledge of all things through their constitutional and comprehensive reasons. It may well be defined as “logocentrism” – i.e., the tendency of Western thought to locate the center of any discourse or discipline within the logos (Klages, 1981).

At the present time, most philosophers avoid defining an adequate, universal definition of what philosophy is as a whole. Hence, it seems that a definition of philosophy that would be insightful and comprehensive seems unattainable. This is because philosophy is a well-established domain, a comprehensive metaphysical endeavor, which precedes any differentiation and specialization found in each cultural science; it uncovers universal presuppositions and conceptual schemes that lurk beneath human language and thought. “Philosophy is simply a survey of the world as whole.... The philosopher is thus the man who views the world from the top of a lookout and sets himself to learn its structure; philosophy is a systematic and general knowledge of things. It is not concerned with this or that compartment of existence, but with all beings existent or possible, the real without restriction. It is not a particular but a general science. General science or philosophy constitutes the second stage of knowledge. It is human wisdom (sapientia), science par excellence” (De Wulf, 1953, pp. 89-90).

Numerous contemporary researches and studies are engaged in a struggle with the information explosion that is doomed to fail. This struggle seems to be hopeless in every disciplinary research or cultural science. Apparently, the philosophical idea of integrating various disciplines is no longer feasible in an era of exponential growth of information and knowledge. Instead, fields of inquiry are isolated and integrative images are more difficult to establish. Therefore, most philosophers who strive to develop a systematic philosophy become increasingly desperate, to say nothing of veering away from any novel metaphysical core. Nevertheless, the vast task of building up a new apparatus of philosophy – i.e., a new organon, which will set forth and find the underlying causes of what might be called the Tower of Babel’s crisis of the modern epoch – is still very well alive. The new organon should create an avowedly artificial order, designed to dissipate contingency, as is done in many human-made domains of science, humanities and arts. Such a program stands in contradiction to the ruling mood in modern times to refute any attempt to create a universal apparatus, whose objective is to amalgamate most systems and theories of thought.

All cultural sciences have their own idiosyncratic terms, concepts, methods and theories, by means of which they build frameworks of knowledge. Therefore, it should be asked, if it is at all possible to create an organon, based on symbolic forms, which will comprise all cultural sciences. Deeply anchored in the history of philosophy and culture, this

core problem seems to defy a satisfactory solution. By exposing the philosophical concepts, ideas, principles, theories and methods of thought, which sustain the symbolic forms, it will be possible to create the basis for such an all-encompassing system of the cultural sciences – i.e., the organon. It is the task of the organon of the cultural sciences to set forth and amalgamate all of them under one systematic roof. Designed for an objective investigation of every system of knowledge of each cultural science, the organon of the cultural sciences has to take into consideration every essential characteristic, fact, datum, idea, law, postulate, belief and theory in order to fulfill its goal of creating true, adequate, original, inspiring, as well as objectively valid symbolic forms.

Although the organon strives to fulfill this ideal of creating a science of all sciences – i.e. philosophy, it will not attempt to standardize, normatively and/or analytically every theory or method of each cultural science. Given that the organon of the cultural sciences transcends the limits of every method, principle, postulate, formula, theorem or theory, then its function extends beyond the domain of each cultural science. Moreover, all empirical and theoretical sciences and their adequate realities are to be the foundations for comparative analyses and comprehensive generalizations of the symbolic forms, which constitute and shape the organon, although they do not establish or ascertain definitely its metaphysical *telos*. This is the first step in overcoming the peril of deep discrepancies, wide divergences and differences, as well as the lack of confidence and understanding that exist in contemporary culture, with the purpose of facing the menace of nihilism and relativism, which dominate our present reality.

Philosophy as science

A further problem that we face in the process of shaping a new organon refers to what thinking might entail and be. “Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well” (Benjamin, 1970, p. 262). The term “arrest” refers to living in line with a tradition that often turns out to be a burden and oppressive; alternatively, it also refers to the constructive and creative process of “arresting the flow of thoughts” and “imprisoning” them systematically in a cultural science. Usually, after their development, classical philosophical systems show a tendency to a pendulum-like movement of appearance and reappearance, following cultural-philosophical fashions. The pendulum metaphor seems to describe some fashionable methods of thinking and new versions of old principles,

ideas, paradigms or theories. This means that one era tends to err in the direction of absolute and ultimate truth, while another era tends toward relativistic and skeptical theories. In our epoch, the idea of an objective, reliable truth has increasingly come under fire from a range of relativistic arguments, insisting that truth finding is an active, interpretive activity that is imprinted with the subjectivity of those who set off in its pursuit. The relativistic worldview has infiltrated wide-ranging spheres of debate and analysis, to such an extent that uncertainty and skepticism have grown extensively. “Trapped between the fundamentalists, who believe they have found truth, and relativists, who refuse to pin it down, the bewildered majority in between continuing to hope that there is a truth worth looking for, without how to go about it or how to answer the voices from either extreme” (Fernandez-Armesto, 1998, p. 3).

Historically, bringing to realization the idea of rational inquiry was one of the most decisive steps taken by the Western spirit, which had previously been an object of traditional and/or religious belief. Although there was an uninterrupted succession between the initial rational speculation and the religious presentation that lay behind it, philosophy took its own autonomous and original path. Philosophy inherited from mythology and religion, poetry and literature, arts and crafts, a variety of conceptions, ideas, ideals and metaphors. For the most part, mythology and religion express themselves in poetical, allegorical or magical symbols, whereas philosophy and science express themselves in a language of dry abstractions and symbolic definitions, such as of substance, principles, axioms, laws, paradigms, theories, and so forth. These outward differences distinguish an inward and substantial affinity between the successive products of the same consciousness, because the modes of thought that achieved comprehensible definitions and clear statements in philosophy were previously contained in the unreasoned intuitions of mythology, poetry and arts.

Philosophy and education

Over the centuries, philosophy has included diverse forms of knowledge, critique, analysis, information and beliefs. Philosophy cannot be defined by certain traditional creeds, beliefs, or established class of propositions. Being highly motivated to get the most out of its methods, every philosophical school is in constant need of images, metaphors and illustrative instances with the purpose of elucidating its abstract and universal concepts, ideas and theories. Given that philosophy is concerned

with wholes and universal entities, as well as with individual and particular beings, it needs the assistance of an applied cultural science. But, what type of science one may rightfully ask? It should be a science, which explicitly and implicitly concerns itself not only with creating its own methods and theories, but strives to illuminate the ideas, methods and theories of all cultural sciences. Education, as an applied cultural science, is directed toward and concerned with philosophy and all other cultural sciences, in order to illuminate and communicate their definitions, methods, theories, goals, and meanings. It follows that education was and still is the best normative domain of expression and explanation of all cultural sciences.

Culture and cultural sciences

Culture, through its astoundingly practical and institutional significance, has resulted as an all-encompassing area of behaviour, information, knowledge and research. In its broadest outward and inward appearance, culture is open to all voices of human experience, be it in their empirical or metaphysical tone, in its references to a person, as well as to all the domains of knowledge. The empirical aspect of the reality of culture must be seen both as a derivation of experience qua experience, and as a reflection of experience that is marked by universality. This dual nature of the individual and the universal, of the empirical and the metaphysical is the core of culture. Culture can be defined by traditional ideas, beliefs, actions and feelings, along with the tools and techniques that it fosters. In culture, the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behavior depends on the capacity for symbolic thought. Culture may also be viewed as an essentially human environment, selectively developed by the human being; it is also a derivative of human experience, which is learned or created by individuals, or passed on to them through a socialization process; it comprises all human and natural phenomena, along with what the knower adds to the real. The primary purpose underlying the principles of culture is to provide us with an ideal of human perfection – a harmonious expansion of all the creative powers comprising the beauty and worth of human nature.

Culture as a science is the product of pretentious emulation, the outcome of the appeal of the idea of progress, as well as the desire for the satisfaction of believing oneself to be on the right path and advancing with an inexorable tide. Each domain of human knowledge and praxis can be transformed and developed into a science – i.e., a systematic discipline

with an adequate logic. Every cultural realm can be fashioned by scientific knowledge, including its object of investigation. Scientific knowledge itself is a cultural formation, which has to be comprehended through a comprehensive examination of its foundations. Every cultural science neither replaces intrinsic knowledge by relying upon a privileged alternative explanatory framework, nor grants epistemic autonomy to what is accepted as scientific knowledge. Based on scientific knowledge, the cultural sciences reject the idea that there is “essence of science,” or a single essential aim to which all genuinely scientific domains must aspire. Hence, the practices of scientific investigation in every cultural science, including its methods, products and norms all vary historically.

Although the theories of the cultural sciences are represented in perspective with the discrepancy between the natural sciences and the humanities (Dilthey, 1968, 1976; Windelband, 1919), they must find their groundwork in a practical and yet theoretically substantiated use of applied understanding that appeals to a methodological understanding of human thought. Given that the methods of modern science are recognized as the highest development and achievement of human thought, it is assumed that there must be a method of amalgamating them by making use of the methods of humanities and arts. Such a method is beyond the range of diversity of the cultural sciences; it lies higher than their common structure and methods, as an essential faculty of the organon – namely, the faculty of amalgamating and integrating all methods, theories, rules, postulates, laws and principles of the cultural sciences. This means that the main objective of the organon is deducing, tracing, and deriving the wealth of symbolic forms from the multiplicity of expressions of the cultural sciences. The organon ought to search after the true reality behind the multiplicity of the realities of the various cultural sciences. The condition of their survival and flourishing is indeed anchored in the idea that science as a whole is “the search for unity in hidden likenesses” (Bronowski, 1956, p. 128). Through multiple and versatile processes, it will be possible to grasp the cultural sciences in their unitary significance as symbolic forms, designed by an understanding of human knowledge, getting to know its boundaries.

Philosophy and the cultural sciences

Philosophy sets aside the finished products of mythology or poetry and returns to the nature of things – namely, returns to that original presentation out of which mythology or poetry had gathered shape.

Subsequently, metaphysical elucidations take the place of supernatural visualizations, although the things themselves have not essentially changed their character. What has changed is, rather, the human attitude toward reality, which, from being active and emotional, has become intellectual and speculative. Thus, for instance, the early, emotional reaction gave birth to the symbols of myth, to objects of faith, whereas the rational procedure of critical analysis dissects reality into concepts from which the various types of systematic, scientific symbols are deduced.

Philosophy per se has no distinctive information sources of its own, although it is the most extensive and universal expression of human feelings, thoughts and beliefs about the world. Philosophical systems constitute concepts, ideas, symbols and theories, which are grounded in received information, facts, and knowledge about the world and its inhabitants. The subject matter of philosophy is the world, and the world is complex, dynamic, multidimensional and puzzling. The complexity of the world precludes systematic solutions. In principle, as long as philosophy is tempted to comprehend thinking in purely conceptual and structural frameworks, it will ignore the dynamic nature of human mind. To avoid this, philosophy must utilize complementary and dialectical methods, in such a manner that human thought will maintain its dynamic character, and not be merely determined by a predetermined, stagnant theory. These presuppositions are required for the production of knowledge and the use of language. Knowledge and knowing have often been reduced to the relationship between ideas and theory, or to the individual subject (i.e., the knower) and the object (i.e., the known). The knower has applied his skills in analyzing arguments, assessing knowledge claims, exposing assumptions and making creative syntheses of ideas from disparate fields of knowledge, so as to throw light on his own subject matter – namely, on the validity of the things he is trying to argue.

Every reliable philosophy that is headed toward wisdom must be open, ready to accept its inevitable failure to achieve the perfection of an exhaustive account that is universal, adequate and comprehensive in connection with experience and nature. Philosophy is the unique domain where it is possible to learn and relearn how to “play” with ideas and symbols, and dialectics is the engine of the apparatus of this activity. Where the methods, monopolized by the cultural sciences, no longer suffice the philosophical free play of ideas, its corresponding dialectics begin to lead a vital existence and assume valuable significance. Philosophy’s vital aspiration and impulse are expressed via the speculative

power of imagination, which reveals itself in artistic, literary, poetical or mythical visions, mental images, or mystical experiences. Seen as something apart from the concerns of the theory of knowledge, the power of imagination presents us with the sense or feeling that there is always more to experience than we can predict. In view of the recognition of the perplexed and skeptical character of contemporary knowledge, the insights regarding the nature of various cultural sciences, as well as the impossibility of integrating and embedding those into a metaphysical system have led to revitalization and renaissance of imagination.

The symbolic forms

Human knowledge shapes and formulates the whole of reality through symbols since it lost its belief in the possibility to take hold of the whole world intuitively, in an unmediated approach. Symbols are human contemplations of the nature of things, whereas the symbolic forms are identified and recognized as universal entities. Based on various classical philosophical systems, this study reflects the metaphysical perception regarding the necessity of the symbolic forms. Indeed, the symbolic emphasis gives human knowledge much of its power, enabling human beings to think and act abstractly, analytically or speculatively, artistically or scientifically at a high level of generality with words, data, ideas, concepts or theories. The essential *telos* of a systematic philosophy is to depict, comprehend, illuminate and utilize a system of symbols as a formation of experience, comprised of a structure of culture as a whole – i.e., symbolic forms. By characterizing, analyzing and categorizing each cultural science, the knowledge is framed and boundaries are set to particular symbolic forms. Still, the symbolic emphasis could trap us into circling around at a high level of generality, without having the need to attach abstraction to concrete applications. Although every cultural science develops its own system of expression and knowledge, it finds its entire expression and fulfillment in the whole of the symbolic forms. In this manner, the main argument in support of implementing the symbolic forms emerges consequently with reference to the structure of knowledge.

In every epoch, by trying to prevail over the veil of ignorance and commonsense knowledge, people try to develop symbolic schemata and structures that will comprise every piece of information and knowledge into one general system. Symbolic forms were initially expressive rituals, particular mandates of behavior, a sense of the holy or an institutional role in social life that disclosed their permanent existence through fundamental

philosophical and psychological intentionality. Human symbols are fashioned by the traits of universal applicability, variability and meaningfulness as a designation. The symbolic forms, via individual perception, should enable the comprehension and representation of the entire reality, as well as the delineation and illumination of human beings' existence in the world. Every systematic philosophy makes strenuous efforts to characterize culture, frame knowledge and set boundaries to particular symbolic forms. Combining the structure of cultural forms with the postulates of systematic philosophy entails by logical necessity that the symbolic forms are rationally comprehensible and systematically constituted, and, subsequently, accurately and adequately amalgamated in the organon of the cultural sciences. The generated wide-ranging system of symbolic forms seems to be the successful fulfillment of one of Leibniz's original ideas – namely, creating a truly *lingua universalis* of thought that has the *characteristica universalis* as a system of communication and comprehension of the entire reality. The various symbolic forms are not interchangeable subjects or theories; as symbolic forms, they include an entire world – its logic, concepts and ideas, systems of thought and structures. By combining the structures of cultural sciences with the demands of a systematic philosophy, the symbolic forms turn out to be the proper constituents of the organon of the cultural sciences.

The program of creating an organon of the cultural sciences based on symbolic forms follows certain paths of Ernst Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1953L, 1955, 1957, 1996). Cassirer tries to expose and shape the entire world of human knowledge into a vast network of ideas. By means of shaping symbolic forms, the human horizon is broadened, human knowledge and memory are improved and new significant harmonious realities are created. Via symbolic forms, it is possible to think, comprehend, create, imagine and learn something innovative, new perspectives, ideas and principles of science and humanities. To follow the Kantian idea that the very nature of human consciousness means that "unity in the manifold" and to identify the "parts" of experience as elements of a "whole" of which the mind is in possession as a "regulative idea," means that metaphysics has a more unpretentious objective than in its classical fashion. If the human mind attempts by means of symbols to organize and stabilize the chaos of sensory impression, and to shape those impressions into an intelligible, enduring unity, then metaphysics should be grounded on symbolic forms. Symbolic rendering of experience in the various cultural forms is essentially an imaginative process. Imagination is not only reproductive and productive, but also anticipatory, thus enabling

us to shape future expectations; from the making of simple tools to the construction of philosophical utopias, this “pre-presentation” of the future underlies all human action. Cassirer builds up a cultural world as an ideal world, as a world wherein each symbolic form is autonomous and has its own distinctive mode of synthetic construction. In fact, the lack of ability to unify them due to their different natures is a difficulty affecting his system of thought as a whole. Alternatively, in the new organon, the symbolic forms offer equally indispensable universes of discourse through which the world of experience is articulated and revealed, and human perspectives is widened.

For centuries, theories – either metaphysical speculations or critical methods of knowledge – are viewed as the crowning achievement of scholarly and scientific activity. Through theoretical understanding and creative speculation it is possible to generate increasingly accurate knowledge. Theories, paradigms, laws and principles – rather than directly intuited reflection on the nature of the world – serve as philosophical pillars for structuring the organon. These symbolic structures are merely conventional paradigms, which in paradoxical ways turn out to be constituents of reality and human thought, because they are derived from the dominant *Weltanschauung*, on the one hand, and are defined as the groundwork of reality, on the other. No such theory can provide us with a worthy authoritative order for a fruitful future, nor can it predict an exact time and place for its applicability. Although we are aware of the restrictions and limits of every theory, especially the fact that a reflective or a critical theory per se cannot provide self-knowledge or divine wisdom, by attaining a creative rational *Weltanschauung*, all of us benefit from its fruits. Otherwise, we will be like “philosophers, who have abandoned faith in universal norms of rationality, whether pragmatists or historicists and find themselves in the awkward position of making a living out of the concerns which, by their own account, should long have been dismissed as being meaningless and of no conceivable practical use” (Kolakowski, 2001, p. 9). This means that in order to understand and to be able to act rationally in the world, we have to examine every intellectual resource we have, the roots, growth, essence, and above all the validity of the goals and motives that guide human thinking and action.

Speculative philosophy and the critical-dialectical method

The term “speculation” is derived from the Latin *speculum*, to mirror. Etymologically, “to speculate,” means, “to observe,” “to spy out” or “to

look carefully at something.” If thinking is reflection on all possible concepts and things, speculation leads it from visible objects and effects to ultimate, first, universal principles. Speculative thought grew out of a mythological matrix; it is a living matrix by which the philosopher, the poet or the thinker – who all draw on the myth – are fed. The aspiration of reason to formulate concepts is itself shaped by the matrix, which gives birth to it. Speculative thought is also anchored in religion, in such a manner that it is filled with the profound significance of religious symbolism, seeing in it the explanation of the universe. Speculative philosophy cannot attain the form of a science since it expresses itself not in universal categories but in symbols, which are relatively inadequate, ambiguous and insufficient to represent either archetypes, or the entire nature. The ultimate objective of speculative philosophy as first philosophy is a distinct, universal, transcendent principle. Plurality, immanence, disintegration, finitude and many other significant features of human experience would in effect be subordinated to the primary commitments of first philosophy – namely, to harmony, transcendence, wholeness, unity, the infinite, and the unconditioned. As first philosophy, speculative philosophy discovers the fundamental categories of thought and forms of being by explicitly presenting what is implicit in the thought of the pure being, in conjunction with the ideas that are immanent in pure being itself. Thus, it provides an account of the pure categories of thought, such as being, becoming or substance rather than empirical concepts.

Philosophy, by its own nature, strives to reach something beyond the known laws of nature, or beyond the known laws and principles of human mind, and, therefore, it is a speculative realm. Yet in order to unfetter the philosophical imagination from any restraint, it is necessary to make use of speculation. The ground principles of self-knowledge and self-fulfillment are speculative. Philosophy is sustained by wisdom, imagination and speculation, sine qua non “reason, in a speculative sense, is to observe the invisible within the visible ... Speculative reason becomes the one agency that acts against the destruction of memory in the building of the technological order” (Verene, 1997, pp. 133 and 137). The path from substance to subject and from substance to function, from the Renaissance to the Modern Era, is made possible via speculative thinking. Speculation is subjected to criticism and defined, with relative consistency, as an aberration of the human mind. Science constitutes adequate distinctions between itself and speculation. Science cannot ultimately affirm any final truth, because one of its first principles is that the process of increasing knowledge is an indefinite approximation to ultimate truths. If the

standards of scientific truth are not themselves ultimately true, and the reality is perceived in different ways, then it will be impossible to affirm any fact or phenomenon without having an underlying speculative, theoretical basis. Therefore, it is necessary to utilize the faculty of speculation, which can lead us to unknown possible realities or truths.

There is a linkage between speculative philosophy and critical philosophy and that is to be found through the dialectical method, which is an essential stipulation of systematic thinking. The dialectical method is defined as a process of becoming, which demonstrates how each category must be thought together with its negation. This means that the categories lack independence and are systematically bound to their opposites in such a manner that the one has no meaning apart from the other. When speculative and dialectical methods of philosophy are amalgamated, the power of negation is evident and effective, as well as holding within itself the possibility of developing into an anti-speculative philosophy. One of the possible trajectories of a dialectical philosophy is negative dialectics; this means that the logic of possibilities and not that of necessities is involved in speculative philosophy; this is not the logic of transcendental argumentation, which aims to identify the conditions for the possibility of scientific explanation, moral conduct or aesthetic judgment since its concern is to project possibilities, wherein the conditions of thinking, acting and desiring might be otherwise merely contingent actualities of diverse possibilities.

The ancient Greek philosophy started its inquiry with metaphysical speculation – namely, enquiring into the nature common to all beings and things. Following the classical Aristotelian definition of philosophy, Thomas Aquinas writes, “Sapientia est scientia quae considerat causas primas et universales causas; sapientia causas primas omnium causarum considerat” – Wisdom, i.e. philosophy is the science which considers first and universal causes; wisdom considers the first causes of all causes (Aquinas, 1981, *Metaph. I*, lect. 2). Philosophy is superior to all other sciences simply by its being wisdom; it has regulative and directive functions in relation to the particular sciences, and it can also shape new perspectives and horizons by means of the speculative method. The speculative method “involves a constant substitution of one thing for another.... A thought is speculative if the relationship it asserts is not conceived as a quality unambiguously assigned to a subject, a property given over to a given thing... It must be thought of as a mirroring, in which a reflection is nothing but the pure appearance of what is reflected,

just as the one is the one of the other and the other is the other of the one” (Gadamer, 1975, pp. 465-466). The relation between the subject and its predicate in an ordinary proposition is non-reflective; conversely, in a speculative proposition, the subject is recognized as being in its predicate.

The organon of the cultural sciences endorses to some extent the principles of the Hegelian speculative philosophy, as for instance the notion that the true is the whole. Nevertheless, the main problem remains the Hegelian notion of the absolute, which has to be engaged in confrontation with the purpose of conceiving philosophy as science. The absolute should not be understood merely as an infinite whole that encompasses all the things of the world, as well as all causal relations between these things. In principle, it was the Romantics’ idea that we can know the absolute through a form of aesthetic intuition that transcends discursive knowledge. Since the Romantics equate knowledge with discursive knowledge, then implicitly we cannot know the absolute but only have a certain intuitive feeling of it. Based on this feeling we strive to know the Being, which is the absolute, but we will never accomplish this goal. Instead, our striving results in systematizing our knowledge of the finite things that are amenable to discursive knowledge. Having an intuitive feeling of the absolute – namely, being aesthetically intuitive in certain natural phenomena – does not mean having knowledge of the absolute since it is not discursively articulated. Such an intuitive feeling is not non-cognitive since it gives us not merely the idea that the absolute may exist, but a distinct comprehension of the absolute, glimmering through nature before us. This form of intuition occupies a middle ground between knowledge and non-knowledge. By facing this vague status of the feelings and intuitions, we become rationally compelled to try to convert our intuitions into full knowledge, in an endless process of striving to know the absolute.

There are various interchangeable terms for the absolute. The absolute is “the infinite” and “the non-finite whole,” which comprises all finite things since all finite things contain negation in that they are different from (so that they are-not) one another. The absolute encompasses everything; there is nothing outside it for it to not-be – i.e., it wholly is. It is “the unconditioned” since there is nothing outside it to condition it. The absolute is the cosmos, or the universe, as a whole, a synthetic whole. Given that it is impossible to know everything about finite things, then certainly we cannot know the absolute. The absolute as the first principle becomes the synthetic web of all interrelated things and ideas, although it is impossible to know the whole in advance of knowing about these things or ideas and their relations. If we can

conceptualize and know something insofar as we delimit the object of knowledge as a finite thing, and since we know that the whole is not a finite thing – i.e., the synthetic totality of all finite things and ideas – then we cannot conceptualize or know the whole. Furthermore, even if we try to know the absolute under the concept of the whole – namely, as that which differs from finite things or ideas, we still fail to know the whole, because rather than differing from finite things or ideas, the whole encompasses and includes them. Simply conceiving of the absolute as a synthetic whole would not suffice, for we can only know what we conceptualize. As an alternative, feeling can give us non-cognitive awareness of the absolute. This insight motivates us to try to convert non-cognitive awareness into knowledge, so that the absolute turns out to be a relative entity or notion. The principle of the absolute is an essential constituent of the speculative philosophy since it encompasses the whole realm of human thought, as well as creating the groundwork for the unity of symbolic forms. By utilizing the critical-dialectical method, the principle of the absolute can ensure the original unity of every cultural science, and it will ascertain its concluding syntheses that are to be integrated in the organon.

“Speculative philosophy is the endeavor to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 4). Any speculative system must aim at coherence as “the great preservative of rationalistic sanity... ‘Coherence’... means that the fundamental ideas, in terms of which the scheme is developed, presuppose each other so that in isolation they are meaningless. It is the idea of speculative philosophy that its fundamental notions shall not seem capable of abstraction from each other. In other words, it is presupposed that no entity can be conceived in complete abstraction from the system of the universe, and that it is the business of speculative philosophy to exhibit this truth: ‘This character is its coherence’” (Ibid. pp. 6-7) Speculative philosophy declares its efforts to be both fallible and revisable, and thus partial or incomplete; its logical quality lies both in its internal consistency and in its applicability to empirical matters of fact, whereas its necessity lies in the universality of its application. Unlike each of the cultural sciences that is concerned with one or another aspect of the self or the world, speculative philosophy is concerned with broader theories, principles, worldviews, imaginary realities, etcetera, and it comprises all of them in their totality.

Since modern culture is also defined as a post-classical civilization, namely a culture that must increasingly imply the vision of sciences, then

the significance of speculative philosophy dramatically declines and decreases. In principle, science strives systematically toward self-objectivation of being and turns it by knowledge into thingness – i.e., objective reality; it also classifies and divides its world picture into autonomous fragments of knowledge, rather than creative and/or poetic expressions of humanity. Alternatively, speculative philosophy plays a tremendous vital complementary role, not by opposing science or naturalistic philosophy, but by harmonizing them with artistic, intuitive and imaginary vision and contemplation. Artistic and/or poetic expression strives to attain a higher degree of sensitive insight and intuitive knowledge, to the extent of creating a total world picture that could be amalgamated with scientific knowledge in a complementary composition, designed by means of speculative philosophy.

If the past is not sealed off from the present, then it is possible to maintain all these counterpoints and extremes in uneasy but fruitful tension, by means of the critical-dialectical method, within speculative philosophy. This uneasy, fruitful tension refers to the tension between myth and *logos*, religion and Enlightenment, poetic and scientific imagination, as well as romantic legendary past versus the empirical reality of the present. Although this study is not an attempt to recover the past, it brings the past and the present in a controversial unity of opposites, with the purpose of understanding all phenomena, for the sake of a better future, rather than accomplishing the conservation of either the past or the present. In short, to get to the heart of the culture one cannot just travel the road of arts and humanities, but also the road of science, or, better, both – i.e., the artery of *utraquismus*.

This study concentrates on speculative philosophy, because any systematization of the world and human existence is based on an interpretation of the diverse outcomes of human comprehension, analysis, investigation, reflection, poetic expression, and creative imagination. Speculative philosophy strives to unify all phases of human life and experience into a comprehensive and meaningful whole. In framing and testing its interpretations, speculative philosophy appeals to observation, investigation, memory and imagination, with the purpose of accomplishing a universal theory of the cultural sciences. The primary and long-ignored function of speculative philosophy is to devise or construct generalized frameworks or systems of the world and that help engender a rich sense of place within the world – namely, materially, morally, aesthetically, epistemologically, and so forth. Failure to acknowledge this essential task

leaves us disoriented in ways that are harmful to ourselves as human beings, as well as to nature and to the world's comprehension as a whole.

Due to a process of reiteration and gradual clarification, the traditional problems of metaphysics and epistemology are examined methodically, and subsequently followed by a critical-dialectical method in such a manner that new paths and possibilities are revealed. The modality of this assertion reflects the attainable trajectory of dialectical thinking, which projects possibilities. Dialectics is closely tied to dialogue and imagination since its method refers to the seeing of something as something else. It is a mode of thinking and application or praxis, a back-and-forth among various participants, brought together in their desire for wisdom. Dialectics involves images in order to facilitate the process and progress of dialogue; it refers to answers that can be given by the very action it presents, and it is a rational dialogue about the whole – i.e., the entire human experience and human knowledge. Dialectics demonstrates that things as ideas, in the matter of unity, do not need to be absolutely one. This means that the one is shown to be many – not as the unified manifold of things that are coming to be, but as a definite, comprehensible multiplicity of unities. Since abstract distinctions have a tendency to turn into logical opposites, then the notions of abstract separation and abstract identity are internally related by an inescapable dialectic, which continually reduces the one to the other.

Dialectics refers to a reproducible path of knowledge, and not a separate complex of objects; it denotes a tension between two opposite entities, which necessitates developing a method of argumentation that systematically evaluates contradictory facts or ideas, with the intention of reaching a resolution of their real or apparent contradictions, directed to a logical inquiry into truth. The harmony at the heart of dialectics refers to its ability to embrace both the one - i.e., unity, and the many - i.e., difference; the harmonious idea of unity does not exclude, but posits together with itself the idea of multiplicity. This is the positive meaning of dialectics, which seems to be so lacking in direction, and leads to the false impression that any field or object that is either so indeterminate or so mysterious that it cannot be grasped in any better or more solid fashion, is abandoned *faute de mieux* to the bewildering play of dialectics. The organon utilizes the critical-dialectical method, which copes with ever-new classification of each cultural science, synthesizing its permanence and change, and fashioning phenomena. By thinking dialectically, we think and become novelty – namely, new *Being* and *Becoming*.

Scientific thought

In contemporary times, philosophy is necessarily critical, and only contingently speculative. Swayed by the ideals of Modernity, human thought has been anchored in scientific thought, which is indeed one of the vital, efficient and resourceful methods of human thinking. Scientific thought reflects philosophy's task of analyzing the ways in which it achieves its goals and results, as well as comparing and evaluating its methods with other possible intellectual methods and models. Science is the foremost, fundamental enterprise of the human mind, inasmuch as modern systems of philosophy make use of logical-analytical and critical methods.

As such, science comprises a constant search for scientific evidence and elucidation insofar as either reveal or prove the existence of truth in every realm of reality of cultural science. Scientific knowledge is derived from the combination of observation and mathematical analysis, which passes through stages of hypothesis and theory until it is confirmed and evaluated by subsequent experiments. The instantaneous objective of empirical science is not to understand reality by means of ultimate causes, but to create a reasonable explanation of the phenomena that can be observed in nature. Ergo, when the term science is applied to metaphysics, it refers to understanding of the principles from which metaphysical truths can be drawn with certitude and necessity.

Integrated system of thought

Since the early modern times, we have been living in a civilization of system-makers and system-appliers. People consciously sought to make their lives conform to a system – namely, a set of limited, partial, exclusive principles. Thus, for instance, people sought to live by a romantic *Weltanschauung* or utilitarian values, and sometimes both together, to be wholly idealist or wholly realist, or just to be fans of mysticism. In short, the system-promoter sought to align a whole community or society according to some limiting principles, and to organize all aspects of life in conformity to a system, as if such wholesale limitations could do justice to the *condicio humana*. This means that we do not choose between the systematizable wholeness and the system-bursting infinite but unsettlingly hover between them.

The challenging paradox regarding the process of formation and structuring a new organon, based on symbolic forms, has been

spectacularly phrased by Friedrich Schlegel: “It is equally fatal for the mind to have a system and to have none. It will simply have to decide to combine the two” (Schlegel, 1971b, p. 24). Schlegel typified the romantic rejection of any system, because it tended to embrace contradiction rather than sublimate it. His advocacy of a method of intuitive insight rather than deductive reasoning of philosophy was intended to assimilate philosophy to poetry. Schlegel thought that poetry has no conceptual element; it involves a kind of immediate and near-magical embodiment of insights in verbal form. Understanding is the categorizing component of human reason, which actively determines the objectivity of what would otherwise be blind, sensual intuition. Philosophy strives for a general idea of the structural human conceptual scheme and logico-grammatical relations between the elements. Where understanding fails to achieve its conceptual goals, feeling and imagination succeed. This means that a fantastic form is one where the imagination “can rise ... again and again to a higher power ... in an endless succession of mirrors” (Ibid. p. 32). Identifying the form with the infinite, as an illustration of the endlessness of the succession of mirrors that mirrors itself – namely, the lure of the infinite – leads us to the logical and structural opposition between the infinite and the whole. In the organon, the form is identified with the whole since it refers to the whole of symbolic forms, whereas the infinite is identified with the content, the infinite possibilities of the cultural sciences. Moreover, the organon reduces the distinction between content and form by relating them analogously with the overtly oppositional infinite and whole. The instated distance inverts and reverses the vanishing one, as though the two are reflections in a mirror; thus, after vanishing and hovering, the process of generating the symbolic forms is characterized as inversion and mirroring.

The organon’s constituents

Without reference to particular instances or details, philosophy represents the human mind’s aspiration to bring intelligible order to the chaotic human experience by means of the organon of the cultural sciences, whose main objective is to amalgamate all symbolic forms of the classical and modern systems of thought in a metaphysical sphere. In principle, every theory or cultural domain can be mediated and can be a subject of modification or transformation into a symbolic form; its meaning should be uncovered, its structure of comprehension and communication should be disclosed, and its values should be highlighted, in order to enlighten its cognitive, imaginary, aesthetic and practical potential. The recognition that the forward-looking character of the past presents itself in the process of

representation of the various theories and systems of humanities and sciences, leads to the development of a pattern of enlightening the accuracy and substantiality of the organon of the cultural sciences.

The organon does not have any steady distinctiveness, presentation or representation; its foundations, principles and functions are continually modified by changing purposes and uses. The unified synthesis of different lines of thought and their sweeping consequences makes the organon, if correct in its principal assertions, a ground-shaking and all-encompassing system, to emerge in the entire history of ideas. The sources and the groundwork of the organon are rendered in clear outline: numerous concepts, ideas and theories, which comprise diverse meanings and denotations of symbolic forms, in concurrence with a multiplicity of *Weltanschauungs*. The organon is committed to the traditional claim of philosophy to convey truths that transcend the conditions of their historical origin and the relativistic, limited conceptions, so that they will be universally valid. To defend this claim in light of the historical diversity and development of modern philosophical doctrines means that all great philosophical systems contain some true accounts of the history of ideas. Determined from the history of ideas, all those systems that express certain timeless, universal truths have been included in the organon. At this point, before proceeding further with ideating the new organon, it would be useful to lay out some basic concepts and to enlighten its vast objectives.

Human Being – The idea of human being is an essential Enlightenment notion, which should ensure the unity of humanity. This idea is anchored in the Enlightenment's principle of progress from blindness to sight, darkness to light, and ignorance to knowledge. Biologically, the definition of human being refers to one's belonging to a bipedal primate, one of the mammalian species, with a highly developed brain, and with the capability of abstract reasoning, language and practical skills. This creature has been adept at using systems of communication for self-expression, introspection, exchanging ideas and creating complex social structures. Human being has established an extremely wide variety of social interactions, traditions, rituals, values and laws. Every human being has a deep desire to understand the entire universe and to attain self-knowledge. Finally, the modern notion of human being has to be redefined, in such a manner that it becomes a universal symbolic form.

In the contemporary epoch, the rapid scientific, technological changes have an enormous impact on every person, manifested by human powerful

intellect. Being ingenious, intelligent, skilful, self-thought, self-made, all-advising, all-resourceful and all powerful, the inventor of speech and thought, human being finds his sovereignty in his own knowledge, in such a way that the many powers of modern human being seem to overcome the greatest powers of the world. By means of abstract intellection, human being has the capacity to see unity in multiplicity, identity in plurality, and equality in difference. Human being is *deinos*, the truest auto-antonym – namely, excellent, awesome, mighty, wondrous, clever, tremendous, horrible, dreadful, amazing, astounding, shocking, disgusting, skilful and awful, terrible, dangerous, fearful, and savage – in all the meanings of all these terms. Despite human being's apparent mastery over the strange, mysterious, dreadful and powerful forces of the world, the individual human being is unable to master the strangest, most mysterious, most dreadful and most powerful of them all: him/herself. Neither community nor society shelters us from savagery; they can provide little security against the savagery within us. Alienated and strangers, we are homeless wherever we may seek to make ourselves a home. In our most complete knowledge we remain imperfect, whereas the world remains impenetrable, and obscure, even to the most discerning gaze.

Metaphysics – is the study of the ultimate nature of reality. It investigates the principles of reality by transcending those of any particular science, and by attempting to clarify the ideas by which human beings understand the world and themselves. Metaphysics has to establish the validity of its own principles, including first principles. It is a philosophical inquiry into the entirety of reality, its sources, its *telos*, as well as the ultimate grounds of reality; it attempts to describe the most general structural features of reality, and to provide a definitive exhaustive classification of entities in all spheres of being. Metaphysics designates the process that begins with the possibility of being, affected by the very presence of the real, and the ability to question the real, with regard to its being; hence, it is postulated as a legitimate, universal science. Inasmuch as the ability to apprehend and understand is conditioned by the aptitude to transcend the immediate, it is possible only by metaphysical tools. Every theory of knowledge must be anchored in metaphysics, if it aims to grasp the entire reality. Without a certain notion of what reality is in the broadest sense of the term, we cannot say whether knowledge succeeds or fails. This means that either all knowledge gives way before metaphysics, or else thought is driven further and further back until it touches the first principles, to such an extent that it lays the foundations of a system of metaphysics. Metaphysics arises out of the acknowledgment that there must be a non-empirical element in

reality and human life. Regardless of the fact that the world itself is the objective of metaphysical investigation, metaphysics is a theory about the existence of a supra-sensory world of real entities.

The philosophers' preoccupation with finding hidden metaphysical assumptions seems to reflect the unquestioned conviction that metaphysical vacuums do not exist. "All our knowledge depends on metaphysical views whether we are aware of it or not, and all our thinking involves metaphysical thinking. Those who delude themselves in believing that they do not engage in metaphysical thinking nonetheless do. The only difference between them and declared metaphysicians is that the former are unaware of what they do and, therefore, do it surreptitiously and unreflectively, whereas the latter are aware of it and do it openly and deliberately. Metaphysics is inescapable" (Gracia, 1999, p. 221). The existence of metaphysics cannot be refuted or denied by negation: either we are condemned to perpetually asking about the world and ourselves without finding an answer, or we have achieved certitude to such an extent that we know the whole reality and have reached total self-knowledge. If knowledge fails in some sense to grasp reality, by knowing this fact it attains an ultimate, unpleasant truth, but it does not fail completely; and if it succeeds, it has to stand in need of justification - namely, a series of justifications that has no end.

The basic metaphysical questions are questions of ontology, a study of what there is or what exists; its subject matter is the set of entities whose existence it is committed to affirm. Ontological questions do not elicit inquiry into a catalog of entities or their properties, because the inquiry into the being of things is not inquiry into the properties of entities; being per se is not an entity, nor is it a property of an entity. Being qua being can be examined independently of the extent of observed, experienced or theoretical knowledge about the world, because ontological inquiry is a pre-theoretical and pre-scientific study. Even where entities and their properties are different or other than they are in this world, or even where they, in some possible world, are wholly inaccessible, the questions of ontology would remain possible. Complete information and knowledge of the nature of entities may be the ideal task of science. Yet the completion of such a task, as for instance, finding an "ultimate theory of everything," would not constitute a final answer to the question of being. Metaphysics may refer to an ideal schema of ideas, which is not revealed to us by any rational method, mystical revelation or power of intuition. Moreover,

metaphysics enables us to speculate systematically and make use of our power of imagination, in order to reveal certain schemata of ideas.

Metaphysics starts from the given upon which it bases itself, and it embraces insightful and spiritual being just as much as being of nature. Metaphysics repeatedly urges us to view the world as *sub specie aeternitatis*; its objective is to accomplish a general description and categorization of the world. “Metaphysics is nothing but the description of the generalities, which apply to all the details of practice” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 19). Thus conceived, metaphysics is a study of the presuppositions governing the various areas of experience; its objective is not to investigate what there is or what exists, but to bring these presuppositions to light, to make them explicit; its goal is not to discover some ultimate truths about reality, but the principles that govern every possible experience. Metaphysics also deals with the ideas and relations that apply to all aspects of being, with the widest possible categorial connections. It is composed of necessities – i.e., metaphysical necessities – and if there are such things, they are absolute in the sense that they hold for all possible worlds, or at least all possible worlds in which the things they concern exist. It is evident, however, that the burden of explaining our practices, or more generally, of interpreting our experience, never falls to metaphysics alone; it falls to a complex conjunct, consisting of a general theory of existence plus all cultural sciences, a purpose and a function which the new organon ought to fulfill.

Metaphysics was born of wonder on the subjects of life, nature, universe, being, nothingness and becoming – phenomena that essentially can be explained neither by commonsense perceptions nor by scientific methods, neither by theological methods nor by empirical data. It is the product of creative imagination, which endeavors constantly to prevail over the boundaries of nature and human finitude. Metaphysics begins with negation since it strives constantly to find a way to overcome the obstacles of nature, human existence or any given reality. Metaphysics copes with the ontological problems of Being and Becoming, life and world, God and human being, scientific laws and free will. A metaphysical analysis can easily, from the very beginning, elucidate that the spirit of one’s self and the negation of one’s self as being are one and the same thing since the beginning can also only be or be delineated by negating self as being. If primal nature is a will to exist, or, theologically, it is God’s will to exist, then as such, the ground, the beginning of the sequence, must be negative: namely, the beginning in any case lies only in the negation. Every