

Lajos Szabó:

Mammonism – a Natural History

The *instrument in itself* is the *basic category* of economy, economic theory, sociology and the atheistic mass-socialism. A real instrument is an instrument as opposed to a goal, in relation to a goal.

An instrument without a goal is no instrument.

Every goal is a definite goal; every instrument is a definite instrument to a definite goal. Ergo: an instrument without a goal, i.e. a definite goal is no instrument at all. Without the original goal, the instrument ceases to exist in its original sense and original value, it *annihilates*. It is the goal that makes an instrument.

The three directions in which insanity is professionalized and condensed into *idées fixes*:

1. *the thing in itself*,
2. *the phenomenon in itself*,
3. *the truth in itself*:

— Kant, Comte and Bolzano

Here we anticipated the fundamental theorems of these three, age-expressing thinkers, all collected together, classified and evaluated, in order for us to see – condensed and clear – a few of the more important representatives of the destructive thoughts of which our lives need to be liberated. The way and the method of this liberation is that work which Ebner sets as the life task of all thinkers: *pondering of words*. It is an unusual and often cumbersome job. Not that in principle it needs to be cumbersome, but it is because we are at the beginning of our work, and then because the resistance against clearing our language of insanity is unfathomably great. We are working in a hostile atmosphere – that is the other meaning of the cumbersome nature of this work.

Every existing thing is a phenomenon; every phenomenon is an existing thing. (Everything that exists appears; everything that appears exists.)¹

Everything exists. “Everything”, or rather “all”, “exist”, and “phenomenon” are mutual concepts; cross-sections of the same reality carried out in the directions and for the sake of different

1 phenomenon – the commonly understood meaning “an observable occurrence”, and the one often used in philosophy: “appearance” are both meant here. The author makes extensive use of the rich Hungarian stem “jel” = “sign” through its involvement in the etymology of “jelen” = “present”, “jelez” = “to signal”, “jelent” = 1. “to mean sth”, 2. “to report sth”, “jelentkezik” = “to show up, to appear, to present itself, to show a sign of itself”, thus “jelenség” = *phil. tech.* “phenomenon, appearance”. Szabó is attacking the modern philosophical notion of *phenomenon* deriving from Kant, who distinguished it from *noumenon*, which he also termed “thing-in-itself” (Ding an sich), which in contrast to the phenomenon is not accessible to any sort of perception.

goals. They are the criteria unto each other. Besides each other and our related words of the same rank, these cannot even have other criteria! This follows from the essence of them all.

Every existing thing is a phenomenon.² It is obvious that we cannot experience existence or an existing thing without a phenomenon, an appearance, even if “experience” is understood in its narrower, Kantian sense. But even if we cannot speak of the independence, separation and self-containedness³ of existence and phenomenon in this narrower sense, logically we may still assume the two to be separate. In principle, this could be possible in one of two ways:

1. If we knew about an existing thing without a phenomenon.
2. Or if we knew about a phenomenon without an existing thing.

Have we ever known about an existing thing independently of a phenomenon? In the correct use of the word: never; in the predominant use of the word: yes! Deviations are observed in the orbit of a planet from the curves presumed by the laws of astronomy. A researcher arrives at the conclusion that the deviation is caused by the attraction, the influence of another star. Using the data of the deviation, he calculates where that stellar object should be to produce the orbit deviating from the regular one. The astronomers aim their telescopes at the point he calculated, and lo and behold, a new star is discovered. This would be the most well-known and most obvious example of *our knowledge of an existing thing without a phenomenon!*

In the sense of the predominant and wrong use of the word, we really do know about an existing thing independent of a phenomenon in this case. There is no argument about that. The only thing we can and do argue about is whether the predominant use of the word is right or wrong? In the example given: the mathematical astronomer did know about a new star, about a new entity via his calculations, but it has only become a phenomenon, a thing of experience to him, when he aimed his telescope at the point he already calculated, and this time saw the star “with his own eyes”! The basis for evaluation between what is an experience and what is a hypothesis is provided by the dogma of crude sensualism. The proving dignity of the rank of “experience” is not due to mathematics, because in the given case it is the farthest away from the sensual experience of the five sensing organs which are conceived as isolated, and these are the sole approved sources of all knowledge. This of course is the first contradiction, since an empiricism that aspires to be taken seriously must consider mathematics an empirically based and empirically saturated art. Thus, if such an empiricism still traces all proofs back to the elementary and isolated senses, even in the face of mathematical derivation, this over-providence qualifies the empirical structure of mathematics partly superfluous and partly failed. At least it does so within the interpretation and evaluation provided by this empiricism. Additionally, if we consider the enormous intermediate machinery involved with the use of a telescope in an observatory, the expression “he saw it with his own eyes” appears to be more of a caricature than a “palpable” argument.

Something could still be saved from the opposition of entity and phenomenon if from the original position we only wished to maintain – very leniently – that the closer we remain to the

2 See previous footnote on the same issue

3 An-sich or “in itself” character

experience of the original, elementary senses the higher the degree of safety of our knowledge will be. But of course this weakened version of arbitrary sensualism – besides never having been able to even remotely explain any higher spiritual activities – even stumbles upon very “palpable” contradictions. First, it is obvious that the safety of our knowledge is not provided by the experience of the elementary and isolated senses, but quite the opposite: by the intersection, permeation and coincidence of our different sensations and experiences – as it is shown by our original example and by all crosscheck procedures in science. Second, once again we may remain with astronomy and our first example, where not only does the least mediated sensing experience (the apparent motion of stellar objects!) not provide the greatest safety of knowledge, but it suggests the polar opposite of the scientifically assured result.

This minute criticism of coarse sensualism was necessary, because at the depths of automatic expressions, evaluations and figures of speech even today it is not the sublimated but the coarsest form of sensualism that prevails; and apart from a few exceptions, even for the representatives of trends formally opposing the cruder forms of sensualism.

Now if we disregard the arbitrary and contradictory evaluation and word use of coarse sensualism, it is obvious that the new planet, the new entity showed up as much in the deviations from the mathematical formulae of astronomy as in the view of the telescopes.

Therefore it was not without a phenomenon but simultaneously to the phenomenon that we learnt about the entity.

Is there an example for the opposite? Do we know about a phenomenon without an existing thing? It could appear that it is easy to bring an example. Indeed our own examples of astronomy seem to turn on us! It seems, it *appears* that the Sun and all the stars revolve around the Earth, even though the *existing* reality is just the opposite. Is this then the separation of existence and appearance after all? I can see, I can sense the phenomenon of the rainbow, but I do not know *what it is!* I do not know *what is behind it.*

Both examples represent the case of so-called sensory illusions, and as much for the Greeks as all other instances of philosophical awakening, these sensory illusions were the tour-de-force-style arguments of certain rationalistic trends against the narrow – and even real – empiricism.

Well, we must defend not only empiricism but also the value, reliability and credit of our senses against this kind of indirect apriorism or skepticism.

It is not true that what I see is that “the Sun rises in the East, moves in a circular motion around the globe and sets in the West,” I do not see that with my eyes. That is an extension of what I have seen with my eyes with one or more theories; which would be all right. What is not all right is that it is an extension of what I have seen with arbitrary and bad theories, theories that lost their meaning. No one ever sees anything like the sun not even just rising but even as much as budging. What we do see is that once it is “at this point”, then at another one; once it is small, then it is bigger; once one color, then another. *That* is what we really see! The rest is an

interpretation – and a *bad interpretation* at that. We only have to faithfully express, *bring up*⁴ what the reports of our senses mean, instead of framing them for the errors of bad theories, which are outdated due to a laziness of thought but also engrained in the structure of our language. Do that and the “sensory illusions” will go right away as epistemological arguments for skepticism or against the viability of our senses or their ability to serve our knowledge.

What I see about the Sun and what astronomy tells me about the Sun are in no opposition to each other. It is only the pseudo-theories stemming from the lack of thinking that are in opposition to actual theories that derive from thinking. And that is how it should be!

Here too, appearance and existence appear and exist together.

I can see the rainbow but I do not know what it is, I do not know what is behind it.

I can see the rainbow – and I know what it is: a rainbow: *exactly what I am seeing*. What I do not know, or know wrong, is something *entirely different!* I do not know how a rainbow comes to be. I do not know the relationships of the rainbow-phenomenon and rainbow-entity to other phenomena and other entities. These relationships of phenomena and existence *do not appear to me*, and in my vanity, it is not my own, my own person’s weak sensitivity and perceptivity that I blame, but the “things” that hide from me as “in-itself” entities; I vainly blame our “weak” senses which seem to have been organized just to hide reality from us via these sensory illusions.

Everything that exists: appears, everything that appears: exists.

Everything exists! But then so do all the mutually “exclusive” differences and opposites, all contradictions and all the “*contradicting*” “*things*” exist! No sort of dialectic logic can avoid this final consequence of its own path. If its approach is still to attempt circumventing the issue (see Hegel), then it will have used the perfect recipe for producing the kind of kitchen-sponge-dialectic that can be used at all times to present, prove, illustrate and disprove anything as well as its opposite. On the other hand, even acknowledging contradictory existence is only possible if we maintain the complete integrity of the motives and motion laws of identity! Taking this further, we must say that the only thing making the unfulfilled promise of systems of dialectic logic, i.e. *the acknowledgment* of “contradictory existence” possible, is recognizing the *validity* of the *principia of identity surpassing all Aristotelean logic and the so-called philosophies of identity*.

Everything exists! Therefore so do all the mutually exclusive differences and opposites, the contradictory and, in the last resort, even the self-contradictory entities – of course they do so as entirely *specific units of existence*. It is a distinction very difficult to put into words that separates these self-contradicting entities from all other types of existing things in their existence in a very specific way, since all others, from first to last, exists also in a very specific way that distinguishes them from everything else! Nothing exists without similarity or difference! The difference that does not exclude, but in fact sustains similarity as its own basis is *existence itself*.

4 “bring up” – the author deliberately chooses the Hungarian expression “to bring into word” = “to bring up” to play with the figurative spatial relation involved in this term, and suggest that we literally bring the correct meaning of our senses *into* a word.

Let us learn the natural history of contradictions then. Let us enclose them in our concepts, let us proceed with these indestructible contradictions as one does with the bacteria that cause epidemics. Let us make vaccines out of them – against them. Let us mix a drink – out of thirst.

There are some who would be afraid of a world without contradictions.

We can understand that fear!

Yet, and exactly because of that, the most important task is defeating and resolving contradictions. For two reasons: first, because everything, all existence and all life breaks down if the contradictions are not defeated; and second, because every resolved contradiction accommodates for a thousand new contradictions and a thousand new lives!

We need not fear any real, contradiction- and paradox-eliminating rationalism (such as the “*winged reason*” for Tábor Béla!), for the deeper our part is in the Logos, the richer our sensitivity to the contradictions that unfold.

That is how human aspiration, creation and research lean towards the greater, deeper and more hidden contradictions.

Contradictions are the prevailing Straits of Gibraltar, the narrow paths, the shortest paths dominating all life, the paths of the greatest resistance, those crossroads, where we may *go forth to meet* our suffering, our enemies and the evil. To summarize with an addendum: everything that exists appears, differs and has an effect. “In some way”, “after its own fashion”. No existence is possible without appearing, differing and having an effect.

To appear, to differ and to have an effect – these are the life and existence functions of existence. Existence is existence because of and in these. It is in them that existence is itself. The order is not quite by chance either. It is ordered as a rising series. Because differing too is the appearance of an appearance, but with more of an aggressive, active momentum involved. The case of the appearance of a phenomenon was predominated by the passive momentum; in the case of differing, the active and the passive aspects appear to have come to a balance. The effect is the highest degree. It is the complementary opposite of the phenomenon, dominated by the active-aggressive momentum. Beyond that, the passive momentum often evanesces in it. These points are transitory to the thought of *efficiency* and *causality*.

It is here that we need to return in the current trend of *causality* becoming problematic. Back to the linguistic analysis of *causality*. This is what it means “to acknowledge and re-conquer the reality of language” – or this too.

This is where the logical principia of Pauler Ákos belong. Processing them from the perspective of our current problems, we could say that no existing thing could exist without a more or less dense texture of identity, classification and coherence.

For the sake of the precision of axiomatic order, it is often better to use the words *order* and *ordering* instead of *classification*. These are the proper means between the “saturated” term of *identity* and the “line-like” term of *coherence*.

In other words:

Nothing is in itself (“an sich”)! This is in fact nothing but a special application of the Parmenidian doctrine of “the non-existent does not exist.” There are two important structural aspects of the doctrine which we have to bear in mind.

1. Greek atomism and the theory of space were born from the productive violation of this requirement of Parmenides; and all modern sciences and mathematics (geometry), in spite of their vast changes and results, still connect to this Greek atomism and theory of space. This is worth noting for the reason (among others) that the Greeks meant “indivisible” by atom, while the moderns mean “divisible”. The discrepancy between the Greek concept of space and the Post-Euclidean constructional spaces is no slimmer than that, even if thus far no one has managed to put it into words. Yet, we have no right for any flabbergasted surprise at the paradoxes of the modern theory of space: the Greek conception of *empty space*, which has by now advanced into the ranks of self evident realities, principia, or even tautologies, is but a specific application of the thought of the existing non-existent.

It seems that the forgotten but all the more thorough and open self-contradiction of the Greeks about the existing non-existent and the empty space that logically follows has become fruitful in the thousands of paradoxes of modern science.

2. The doctrine of “the non-existent does not exist” is in fact the earliest conscious manifestation of the logic of identity!

Nothing is in itself – if for the moment, and for the sake of brevity of thought, we set aside the pivotal truth that the different breeds of the non-existent, of nothing, exist just as untroubled as the types of contradictions from which they originate! Now, after all we have said, we can say that there are – besides God, the original source of all spirit, life and forms – all species of contradictory entities which are existent and *noxious* to various degrees. The non-existent, contradictory and destructive realities most typical of the life of modern men are:

1. things in themselves (Kant and schools of criticism),
2. truths in themselves (Bolzano and the concepts of “pure logic”),
3. phenomena in themselves (Comte and the ephemeral positivisms),
4. economy and society in themselves (mammonism, bourgeois world concept, sociology, capitalism, mass-socialism and all forms of anti-personal and anti-community hysteria of life)

The basis of all axiomatics: completeness, independence and consistency (the lack of contradictions)

Over the common denominator:

Without a deficiency, a redundancy or a contradiction!

Excluding all deficiency, redundancy and contradiction!

Denying all deficiency, redundancy and contradiction!

In other words: *demanding* that deficiency, redundancy and contradiction be denied!

Three words are left still unresolved: deficiency, redundancy and contradiction. Can two of these be traced back to the third? Yes. How?

1. Contradiction can, without further ado – contradiction and denial!
2. Redundancy can, owing to the fact that everything that exists differs – contradiction and denial!
3. Deficiency can, owing to the fact that everything – including both *nothing* and *deficiency* – exists (all and existence are mutual concepts) deficiency therefore is... contradiction and denial!

Considering that axiomatics demands the elimination and negation of deficiency, redundancy and contradiction, its demand according to the above is nothing but the three necessary variants of the *denial of denial*, the *negation of negation* – that is, the *trinitary unity of affirmation!*⁵

The traditional expressions of the trinitary unity of affirmation are today mutilated in their meaning; these are: *Amen – Sanctity – the Star of David – the Trinity...*

The paths are: affirmation – verb⁶, verb – word⁷, approval/affirmation/saying-amen, confirmation, sanctification... yes/verb/word/essence/position/strength/basis/archetype (primordial image)...

- I. All judgments are identical to themselves.
- II. All judgments are either true or not-true, there is no third case.
- III. No judgment can be both true and erroneous in the same regard.

All three variants say the same thing, yet they are all indispensable. This is a manifestation of the trinitary unity, of the *transfixation* of one and three.

- a) Every thing is identical to itself.
- b) Every thing can be classified.
- c) Every thing is connected to every other thing.

The ontological logic of Pauler Ákos has an important role in comparative axiomatics. We make two modifications: 1. we substitute the concept of “thing” with that of “momentum”,⁸ and 2. that of “classifiability” with “orderability”.

- a2) Every momentum is identical to itself.
- b2) Every momentum can be ordered.
- c2) Every momentum is connected to every other momentums.

5 Szabó uses the word “igenlés” = “affirmation”, from the verb “igenel” = “to affirm”, which derives from the word “igen” = “yes”, along the same path as its German counterpart “Ja” (yes) → “Bejahung” (affirmation), thus *lit.* “to affirm” = “to yes”. Later on he plays with the form of this word too which in turn appears to be deriving from “ige” = “verb”.

6 See the previous footnote on this connection.

7 The continuation of the sequence in the previous footnote with word relies – primarily – on the Biblical use of the word “ige” (= “verb”) for God’s word (although in the modern use “word” = “szó”).

8 The word is not meant in its modern, scientific sense but in the common, philosophical use, i.e. as an essential or constituent element, (*lit.* a root of motion, from *lat.* “movimentum”).

In the same way as Paulerian logic introduced a new trinitary unity to the methods of axiomatic research, more new forms can be explored beside the traditional ones. The new forms, in harmony with the old ones, supporting and strengthening them, dissolve their mechanized state! For instance, the axiomatic formulation of *experience* as an *active conduct*

- x) to collect
- y) to order
- z) to evaluate.

The three momentums (x, y, z) mutually presuppose each other. They cannot exist without each other, but they do not render each other redundant, the differences between their roles is very much necessary.

The three common basic requirements of all aesthetical composition and all technical construction are the lack of deficiency, redundancy and contradictions! It is naturally by no chance that this requirement is identical to that of mathematical, and general, axiomatics. The axiomatic coincidence explains the aesthetic value of grand technical creations (see also the elegance and aesthetical value of mathematics), and what is more important, it explains the inexhaustible mechanical-technical productivity of the active form of aesthetics: creation. With this last point we approached the problem of work. Of the work to which the validity of the trinitary unity, which we showed from so many angles above, still applies! For there *is* (of course) a more commonly known form of work and production, in which this cannot be found – or at least not with the obvious directness of the aforementioned things. This more common form of work and production is the subject of economic theory.

Here we got into another world. From the *humanistic economy* of search, research and creation – into the *inhumane netherworld of political economy*! The form of life and research based on the trinitary unity has no place here. It is a world of duality and quaternity. Formlessness, anarchy, “endlessness”, neutrality, the industrially cultivated evasion of all solid stances, of all evaluation and all life-affirmation; here lie the ultimate spiritual, attitudinal and methodical bases of exploitation, of universal parasitism, of the most powerful enemy of man – of the *mammon*!

Translated by István Cziegler