

KARL-OTTO APEL

THE PROBLEM OF
PHILOSOPHICAL FUNDAMENTAL-GROUNDING
IN LIGHT OF A
TRANSCENDENTAL PRAGMATIC OF LANGUAGE

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Translator's Introduction : This translation was made during the spring of 1975 in collaboration with Professor Apel who, in addition to many corrections of the English text, made a number of additions to and expansions of passages in English which were then inserted into the translation. As a consequence, some passages in the translation have no actual correspondents in the German text. It should be noted that the German text will appear in *Sprache und Erkenntnis. Festschrift fuer G. Frey*, B. Kanitscheider (ed.), Innsbruck.

It is necessary to comment briefly on the mechanics of the translation. The following translations have been employed consistently throughout. *Begrundung* has been translated as "grounding," *Letztbegrundung* as "fundamental-grounding," and *gründen* and *begründen* as "to ground." *Rechtfertigung* has been rendered by "justification" and the reader should note that the last sentence of the first section of the essay indicates that Professor Apel takes *Begrundung* and *Rechtfertigung* or "grounding" and "justification" as roughly synonymous. *Virtuell* and *aktuell* have been translated by "virtual" and "actual" and the latter are to be understood as marking the distinction between "existing or resulting in essence or effect" and existing in actual fact or form." *Satz* has been translated by "sentence" although in many contexts it will be observed that it is used more in the sense of "proposition" ; I chose to preserve the ambiguity that exists in the German. Finally, although it is at times awkward, I have rendered many compound and hyphenated German words by hyphenated English words, generally because I judged that a point might have been otherwise lost.

Karl Richard Pavlovic

I. THE PROBLEM :

CRITICAL RATIONALISM VERSUS FUNDAMENTAL-GROUNDING ?

The thesis of the impossibility of philosophical fundamental-grounding has in recent times been brought forward by the representatives of the so-called "Critical Rationalism" that grew out of Karl Popper's *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, in particular, by W. W. Bartley and H. Albert. This thesis has been brought to bear upon the classical rationalism of the modern period as well as upon the Kantian transcendental criticism of knowledge.¹ "Critical Rationalism" combines simultaneously with this distancing from an uncritical rationalism (an uncritical rationalism that has thus far not reflected critically on the impossibility of self-grounding) the claim that the philosophical program of fundamental-grounding might be superseded in a satisfactory form by the alternative program of unlimited rational criticism. Following Bartley's proclamation of a "pan-critical rationalism" in his book, *Retreat to Commitment*,² H. Albert in particular explained this alternative program in his *Traktat Ueber Kritische Vernunft* (Tuebingen 1968, 2nd ed. 1969). Through the deduction of what he calls the "Muenchhausen-Trilemma,"³ the criticism of the claim for philosophical fundamental-grounding has been brought to an impressive and apparently logically compelling form.

According to Hans Albert, every attempt to fulfill the claim for a philosophical fundamental-grounding in the sense of Leibniz' *postulate of sufficient grounding* (*principium rationis sufficientis*) leads "to a situation with three alternatives, all of which appear unacceptable, that is, it leads to a trilemma..." The attempt forces a choice among the following :

1. an *infinite regress* that appears to be demanded by the necessity of going always further back in the search for reasons, but which is not practically feasible and therefore yields no solid foundation
2. a *logical circle* in the deduction which results from the fact that one is forced in the grounding process to resort to statements which have already shown themselves to be in need of grounding — a process which, because it is logically faulty, likewise leads to no solid foundation
3. a *cessation of the process* at a particular point. This cessation is in principle feasible but would involve an arbitrary suspension of the principle of sufficient grounding.⁴

Albert knows, of course, that the philosophical tradition since Aristotle, in particular the rationalism initiated by Descartes and its opponent, empi-

ricism, did not want to suspend at an arbitrary point and by means of an arbitrary suspension of the principle of grounding the logical process of grounding. Rather, that tradition sought premises which, on the basis of *knowledge-evidence*, would be apparent or convincing.⁵ Albert argues, however, that every such premise "can be fundamentally doubted,"⁶ so that any grounding by means of knowledge-"evidence" merely amounts to an arbitrary cessation in the grounding process in the sense of the third alternative of the just mentioned trilemma.

The following textual evidence may illustrate this interpretation of Albert's position. According to Albert, the appeal to "evidence" in the grounding process is "entirely analogous to the suspension of the causal principle through the introduction of a *causa sui*." "An assertion the truth of which is certain and which, therefore, is not in need of grounding" is, according to Albert, "a dogma." Grounding in the sense of the third alternative is, therefore, "*grounding by appeal to a dogma*." Likewise, "going back to extra-linguistic stages of the process" does not alter this fact, since, "with respect to such stages, it is always possible to ask for their grounding." "Any thesis for self-grounding of such fundamental stages must, as with the corresponding theses for certain statements, be viewed as a disguise for the resolution to suspend the principle of sufficient grounding in this case."⁷

Thus Albert not only rejects the cartesian reduction of the *validity of truth* to *knowledge-evidence* or *certainty*, but he goes beyond this to the thesis that the quest for certainty is entirely profitless ; indeed, it is said to be irreconcilable with the search for truth : "All guarantees in knowledge are self-fabricated and thus *worthless* for the comprehension of reality. That is, we can always procure certainty by *dogmatizing* any constituents of our convictions and thus immunizing them *from all possible criticism*. They are thus secured *from the risk of failure*."⁸ Albert sees this evaluation confirmed by H. Dingler who no longer finds the fundamental "guarantee" for philosophical knowledge-grounding in any given evidence, but rather in "will" to certainty. Through the so-called "exhaustion"-principle he immunizes the theoretical constructions of men from possible failure to grasp reality. Here, as for Albert, "the will to certainty" triumphs over the "will to knowledge"⁹ and thus leads the fundamental-grounding principle of classical rationalism *ad absurdum* : "The development of classical teachings has made it clear that the quest for certainty and the search for truth ultimately exclude one another if one does not want to confine oneself to

contentless truths."¹⁰

Facing this problem situation, Albert, along with Karl Popper, proposes to give up the principle of sufficient reason or sufficient justification in general and to make a decision that is not rationally groundable and is the exact opposite of Dingler's decision. This decision favors a method which fundamentally exempts from possible criticism no knowledge that is held to be certain. This method requires that reality be given the opportunity "to be determinately brought to bear" on whether our theoretical constructions will run aground on it (reality).¹¹ The decision in favor of Popper's "Fallibilism" principle must, according to Albert, "sacrifice the desire for certainty that underlies classical teachings and accept the permanent uncertainty as to whether our opinions will hold good in the future and thereby be justified."¹²

Albert explicitly points out that for Popper, just as for Dingler, the "will to certainty" involves a "moral dimension," the acceptance of the method of critical examination also involves a "moral dimension"; "it signifies the assumption of a methodical practice for social life that is rich in consequences, i.e., a practice that is not only of great significance for the drawing up, working out and examining of theories, but also for their application and thus for the role played by knowledge in social life." Indeed, "the rational model of criticism is the scheme of a way of life, of a social practice and has, therefore, ethical and beyond this political significance."¹³ Albert draws the consequences of this consideration for ethics in paragraph 12 ("Criticism and Ethics") of his "Treatise." He also agrees with Popper that a rational fundamental-grounding for ethical norms is impossible. He recommends instead that the existing moral systems as well as the existing scientific theories with respect to their verification by reality be continually subjected to reexamination in light of alternatives.¹⁴

In the following, I wish to submit the just sketched position of "critical rationalism" to metacritical examination, i.e., to an examination which at first depends on nothing other than a self-application of critical rationalism itself. From this it should already be apparent that my purpose cannot be the questioning of the principle of "critical examination." (Who, after all, would today wish to criticise "critical rationalism" *in this sense*?) Instead I would like to inquire into the *conditions of the possibility of intersubjectively valid criticism*, i.e., the "critical examination" of scientific knowledge as well as the criticism of moral norms. This question which is

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oriented towards Kant, shall serve especially to examine Albert's asserted inner-connection between the thesis concerning the impossibility of fundamental-grounding and the positive program of "rational criticism." More specifically, we will investigate *whether* — and if so, in what sense — the principle of grounding or justification can be replaced by the principle of criticism, or *whether* — and if so, in what sense — the principle of grounding or justification is not presupposed by the principle of intersubjectively valid criticism.

II. CRITICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE "MUENCHHAUSEN-TRILEMMA": SYNTACTIC-SEMANTIC VERSUS TRANSCENDENTAL-PRAGMATIC INTERPRETATION OF THE IDEA OF SUFFICIENT GROUNDING.

Where in the tradition does the problem of the philosophical fundamental-grounding stand? The *philosophical* problem of fundamental-grounding has arisen repeatedly, since the ancients, in connection with the insight into the impossibility of *logico-mathematical* (apodictic-deductive) grounding of fundamental principles, the so-called "axioms" of logico-mathematical thought and, thereby, of the demonstrative sciences.¹⁵ More pointedly, since the time of Aristotle, the problem of fundamental-grounding has been made a problem of *philosophical* significance by precisely the circumstance that *logico-mathematical* arguments can ground neither the truth of their premises nor the validity of the rules of proof, but rather can only guarantee "the transfer of the *positive* truth-value, truth, from the set of premises to the conclusion and, in the opposite direction, the *transfer* of the negative truth-value, falsehood, from the conclusion to the set of premises."¹⁶ Corresponding to this circumstance is the circumstance that, since Descartes, the Aristotelian comprehension of the *axioms* as *immediately apparent fundamental principles* that are neither provable nor in need of proof¹⁷ has been radicalized in the sense of a demanded recourse to evidence as the philosophical fundamental-grounding.¹⁸ It is already clear from this that the problem of fundamental-grounding cannot, so long as it is placed in the tradition, be conceived as a purely formal-logical one.

Albert, at first, seems also to ascribe significance to this situation. For he explicitly understands the "principle of sufficient reason," first formulated by Leibniz, not in the manner of less recent logic books as a

"principle of thought" or as an "axiom of logic," but, rather, he understands it as a "general *postulate of the classical methodology of rational thought*," i.e., as a "methodological principle" which presupposes that "the recognizability of reality and the determinability of truth are tied together."¹⁹ (As a matter of fact, the postulate of a fundamental-grounding of New Age classical rationalism, in my opinion, corresponds to a subordination of *logic* — and of the *ontological correspondence* theory of truth — to the quest for *evidence* in a *theory of knowledge* which advanced to the rank of *prima philosophia*. This subordination of *logic* and *ontology* to the *evidence-principle* in the theory of knowledge found its most radical expression in the *phenomenology of consciousness* developed by Brentano and Husserl.)

However, in his treatment of the "Muenchhausen-Trilemma," Albert starts from the point of view of *modern logic*,²⁰ invoking the authority of Popper and Carnap. He now gives the impression that he could explain the aporetic of the rationalist postulate of fundamental-grounding by a *formal-logically deduced* trilemma, viz., by the trilemma (that is in fact deduced on the demand of a purely deductive fundamental-grounding) consisting of the alternatives : 1. infinite regress, 2. logical circle and 3. ungrounded cessation of the grounding process.²¹

Now, whatever Albert's intention may have been, a critical reconstruction of his argument against classical rationalism must, in my opinion, make the following clear : the possible argumentation against the *evidence postulate* of classical rationalism has no direct connection with the third alternative of this formal-logically deduced trilemma. Rather, the trilemma of logical grounding that Albert deduced can itself be understood as a complete explication of the problematic of axioms that Aristotle had pointed out and that, *from the beginning*, has posed the problem of fundamental-grounding. (If one, with D. Hilbert, reduces the problem of the truth of the axioms of logic and mathematics to the problem of the freedom from contradiction of "axiomatic systems," there emerges — corresponding to the "Muenchhausen-Trilemma" — a metalogical or metamathematical aporetic of deductive fundamental-grounding, as Goedel, Church, and others have shown.)²² Already this much becomes clear : in distinction to the logico-mathematical (and metalogical and the metamathematical) problematic of fundamental-grounding, the modern *principle of sufficient reason*, as far as it demands the (eventually logically mediated) *appeal to evidence*, is *from the start* an *epistemological* principle, i.e., a principle that, speaking in the modern idiom,

involves the pragmatic dimension of evidence for a *knowledge-subject*.

The foregoing affects our discussion to this extent : only if it could be proven that the *evidence*-postulate is completely pointless, i.e., that it, in effect, implies the replacement of the search for truth by an arbitrary decision, only then would it be legitimate to hang the aporetic of fundamental-grounding on the third horn of the logically deduced "Muenchhausen-Trilemma." However, the required *demonstration of the pointlessness of the evidence-postulate* cannot, in principle, be accomplished by formal logical means alone. How then can the demonstration be accomplished ? Must not such a demonstration itself assume paradoxically that appeal to "*evidence*" does not imply arbitrariness, but rather that it is indispensable for philosophical argumentation ?

In order to avoid misunderstandings, I shall at this point make clear the strategy of my argumentation. In the following, I wish by no means to defend that position of classical rationalism which, in the sense of the cartesian primacy of theory of knowledge (knowledge qua consciousness), reduces the search for truth to the search for *evidence*. I do not, therefore, want to defend an empirical or rational "philosophy of primordial origins"²³ of knowledge in which are defended, "simultaneously, a solution of the problem of origin and of validity."²⁴ Such a strategy seems to me unpromising because *knowledge-evidence* as such, however indispensable it is, is *restricted to the respective evidence-consciousness*. Traditional theory of knowledge qua theory of consciousness cannot show with its own conceptual apparatus how *knowledge-evidence*, i.e., evidence of judgments about conceptual syntheses of ideas of the respective consciousness, can be carried over into *intersubjective validity of linguistically formulated statements*. Intersubjective validity of statements based on critical discussions seems to me to have been correctly set by Popper and his followers as a methodological goal of the scientific philosophical search for truth.²⁵ I thoroughly agree with Popper and Albert that, to secure the truth of statements, "evidence" of convictions for a particular consciousness is not sufficient. Beyond this, however, I shall, unlike Popper and his school, draw truth-theoretical consequences from the fact that only the critical *discourse* of scientists can decide about the *intersubjective validity* of scientific results. For it would, in my opinion, imply a misapprehension of the problem, if one — as is customary in logical empiricism — were to reduce, without further ado, the *linguistically mediated* problematic of the *intersubjective validity of state-*

ments to a topic of a (syntactic-semantical) logic of science which could banish the problems of traditional *theory of knowledge* into *psychology*.

This also appears to be the opinion of Albert, since he properly rejects, in his discussion of the character of critical methodology, the reduction of the theory of science to an "application (or even a part) of *formal logic*, including the relevant elements of mathematics, in the best case including as well, elements of the semantics of artificial languages."²⁶ Albert demands, "in the sense of the contemporary distinction of syntax, semantics and pragmatics" consideration of "the knowledge-theoretical relevance of pragmatics,"²⁷ i.e., consideration of the linguistic and extra-linguistic states of affairs which constitute the *context* of problematical statements. This includes, according to Albert, "those states of affairs which are the referents of the respective statements concerning those states of affairs" and "beyond this those states of affairs which make up the context of human knowledge-activities, that is, not only the isolated activities of reflection and observation by single individuals, but also critical discussion as a model of social interaction and those institutions which support or hamper, encourage or discourage critical discussion."²⁸ With good reason Albert draws the conclusion that his "criticism of classical knowledge theory"²⁹ and the necessity that he derives from this criticism of a "choice between the principle of sufficient grounding and the principle of critical examination" are matters which are to be dealt with "under the rubric of pragmatics."³⁰

I would not only like to affirm this evaluation of the problem, but moreover to take it seriously, as I comprehend the *pragmatic* conditions of the possibility of scientific knowledge, at least partly, as *conditions of the possibility of intersubjectively valid* knowledge and (scientific and philosophical) knowledge-criticism in the sense of Kant. In this I am in opposition to Carnap and Hempel who comprehend these pragmatic conditions as merely empirical-psychologically or empirical-sociologically relevant context-conditions for the problematic of the validity of knowledge. This assessment must be correct at least to the extent that the conflict, which falls in the "region of pragmatics," "between the principle of sufficient grounding and the principle of critical examination" — whether or not it implies a decision between alternatives — in any case concerns itself with the conditions of the validity of scientific knowledge. I would like therefore to postulate as the philosophical completion of *logical syntax* and the *semantics* of ideal scientific languages a *transcendental pragmatics of language* which shall concern

itself with reflection on the subjective-intersubjective conditions of the possibility of linguistically formulated and, as such, virtually intersubjectively valid knowledge. I shall at this point try to summarize the points of a transcendental semiotic and, in this context, of a transcendental-pragmatic, reconstruction and completion of the foundation of the modern logic of language and science.³¹

The possibility and necessity of a transcendental pragmatic questioning and philosophical method of examination is, in my opinion, demonstrable in radical form through reflection on the conditions of the possibility and intersubjective validity of logical syntax and semantics themselves. As C. S. Peirce recognized, it is a logical implication of the well-understood *three-dimensionality of the sign-function*, and thereby of sign-mediated knowledge and argumentation, that the intra-linguistic (syntactic) sign-functions and the reality related (reference-semantic) sign-functions presuppose a (pragmatic) *interpretation* of the signs through an *interpretation-community*.³² This presupposition obviously applies also to the corresponding semiotic disciplines, i.e., *logical syntax* and *semantics* are, as abstractive components and disciplines of semiotic, only a means of an "indirect" (i.e., mediating over the construction of ideal systems of rules) elucidation of scientific-theoretical argumentation;³³ hence, they are in principle dependent upon completion and integration through a *pragmatic of argumentation*. This, however, means that *pragmatics* must become a *philosophical* discipline which deals with *the subjective-intersubjective conditions of meaning-agreement and truth-consensus* in the, ideally unlimited, *community of scientists*. Peirce has drawn up this matter of a semiotic transformation of the *Critique of Pure Reason* essentially in the sense of a "normative" semiotic logic of inquiry.³⁴

On the one hand, Morris and Carnap have accepted Peirce's grounding of semiotic in the sense of the *three-dimensionality* of the sign-function ("semiosis") and of the science of signs ("semiotic"), but, on the other hand, they have — obviously because of the alleged impossibility of expressing without contradiction the self-reflection of the actual subjective conditions of sign-interpretations³⁵ — declared the pragmatic sign-dimension as the object of an empirical (behavioristic) discipline for which one, eventually, can supply semantic concept explications in a constructive, "pure, theoretical pragmatic." Whatever one thinks of the possibility of such a treatment of the pragmatics of language,³⁶ it is certain that the "conven-

tions" which according to Carnap underly the construction of formalizable syntactic-semantic systems of rules — and, to that extent, also the construction of semantic explications of empirical-pragmatic concepts — are not philosophically thematizable in this way. This is because the normatively relevant conventions, which alone make possible the formally linguistic concept-explications in the sense of a theoretical pragmatic, cannot themselves be made the object of such a pragmatic. Hence, Carnap's explicitly provided — and, so to speak, already semanticized a priori — theoretical pragmatics of language cannot replace the methodological argumentations that Popper and Albert find essential. With regard to today's necessary demand for a semiotic transformation of transcendental philosophy and with regard to the no longer rationally reflected presuppositions of modern language construction, one could characterize the scientific-theoretical function of transcendental pragmatics as that of a reflection on the conditions of the possibility and validity of conventions. A tacit substitute for such reflection in the language-analytic logic of science can be found in Carnap's provisional ordinary speech "introductions" to constructive semantics which are — because of their use of implicit self-referential "universal propositions" — strictly speaking, expressed in an officially unlegitimizable "para-language." Here we find, in my opinion, the inheritance of the Wittgensteinian "ladder"-language of the *Tractatus*. This inheritance belonging to constructive semantics cannot be overcome until we accept a transcendental pragmatics of language as an unformalizable fundamental metadiscipline.

In the framework of the foregoing investigation, I would like to test the indicated conception by means of an elucidation of the necessary question concerning the *conditions of the possibility of intersubjectively valid criticism*. This means in the present context that I must attempt to reconstruct and critically examine Albert's criticism of the classical postulate of *sufficient grounding through appeal to evidence* and must do this from the point of view of *transcendental pragmatics*.

In this context, I would first of all point out that the so-called "Muenchhausen-Trilemma" of sufficient grounding can only be logically deduced for sentences of an axiomatized *sentence-system* in the sense of the *syntactic-semantic* construction of a so-called "formal language." That is, such a logical deduction is only possible under prior abstraction from the *pragmatic* dimension of argumentative language use. To put it another way, only when one abstracts from the situation of the perceiving and argumentatively engaged subject, who in *performatively* explicable *assertions* offers his

doubts and convictions for discussion, is it possible to characterize the (deductively mediated) *appeal to evidence* as the *suspension of the process of grounding* and to consider this presumed suspension, along with the *infinite regress* and the *logical circle*, as the third horn of the trilemma. For only from the viewpoint of *syntactic-semantic* abstraction, an abstraction which does not allow language and knowledge to be bound through objective or subjective (personal) deixis to the lived world, can the *sense of the process of grounding* be understood as a, in principle unsuspendable, *deduction of sentences* (about states of affairs) *from sentences* (about states of affairs). From the point of view of transcendental pragmatics, the deductive process by which sentences are deduced from sentences, indeed, all "axiomatics," can only be considered as an objectifiable *means within the context of the argumentative grounding of statements through knowledge-evidence*. (In this sense, Aristotle's "apodictic logic" is in fact an "organon" of argumentative discourse — no more no less. That is, the logical deduction of sentences from sentences is not *itself the grounding of the validity of knowledge* — such an absolutization of the logical organon would in fact lead (trivially) the problem of grounding back to the "Muenchhausen-Trilemma" — but is merely a mediation moment in the argumentative grounding process, a moment which is indeed distinguished by a priori intersubjective evidence.

Corresponding to this is the following important distinction which has been characteristically overlooked not only by logical empiricists but also — at least in the *Logic of Scientific Discovery* — by K. Popper. Only when one illegitimately abstracts, in the sense of an "abstractive fallacy," from the transcendental-pragmatic interpretative function of the knowledge — and argumentation — subject and reduces this subject to an object for empirical psychology, is it possible to maintain that sentences can only be grounded by sentences and that the so-called "observation-sentences" or "basic-sentences" are merely *motivated* by the experience-evidence of the knowledge-subject in the sense of causation.³⁷ Against this, the transcendental-pragmatic position takes the point of view of the argumentative knowledge-subject and attempts, not to *explain*, from the outside, his "behavior" in the case of the formulation of sentences, but rather to *understand* it from within, and hence must necessarily conceive of *knowledge-evidence* as a *reason* for the formulation of "observation-sentences" or "basic-sentences," although not as a reason from which these sentences

might be logically deduced.

It is by no means implied by this that knowledge-evidence — for example, perceptions or ideal (categorical) apprehensions — is to be thought of as an unquestionable and sufficient linguistically independent (i.e., pre-linguistically intuitive) basis of the *meaning and truth* of scientific statements or systems of statements ("theories"). Such a comprehension would rather correspond to the New Age *epistemological* (empiricist or intellectualistic) philosophy of primordial origins which I do not wish to defend, as I have already mentioned. In my opinion, knowledge-evidence is, in virtue of the "propositional acts" (the identifying "reference"-act and the "predication"-act)³⁸ upon which the formation of judgments depends, interwoven from the outset with language use and the acts of the knowledge-subjects — in the sense of the interweaving of knowledge, language use and activities in quasi-institutionalized "language games" or "forms of life," as the later Wittgenstein analyzed them. If knowledge, language use, etc. were not thus interwoven, a child could not learn language and along with that acquire behavior which is based on an interpretation of experience, i.e., without *paradigmatic experience-evidence*, one cannot imagine a functioning language game. We could not communicate if we did not agree upon common *experience-evidence* from which everything must proceed. From this transcendental-pragmatic language game interweaving of possible knowledge-evidence, it follows, in my opinion, that the grounding of the validity of knowledge can be equated *neither* with the *logical deduction* of sentences from sentences in axiomatized systems (as modern logic of language, or of science, does) *nor* with the *appeal to non-linguistic intuitive consciousness-evidence* (as cartesian theory of knowledge urges). Rather, grounding as grounding of the validity of knowledge must always rest on the possible consciousness-evidence of the particular knowledge-subjects (as autonomous representatives of the transcendental knowledge-subject as such) *and* on the a priori intersubjective rules of an argumentative discourse in the context of which the knowledge-evidence as subjective proof of objective validity must be brought to an intersubjective validity. That this is necessary and also possible is guaranteed by the a priori transcendental-pragmatic "interweaving" of knowledge-evidence, whose content is interpretable "as something," with the rules of language use which Wittgenstein elucidated and which has been concretized and made precise, especially by Austin, Strawson, and Searle, as an interweaving of judgment acts, as reference and predication acts, with speech acts. According to this

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conception, it makes no sense to speak of "appeal to knowledge-evidence" without presupposing a linguistic discourse as interpretation and logical-coherence context. Likewise, it makes no sense to speak of a substantial argumentative discourse of grounding without the presupposition of certain knowledge-evidence which the particular participants of discourse apply as their criteria of truth in the argumentative procedure of building a consensus. This just sketched language game interweaving of knowledge-evidence comprises, in my opinion, the transcendental-pragmatic explanation of the fact that all scientific discoveries are, as one says nowadays, "theory impregnated" and that the knowledge-evidence that enters into "basic sentences" is more or less dependent upon those theories that are to be confirmed or falsified, or upon alternative theories.³⁹

Now, one could perhaps object in Albert's sense that our treatment of the problem of sufficient grounding through knowledge-evidence begins with an inadequate, that is to say, already disarmed explication of his concepts of "grounding" and "evidence." One could say that *grounding through evidence* in the sense of classical rationalism would be *fundamental grounding through something absolutely certain or indubitable*. The methodological search for truth would seem then in the sense of the fallibility-principle to be incompatible with the search for evidence, because it, in the sense of the "Fallibilism" principle, could not recognize any final or indubitable certainty. Let us examine this argument more closely and let us proceed to this point from Albert's dictum that one "can fundamentally doubt everything."

III. DOES THE FALLIBILISM PRINCIPLE CONTRADICT THE PRESUPPOSITION OF INDUBITABLE EVIDENCE ?

The "Fallibilism" principle,⁴⁰ to my knowledge first put forward by C. S. Peirce, indicates, in my opinion, an indispensable presupposition of the methodology of empirical science. A presupposition which distinguishes the empirical sciences from the philosophical science of German idealism, a philosophical science, in Plato's sense, that is grounded in essential insight and the concept of "episteme." But does not this distinction — as well as Albert's claimed insight into the difference between the search for *evidence* and the search for *truth* (or between criticism and grounding-rationalism) — presuppose certain *essential* insight in the sense of philosophical knowledge ?

I do not want, however, to advance this rhetorical question as a definitive counter-argument against "pan-critical rationalism" (Bartley), but rather want to grant that the "Fallibilism" principle — in a certainly yet to be explained sense — is to be applied even with regard to the insights of the formal sciences (logic and mathematics) and transcendental philosophy. In compensation for this admission, I would like to claim — also in a yet to be explained sense — that *evidence* in the sense of *indubitable certainty* is methodologically indispensable also for the empirical sciences. I want to clarify the significance of my thesis through a discussion of Albert's dictum that one "can fundamentally doubt everything."⁴¹ The difficulty in this sentence, a sentence often casually expressed by philosophers, is indicated by the historically remarkable circumstance that the founder of "Fallibilism," C. S. Peirce, polemicized against Descartes with the argument that one could not doubt everything, if the doubt was not to amount to a contentless "paper doubt."⁴² In empirical science, a meaningful doubt presupposes, according to Peirce, that one does not doubt everything, but rather that one proceeds from convictions that are taken as certain and which one assumes as the measure both of what is to be doubted and of new evidence that is theoretically considered possible.

Very similar *sense-critical* arguments can be found in the later Wittgenstein.⁴³ We find in *On Certainty*, # 115 : "Anyone who wanted to doubt everything would not get even as far as doubting. The game of doubt itself presupposes certainty." In other words, doubt — and thereby also criticism in Popper's and Albert's sense — is not explainable as a meaningful language game without in principle presupposing at the same time indubitable certainty. Wittgenstein generalized and radicalized this insight still further in # 114 : "Whoever is certain about no facts, also cannot be certain of the meaning of his words."⁴⁴ In other words every functioning language game (all agreement on meaning) presupposes that the communication-partners, who have to have learned the language together with the verifying orientation towards the world, take numerous facts to be certain. In a pointed sense, convictions (be they principles or contingent facts) that are neither doubted nor to be altered function as "models" or "paradigms" of meaningful language use.⁴⁵ Thus, the conviction that the earth is a sphere which rotates on its axis and which revolves around the sun is a language game "paradigm" for our possible meaningful questions in, say, aeronautics and meteorology. The conviction that there is a real outer world "outside" of consciousness is a language game "paradigm" for the critical question of whether something is real or, perhaps, is only based on delusion, illusion,

hallucination, or something similar.

It seems to follow from this that argumentation in everyday life and science must have recourse to *evidence* that is presupposed in the appropriate language game. Thus, "appeal to evidence" cannot, at least in this sense, be equated with "appeal to dogma" or "appeal to an arbitrary decision," since criticism itself must — as meaningful criticism in the framework of a language game — be, at least virtually, grounded, i.e., it must itself in principle be able to go back to "evidence." To put it differently, criticism cannot in some way be — as it appeared with Bartley and Albert — a *self-sufficient fundamental stage* of rational argumentation ; criticism presupposes a *transcendental-pragmatic* framework (a meaningful language game) in which possible critical arguments and possible groundings through a recourse to "paradigmatic" evidence correspond in principle to each other. This appears to open up the essential structure of the *institution of argumentation*. Wittgenstein seems to mean this when he writes : "All examination, all confirmation and refutation of an assumption, occurs within a system. And this system is not a more or less arbitrary and doubtful beginning point of all our arguments, rather it belongs to the essence of what we call an argument. This system is not so much a point of departure, as it is the life-element of arguments."⁴⁶

By means of this *sense-critical* argumentation which has its origins in Peirce and Wittgenstein, numerous imprudent or exaggerated theses of Bartley's and Albert's "pan-critical rationalism" are without a doubt shown to be untenable. The undifferentiated equation of *sufficient grounding through a return to evidence* with *appeal to a dogma*, or an arbitrary decision, and the proposal to place "the idea of a critical examination in the place of the idea of grounding" both belong to this group of theses. In fact, the language of the "critical rationalists" suggests not infrequently the misunderstanding of an anarchic criticism for criticism's sake, a critical reason without standards of criticism.

Although the discussion cannot yet be brought to a close, the point of "critical rationalism" appears to me to be not yet fully comprehended. This proceeds from the fact that the meaning of the "Fallibilism" principle (which was also put forward by Peirce) has not yet been made clear. Let us try to do this in a second attempt.

In his discussion with Descartes, Peirce clarifies that one cannot doubt everything altogether, e.g., the existence of a real outside world in toto,⁴⁷ but rather one can doubt *virtually everything* that is held to be certain, i.e.,

under certain circumstances, the reality of every fact that is thought to pertain to the world outside of consciousness. This *virtually universal doubt*, which seems to correspond with Peirce to the "Fallibilism" principle, also appears to be Albert's target when he writes: "A *consistent* criticism, which does not allow any dogma, necessarily involves a fallibilism with regard to every possible stage," and "there is neither a solution of the problem nor an appropriate stage for the solution of certain problems which must necessarily and from the start elude criticism."⁴⁸

But how is this "fallibilism" postulate reconcilable with Peirce's and Wittgenstein's sense-critical arguments about meaning in which every doubt and every criticism must *in principle* (i.e., as a constituent of a meaningful scientific argumentation-game) be groundable through presupposedly *indubitable evidence*?

Peirce himself found it difficult to reconcile his "Fallibilism" with his certainty-"pragmatism" in the sense of "critical common sense," and he did not, I think, satisfactorily solve this problem.⁴⁹ It seems to me that the two Peircian principles may be considered consistent, when and only when a distinction is made between the level of reflection of pre-scientific and scientific language games, on the one hand, and, on the other, the level of reflection of transcendental-pragmatic reflection on the structure of language games in general. (In my opinion, this is not a question of an arbitrarily repeatable distinction between levels of reflection in the sense of psychology or even of the formal meta-language hierarchy of metalogic, but rather of a distinction which should unequivocally and at all times recognizably distinguish the possibly *implicitly, self-referential claim of universality* of philosophical statements from the individual or empirically general claim of validity of non-philosophical statements.)⁵⁰

From the standpoint of *philosophical reflection* it may be said with regard to every language game, including the philosophical language game, that *within its framework* doubt and criticism are meaningful only under the presupposition of their sufficient ground-ability by appeal to *indubitable-paradigmatic evidence*. At the same time, it is also possible to formulate on this level of reflection a *fallibilism proviso* as *virtually universal doubt* with regard to the paradigmatic evidence of all possible language games, except for the philosophical language game of doubt. Naturally, with this doubt all corresponding language games are virtually (in the thought experiment to that effect) made nonfunctional. This is so because every language game stands or falls (according to Wittgenstein's insight, upon

which T. Kuhn supported himself in his analysis of scientific revolutions") upon *paradigmatic* evidence. Nevertheless, this virtually universal meta-scientific doubt is not a "paper doubt" in Peirce's sense. But this is so only because the *fallibilism* proviso does not claim to doubt a statement of empirical science for empirical reasons, but only opens or holds open the possibility of doing so. The mere opening or holding open of the possibility of grounded doubt, i.e., grounded criticism, on the level of meta-scientific reflection is not contentless insofar as it grounds the *methodological postulate* of the virtually universal attempt of grounded criticism.

It may well be said, I think, that this argument covers the relevant meaning of "fallibilism" in the sense of Peirce and Popper as a principle of the philosophy of science. At the same time, however, our argument is consistent with the sense-critical transcendental-pragmatic insight of Peirce and Wittgenstein that doubt and criticism, within the framework of an argumentation game, always presuppose *grounding by actually indubitable evidence* (and by the expectation of possible evidence!) as the condition of their possibility. We must, however, in my opinion, inquire into the reason why, according to what has been said, the "*Fallibilism*" principle in the sense of a principle of virtually universal criticism and the principle of sufficient grounding of doubt and criticism through appeal to evidence are consistent. It is not at all self-evident, but rather, philosophically extraordinarily remarkable, that on the one hand an evidence which is the basis of a scientific theory must in principle be open to doubt and criticism, while on the other hand criticism must sufficiently ground itself in the sense that all doubt and criticism must end with appeal to indubitable evidence. A satisfactory answer to this question, in my opinion, requires no more and no less than an appropriate transcendental-pragmatic distinction and mediation between the epistemological philosophy of primordial origins and the twentieth-century philosophy of language analysis.

This much seems clear to me: If modern epistemological philosophy of primordial origins (be it the philosophy of empiricism or that of rationalism) is correct in its claim to reduce *intersubjective truth validity* of knowledge to the (particular) consciousness-evidence, then it could hardly be understood how certain convictions may be doubted or criticised at all. If, on the other hand, semantically oriented (sentence analytic) *logic of science*, were correct with its presupposition that sentences may only be grounded by sentences while extra-linguistic evidence of consciousness may only be considered as external causal motives for the conventional formation

of "basic sentences," then it would be inexplicable that criticism always presupposes possible grounding by evidence. A resolution of this dilemma is, in my opinion, possible with the (transcendental-pragmatic) presupposition that *consciousness-evidence* and *intersubjective validity of linguistically formulated arguments* are, on the one hand, not mutually reducible stages of the problematic of truth and, on the other hand, are always, as such, stages in language games, stages peculiarly interwoven with each other. Let us attempt to explicate this further.

On the one hand, contrary to the view of modern theory of knowledge from Descartes to Husserl, *consciousness-evidence for me* (be it evidence in the sense of empirical perception or be it in the sense of ideal or categorical intuition) cannot in principle be equated with the *intersubjective validity* of arguments. The reason for this lies clearly in the mediation-function of language conceived as the transcendental condition of the possibility of an *intersubjectively valid world-interpretation*, a function overlooked from Descartes to Husserl. A consequence of this mediation-function seems to be that perceptual-judgments, to the extent to which they possess a communicable objective assertion-content that interpretively transcends the judgment supporting, subjective sense-data, underlie the possible *criticism*, in the sense of a possible *reinterpretation*, of the perception-evidence which is itself indubitable. (Although Kant postulated *pre-linguistic* forms of connection and schemata of every "consciousness in general" to account for the objectivity and intersubjectivity of "experience-judgments" which a priori transcend the merely subjective perception-evidence ; and the modern "genetic epistemology" of Piaget appears to empirical-psychologically confirm this postulate.) However, it must be pointed out that the prelinguistic conditions of consciousness postulated by Kant as conditions of the possibility of the intersubjective validity of knowledge are not, as Kant himself knew, sufficient conditions for intersubjective validity of the empirical knowledge of science, so that further conditions are to be postulated at least to account for the subjective validity of the empirical propositions of science. In addition, from the viewpoint of a transcendental pragmatics of language, it is to be postulated that even *synthetic statements a priori*, which for Kant and Husserl were a priori certain (e.g., the axioms of euclidian geometry or the Husserlian statements concerning the a priori certain simultaneity of color and extension), can be ranked as *intersubjectively valid principles* of science only insofar as such statements, on the

basis of tacit conventions, function as *paradigmatic evidence for argumentation* in certain language games. By means of this distinction and connection between the knowledge-theoretical and the language-pragmatical viewpoints, it becomes possible, in my opinion, to explain why it was possible in the so-called crisis of modern physics to call into question the intersubjective validity of the theoretical principles of classical physics on the basis of *reinterpretation of experience* by means of explanatorily stronger theories. This becomes possible despite the recognition of certain a priori evident *conceptual connections* as subjective conditions of the possibility of primary-experience (e.g., conceptual connections in the sense of Kant's "forms of intuition" and "schematized categories"). In my opinion, a transcendental pragmatics of *language* leads in this respect to the following *anti-evidence-theory-consequence*: the answer to the question of the *intersubjective validity* of knowledge cannot be given by means of a recourse to the individual knowledge-evidence for *consciousness* (even if it should be a priori evidence for every "consciousness in general"), but rather the answer can only be given by the postulation of a *consensus* to be reached on the basis of an *argumentative discourse* in the "interpretation-community" of scientists (Peirce, Royce).⁵¹

On the other hand, the discussion of the possible and necessary elevation of consciousness evidence to paradigmatic evidence of language games shows that the procedure of coming to a consensus in the interpretation-community of scientists on the basis of argumentative discourse can in no way be understood without the epistemological viewpoint of a recourse to *knowledge-evidence*. Thus it is clear, for example, that the reinterpretations of our primary experience by means of explanatorily stronger physical theories must, for their part, lay claim to a *sufficient grounding by means of appeal to paradigmatic language game-evidence*. As is the case with such scientific theories, this evidence need not possess the character of direct, clear evidence of primary experience. Thus, for example in the case of Riemannian space which is presupposed by the general theory of relativity, one presupposes a public paradigmatic language game-evidence which is not evidence in the sense of the ideal perceptual space. In this case, however, the empirical verification of the physical theory is carried out by means of measuring instruments, which on their part, with regard to their function and manufacture, presuppose evidence in the sense of ideal space perception which is paradigmatic in the "proto-physical" language game of euclidian

geometry. In my opinion, this example elucidates the a priori necessary connection between discourse related argumentation and (sufficient grounding by means of) appeal to knowledge-evidence, which connection is not considered in the semantically oriented logic of science. Although the consciousness-evidence which is always mine does not guarantee the intersubjective validity of knowledge, still, the *argumentative grounding of validity* in a scientific language game must refer back ultimately to that *evidence* which can, in principle, be ultimately testified to by every single member of the interpretation-community by means of the (empirical or a priori) consciousness-evidence.

(Here, one should particularly note that the *paradigmatic-evidence*, upon which in Wittgenstein's sense criticism and doubt rest in the framework of a language game, is yet not identical with the *originally experienced knowledge-evidence*, but rather, can and must directly refer back to *conventions*. Indeed, as we have, with Wittgenstein, objected to Kant and Husserl without the mediation of such conventions, the *knowledge-evidence* could not function as *paradigmatic language game-evidence*. However, the paradigmatic-evidence conventions as such can in no way be traced back to an *arbitrary decision*, rather, they must (no matter how indirectly, e.g., by empirical verification of those theories which they support) be grounded as argumentation-evidence with regard to that evidence which itself can be identified as plausible interpretations of original (empirical or a priori) consciousness-evidence. The circumstance that *consciousness-evidence* achieves *intersubjective validity only as publicly acknowledged language game paradigms* thus corresponds, from the view point of transcendental pragmatics of language, to the necessity of an argumentative grounding-appeal to knowledge-evidence.)

However, after all, one will in no way recognize in the above outlined transcendental-pragmatic mediation between consciousness-philosophy and language analytic philosophy an argument in favor of *fundamental-grounding*. Rather, the meta-scientific grounding of the "Fallibilism" principle appears to have shown that all indubitable knowledge-evidence must be looked upon as *relative to certain language games*, which games can in principle be transcended by means of *critical reflection*. Thus, it appears that, on the philosophical level of *validity-reflection*, the principle of (progressive) criticism can assert a priority in principle over the *principle of sufficient grounding through appeal to evidence*. The evidence presupposed

in special argumentation language games is in principle to be considered revisable, while *permanent criticism*, which may presuppose in every particular context appeal to evidence, retains, it seems, the last word on the *level of reflection* of philosophy which transcends all particular language games.

At this point, however, we will bear in mind that the circumstance that criticism appears to retain the last word on the (meta-scientific) level of reflection of philosophy is clearly grounded in the fact that there is something like a *philosophical language game* in which the scope of all language games can from the outset be discussed *with a claim to universal validity*. (Wittgenstein sought to minimize this situation by means of his thesis of simple family "resemblance" of [language] "games";⁵² and the main direction of language analytic logic of sciences, to which B. Russell, R. Carnap, and A. Tarski were committed, had in principle objections concerning the implicit self-referentiality of the universal validity claim of philosophical discourse-objections which themselves, since Russell's semantic theory of types, could with universal validity only be articulated as in contradiction with themselves.⁵³ With regard to the "critical rationalism" of Popper, however, it is indisputable that he can ground his thesis of the replacement of the postulate of sufficient grounding by means of the principle of criticism only on the a priori universal validity claim of philosophical argumentation.) Here, however, there immediately opens up the prospect of a *new grounding problem* which includes the appeal to such evidence as cannot (at least not in some ways) be doubted and criticized as the paradigmatic evidence of those language games which could be seen by philosophy as revisable and to that extent could be transcended. To the circumstance which appeared to speak for the final priority of criticism, the circumstance that *philosophical reflection* can and must consider all paradigmatic-evidence as in principle revisable, there corresponds now the circumstance that the *philosophical language game* itself must be able to appeal to evidence which on principle can be equated with none of the empirically revisable language game paradigms. And this circumstance appears to argue for the priority of *fundamental-grounding* in advance of the *principle of permanent criticism*.

IV. PHILOSOPHICAL FUNDAMENTAL-GROUNDING BY MEANS OF TRANSCENDENTAL-PRAGMATIC REFLECTION ON THE CONDITIONS OF THE POSSIBILITY OF THE INTERSUBJECTIVE VALIDITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTATION.

Before I, in a final attempt, try to show the indubitability of certain paradigmatic evidence of the language game of philosophical argumentation, I would like to settle that, and to what extent, the *principle of fallibilism* is also to be employed in philosophical argumentation.

First, it should be noticed that even logico-mathematical deductions are fallible, trivially, insofar as they must be considered with regard to their pragmatic dimension as the operations of finite men which can go wrong. More important than this empirical pragmatic concession is the transcendental-pragmatic insight that the metalogical or meta-mathematical demonstrability of freedom from contradiction of axiomatic logico-mathematical systems is in principle incomplete. Previously, we, with H. Lenk, allowed this circumstance to be valid as an aspect of the "Muenchhausen-Trilemma" of fundamental deductive grounding. However, at the same time, we referred to the fact that the *philosophical* problem of fundamental-grounding is raised by this circumstance rather than led to absurdity. In the present context, we must now reclaim the insight into the incompleteness in principle of all demonstrations of freedom from contradiction as a transcendental-philosophical insight of reflection into both the conditions of the possibility of and the limits of the objectification of arguments in axiomatized and formalized language systems. And it is difficult to conceive how this insight of an extended criticism of reason in its transcendental-philosophical core would be capable of revision. Nevertheless, one never knows definitively what here belongs to the transcendental-philosophical core and what here belongs to the complex of results which is revisable through advances in meta-mathematics or metalogic. To that extent, the transcendental-pragmatic interpretation of the results of metalogic or meta-mathematics can give an indication of the problem-situation of transcendental philosophy, which situation is here changed in relation to Kant. The Kantian claim of the definitive completeness of a "system of pure reason" can no longer be sustained ; rather, it is a question of a reflexive-progressive exposing of transcendental horizons which grow wider to the extent to which human knowledge, which is questioned concerning its

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conditions of possibility, grows wider. However, it in no way follows from these considerations that the "Fallibilism" principle, and the principle of *virtually universal criticism* which is derived from it, could either lead the *postulate of transcendental-philosophical fundamental-grounding* to absurdity or replace it.

That this is impossible is shown by the fact that the self-application of the "Fallibilism" principle clearly leads to a paradox which corresponds to that of the "liar." If the "Fallibilism" principle is itself fallible, it is to just that extent not fallible and vice versa. Now, the self-application of the "Fallibilism" principle of the representatives of "critical rationalism" can hardly, however, be rejected as senseless ; for it is precisely they who have absolutized the methodological "Fallibilism" principle that was originally related to empirical science. In my opinion, it follows from this, with all the desired clarity, that "pan-critical rationalism" represents an untenable standpoint, or at least an exaggeration. The *Fallibilism principle* and the *principle of criticism* derived from it are clearly meaningful and valid only if they are from the outset restricted as to their validity in such a way that at least some *philosophical* evidence is from the beginning excluded from possible criticism, viz., that evidence upon which they are themselves grounded. Only in that way does the transcendental-pragmatic dimension of the uncriticizable conditions of the possibility of intersubjectively valid philosophical criticism and self-criticism open up in a sufficiently radical form. What are these conditions ? In my opinion, the problem of philosophical fundamental-grounding is concentrated in this question.

That the principle of "pan-critical rationalism" does not belong to the uncritical conditions of the possibility of philosophical criticism can be interestingly shown by the successful *self-criticism* of "pan-critical rationalism" as put forward by its founder, W. W. Bartley. Bartley found out that *logic* manifestly can "not also belong to that totality... which should be subject to proof," since "the exercise of critical argumentation and logic are inseparably bound together."⁵⁴ In critical discussion with Bartley and Albert, Hans Lenk made more precise the Bartlian observation. He stated "that at least some logical rules are fundamentally removed from rational revision."⁵⁵ Still more interesting to me appears Hans Lenk's remark, that the stated rules of a minimal-logic are therefore removed a priori from criticism, because they are analytically bound to the (idea of) institution of criticism itself.⁵⁶ Thus, the rules of a minimal logic are exposed as

belonging to the paradigmatic evidence of that institution or language game which can only be exposed by transcendental pragmatic reflection upon the conditions of the possibility of criticism itself. I will call this institution the *transcendental language game*. Concerning this language game, the previously cited insight of the later Wittgenstein is emphatically valid: that this language game as a "system" belongs "to the essence of what we call an argument," so to speak, "as the life-element of arguments."⁵⁷

The transcendental-pragmatic exposure of this "system" of argumentation proves to be the *philosophical fundamental-grounding in a nondeductive way* insofar as its *paradigmatic evidence* is precisely of that kind which can neither be called into question by criticism without self-contradiction nor be grounded *deductively* without presupposing itself. The present day discussion of the problem of the fundamental-grounding, which is usually oriented towards axiomatic systems of logic, would certainly interpret this situation differently, viz., fundamental evidence can neither be denied without self-contradiction nor be grounded without *petitio principii*. Therefore, it is said, the *fundamental-grounding* must be superseded by a *fundamental-decision* — somewhat in the sense of the self-confidence of reason as opposed to scepticism⁵⁸ (e.g., W. Stegmüller) or in the sense of a belonging to the institution of critical discussion as opposed to obscurantism (e.g., K. Popper).⁵⁹ (This "solution" of the problem of fundamental-grounding clearly corresponds again to the purely logically deduced "Muenchhausen-Trilemma" of *fundamental-grounding* in the sense of Hans Albert, if one disregards the fact that W. Stegmüller understands "appeal to evidence" not as "appeal to dogma," but rather as a necessity of all philosophizing, which necessity cannot be denied without self-contradiction and of which the fulfillment cannot be demonstrated without *petitio principii*.)

In light of our transcendental-pragmatic reflection, however, the appraisal of the situation presupposed here again proves to be the following: The objectivization and externalization (estrangement) of argumentation in syntactic-semantically interpreted sentence-systems which can and must be analyzed in abstraction from the transcendental-pragmatic dimension of self-reflection of the arguing subject, — this objectivization which is presupposed together with the axiomatic method is absolutized as the very dimension of fundamental-grounding. Under this abstractive presupposition, all paradigmatic evidence of the transcendental language game (as, for instance, the validity of a minimal logic) must, of course, take the role of

unprovable presuppositions of any proof. And the attempt to *justify* the necessity of those presuppositions now must look like any bad sophistic attempt of a proof by begging the question ; for, on the abstract level of an axiomatized sentence-system there is no difference between arbitrarily chosen presuppositions and those presuppositions which one must presuppose in all possible proofs because one cannot deny them without actual self-contradiction. Thus philosophy seems to be doomed to resignation with regard to fundamental-grounding. However, the logical semantics of sentences and sentence-systems can (as Y. Bar-Hillel has seen)⁶⁰ merely perform an *indirect* clarification of argumentation in ordinary language which is pragmatically oriented in principle, viz., it is to perform a clarification on the basis of an abstraction from the pragmatic dimension which in principle must be reflected upon and even withdrawn if the result of clarification shall be brought home, so to speak, to the self-reflection of argumentation by the arguing subject, e.g., the insight which is virtually provided by the statement (which results from the objectivization of the attempt of fundamental-grounding) that certain presuppositions of proofs cannot be denied without actual self-contradiction and at the same time cannot be proved without *petitio principii*. Therefore, the reduction of the significance of *fundamental-grounding* to the sense of the *deduction of sentences from sentences* (or to the metalogical proof of freedom from contradiction of sentence-systems) appears to me to be an illegitimate reduction resting fundamentally on an "abstractive fallacy" which lies at the base of the whole current logic of science that is purely syntactic-semantically oriented. This logic absolutized as philosophy of argumentation underlies an "abstractive fallacy" insofar as it banishes into the jurisdiction of empirical psychology the pragmatic dimension of argumentation insofar as it cannot be objectivized and formalized (e.g., the responsible self-reflection of argumentation as it comes to expression in performative acts and in universal insights springing from the implicit self-reflection of performative acts). The discussion of the impossibility of the philosophical fundamental-grounding proves, to that extent, to be the consequence of a confusion between the originally dialogue-related argumentation of assertion and contradiction upon which Socrates grounded philosophizing and the "apodictic" grounded by Aristotle which can only be an "organ" of argumentation purified of all possible pragmatic intrusions.⁶¹

If, however, this "abstractive fallacy" is removed by an admission of

transcendental-pragmatic reflection upon the subjective-intersubjective conditions of the possibility of intersubjectively valid argumentation, then the problem of the fundamental-grounding appears in a completely changed light. The insight that certain evidence cannot be deductively grounded without having thereby presupposed itself (e.g., the paradigmatic evidence of a minimal-logic in the framework of a still to be satisfactorily explained transcendental language game) — this insight now proves to be, not proof of the impossibility in principle of a philosophical fundamental-grounding, but, rather, *a reflexive, transcendental-pragmatic insight into the uncriticizable foundation of argumentation itself*. If I cannot challenge something without actual self-contradiction and cannot deductively ground it without formal-logical *petitio principii*, then that thing belongs precisely to those transcendental-pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation which one must always have accepted, if the language game of argumentation is to be expected to retain its significance. One can, therefore, also call this transcendental-pragmatic way of arguing the *sense-critical form of the fundamental-grounding*.

As far as I can see, this *reflexive transcendental-pragmatic* form of philosophical fundamental-grounding confirms itself in the critical, as well as affirmative, sense in the case of the reconstruction of the argument of cartesian doubt.

In this way, it can be shown, for example, that Descartes destroys the possible significance of the language game used unreflectively by him when he grants, in the course of his methodical doubt, that in the end *all that is* supposed to be real might be *merely his dream*, viz., *merely in consciousness*. If all that is supposed to be real is *merely a dream*, viz., *merely in consciousness*, then precisely the critical sense of the expression, “merely a dream” (or “merely in consciousness”) cannot be sustained, since he presupposes as paradigmatic language game evidence that *all is not merely a dream* (or, *merely in consciousness*). However, this pseudo-argument which manifestly rests upon Descartes’ illegitimate abstraction of the methodical-solipsistic search for evidence from the language game-a priori of argumentation can be corrected, as was already previously indicated with Peirce and Popper, in favor of *virtually universal doubt* (viz., the *fallibilism principle*). If one undertakes this correction, then the proper significance of the cartesian doubt shows itself in the circumstance that the certainty of the “*dubito, cogito, ergo sum*” can also not be doubted in the sense of the virtually

universal doubt of all that is supposed to be real. Upon what does this certainty of the "*cogito, ergo sum*" now rest ?

It cannot rest upon the fact that (in the sense of logical semantics) a *syillogistic inference from that which thinks to the existence of that which thinks* were permitted, as J. Hintikka in 1963 showed with the conceptual apparatus of Austinian speech-act theory.⁶²

Descartes himself repeatedly refused to accept such an interpretation. Hintikka, however, explicitly states the reason why such an interpretation is inadmissible : in the use of a syllogistic inference from that which thinks to the existence of that which thinks, the *existence* of the thinking being must be tacitly presupposed so that the thought of a fictitious person (e.g., Hamlet) can be rejected as irrelevant. In other words, the certainty of the "*cogito, ergo sum*" cannot be directly formal-logically demonstrated. In this sense there is in the case of Descartes no fundamental-grounding which could be affirmatively reconstructed. Rather, that the same person who thinks also exists is, from the viewpoint of formal logic, a thesis which, in the sense of the Stegmullerian dilemma, can be neither denied without self-contradiction nor demonstrated without *petitio principii*, since it cannot be brought forward in the case of a fictitious person like Hamlet, but rather only in the case of an existing thinker. For just that reason, however, the certainty of the "*ego cogito, ergo sum*" is a transcendental-pragmatic condition of the possibility of the language game of argumentation in the sense of our thesis. How can this be shown ? As Hintikka shows, that my doubting or thinking guarantees my existence rests upon the fact that I, by means of the performative act of doubting my existence explicitly expressed in the sentence "I doubt herewith, now, that I exist," refute the thereby asserted sense of the sentence for myself — and virtually for every dialogue-partner.⁶³ In other words, the propositional part contradicts the performative part of the speech-act expressed by that self-referential sentence. The irrefutable certainty of the "*cogito, ergo sum*" rests thus not on an axiomatically objectifiable deductive sentential-context, but rather on a *transcendental-pragmatic reflection-insight* that is mediated by the actual self-reflexivity of the thought or speech act.

Hintikka remarks in addition that not only is the assertion "I do not exist" refuted by the thought or speech act that is performed by it, but this is also and especially the case with the assertion "you do not exist." As I would like to explain this, whoever would use as an exorcism such an ex-

pression in the presence of a ghostly appearance would in truth not deny existence to an object by means of a predication act, but rather he would cancel the expression of address, viz., he would reflexively designate his communicative act as failed. I would like to see in this an indication of the fact that the irrefutable certainty of the "*ego cogito, ergo sum*" rests not upon the primacy of so-called "inner experience" or "introspection" of the, in principle, solitary consciousness as is assumed in the cartesian tradition of "evidence" theory up to Brentano, but rather it rests upon the primacy of an *experience situation that is simultaneously communicative and reflexive* in which the actual self-understanding (and with it the ego-consciousness) and the understanding of the existence of another are *equally original* — as it is in fact convincingly asserted by G. H. Mead and M. Heidegger. The confirmation of personal existence in the performatively understood "*ego cogito, ergo sum*" is only possible as an understanding with oneself about oneself, and that is to say, as part of a virtually public discussion — more precisely, as the deficient mode of such a discussion in which I am for myself the other. It is precisely this which is attested to in the fact that reflexive self-certainty can be made explicit with the help of a performative speech act.

Therefore, the certainty of the "*cogito, sum*" cannot, as E. Husserl wishes in *Cartesian Meditations*, be understood as being no longer formulable in the "communicative plural."⁶⁴ This is because, in such an epoché of "methodological solipsism" in which the existence of other subjects would be bracketed along with the real world, the evidence of cartesian insight in principle could not be formulated in the sense of an intersubjectively valid philosophical judgment. Every one of us can see with subjective evidence and with an a priori intersubjective claim of validity, that he cannot doubt the existence of his ego without actual self-contradiction.⁶⁵ In fact, unless Husserl could somehow formulate this statement in the "communicative plural," he could not, for us, bring to knowledge the results of his transcendental reduction or epoché — the for him certain insight into the irreducibility of the sphere of the pure noetic-intentional meaning-constitutive ego-consciousness and its noematic act-correlates. This can be applied even more radically : just as for Descartes, Husserl could not, even for himself, bring to consciousness the indubitability of his ego-consciousness in a form both intelligible and valid for him, unless he could formulate this insight as an argument in the framework of a transcendental language game of an

ideal communication-community. In summary, along with the ego-consciousness, a language game is presupposed as the "*fundamentum inconcussum*" in the sense of the critically reconstructed and transformed cartesian tradition of the philosophical fundamental-grounding. In this language game, the existence of a *real life-world* and the existence of a *communication-community* are presupposed along with the *actual evidence* of *I think myself as existing* in the sense of *paradigmatic language game-evidence*. For it is of prime importance that the cartesian insight (solitary as it actually is) must be capable of being reexamined and, in this case, also capable of being confirmed by a communication-community that is in principle indefinite. This transcendental-pragmatic version of the cartesian insight could be valid, in principle, *in the form of an a priori certain and at the same time a priori intersubjectively valid* judgment even for a man who, by accident, was the last representative of the communication-community and thus was alone in an empirical sense. Even this man would have to presuppose 1) that there must have been a real communication-community, and 2) that there might be an unlimited ideal communication-community, both capable in principle of confirming his certain insight.⁶⁶

From this I conclude that the "life-element" of philosophical arguments is a *transcendental language game* in which, along with some rules of logic and the existence of a real world, something like the *transcendental-pragmatic rules or norms of ideal communication* is presupposed. The individual can secure a priori certainty in the solitary thought of his existence only with reference to this transcendental language game and its rules. That means, however, that the individual cannot step into or out of the "institution" of this transcendental language game of critical argumentation in the same way as one presupposes in the case of the empirical "language-games" and "institutions" as "forms of life" (Wittgenstein.)⁶⁷ Rather, he is, as a successfully socialized "homo sapiens" with "communicative competence,"⁶⁸ necessarily constituted as a being who has identified himself with the ideal communication-community in the indicated sense and who has implicitly accepted the transcendental-pragmatic rules of communication also as ethically relevant norms. This is not contradicted by the circumstance that we are always capable of bringing to consciousness the discrepancy between the *normative ideal* of the ideal communication-community and the real discussion situation. Rather, there lies within precisely this circumstance, it seems to me, an indication of the possibility of locating the presuppositions

of a transcendental-pragmatic grounding of ethics in the a priori of communication that is presupposed by rational argumentation, more precisely, in the contradiction that is not formal-logically solvable between the presupposition of the real communication-community (including our real self) and of the situation of an ideal communication-community, a situation necessarily "contra-factually anticipated" in the presupposition of the real communication-community.⁶⁹ To that extent, the "institution" of the transcendental language game turns out to be rather different from the conventionally based institutions of the empirically describable "language games" or "forms of life" in the sense of Wittgenstein.⁷⁰ Better, the institution could be characterized as the *meta-institution* of all possible human institutions,⁷¹ since it involves the conditions of the possibility of transparent and rational conventions ("agreements"). Man can withdraw from this institution only at the price of the loss of the possibility of self-identification as a meaningfully acting being, e.g., in suicide from existential despair or in the pathological process of paranoid-autistic loss of self.

Therefore — to draw the final consequence — one cannot choose this rational form of life in an "irrational choice," as Popper desires,⁷² since a choice that could understand itself as meaningful presupposes already the transcendental language game as the condition of its possibility. Only under the rational presupposition of intersubjectively executable rules can deciding in the presence of alternatives be understood as meaningful behavior. From this it does not follow that every decision is rational; only that the decision in favor of the principle of rational legitimation or criticism of behavior according to rules is *a priori rational*. To that extent, the decision in favor of the so-called "framework" of critical argumentation or discussion demanded by Popper can only be understood as *a priori rational and deliberate affirmation of the transcendental language game rules that are always already implicitly accepted as valid*. Necessarily, such a decision — which is even to be when repeated again and again, particularly in the "existential border situations" — is indeed required in the interest of the *realization of reason*.⁷³ However, reason in no way needs to *replace*, through a decision, its rational justification as is *demande*d by *decisionism*. For it can always confirm its own legitimation through reflection on the circumstance that it itself presupposed for its self-understanding the rules for which it voted. The assertion of Popper, that irrationalism can be defended without self-contradiction because one can refuse to accept the argument,⁷⁴ is simply false since the

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defense of irrationalism refutes in actuality, viz., by means of the accompanying performative act, the attempt to refuse argumentation. The effective refusal of rational argumentation (or a corresponding self-understanding) is on the other hand a very much more serious matter than Popper seems to assume ; it is an act of self-negation and, moreover, of self-destruction, as I have already indicated.⁷⁵ Even in such a case, however, the deciding person himself must presuppose the denied principle so long as he understands his own decision as such. Otherwise, the philosophical *decisionism* (upon which, in the final analysis, Popper's argument supports "critical rationalism") could not refer to the act of the denial of reason as to an *understandable* human decision-possibility.

With that I can summarize the issue of this attempt of a meta-criticism of "critical rationalism." "Critical rationalism" cannot, it seems to me, succeed in placing the *principle of criticism* as such in the place of the *principle of philosophical fundamental-grounding*, because its criticism of this principle — like every meaningful criticism — itself needs justification. Such a justification of the principle of criticism is, however, possible when and only when the principle is not absolute. Rather, it is possible only when it restricts itself by means of the principle of the self-grounding of critical reason through *transcendental reflection* upon the conditions of its own possibility.⁷⁶ The point of philosophical fundamental-grounding lies then in the reflexive — transcendental-pragmatic and not deductive — argument that one can discursively or practically decide neither for nor against the rules of the transcendental language game without these rules being presupposed.

NOTES

1 Albert, H., *Traktat ueber Kritische Vernunft*, Tuebingen, 1968, 1969, p. 15.

2 Bartley, W. W., *The Retreat to Commitment*, New York, 1962 (German : "Flucht ins Engagement," Muenchen, 1964).

3 Albert, p. 13.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Cf. Albert, p. 14 as well as pp. 15-28.

6 Albert, p. 14.

7 *Ibid.*

8 Albert, p. 30.

9 Albert, p. 34.

10 Albert, p. 33.

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*

13 Albert, p. 40 ff.

14 Cf. Albert, p. 77 ff.

15 Aristotle's grounding of the Principle of Contradiction can serve as an illustration of the classical problem of fundamental-grounding. After Aristotle has first explained the nature of so-called "axioms" of the mathematicians and then presented the principle of contradiction as an example of an axiom, he continues: "Some indeed demand that even this shall be demonstrated, but this they do through want of education, for not to know of what things one should demand demonstration, and of what one should not, argues want of education. For it is impossible that there should be demonstration of absolutely everything (there would be an infinite regress, so that there would still be no demonstration);... We can, however, demonstrate negatively even that this view is impossible, if our opponent will only say something; and if he says nothing it is absurd to seek to give an account of our views to one who cannot give an account of anything, in so far as he cannot do so. For such a man, as such, is from the start no better than a vegetable. Now negative demonstration I distinguish from demonstration proper, because in a demonstration one might be thought to be begging the question, but if another person is responsible for the assumption we shall have negative proof, not demonstration." *Metaphysics*, (Tr. Arthur Platt, McKean ed., New York, 1941), bk. 4, 1006 a 6-18.

16 Albert, p. 12.

17 Cf. Aristotle, *Anal. Post.* I, 2, 71 b 20 ff.

18 To speak more precisely, Descartes ranks evidence (in the sense of "clara et distincta perceptio") above truth (in the sense of the ontological correspondence between thoughts and states of affairs) and, in this sense, raises self-consciousness as being certain of its being to the "first principle" of his philosophy. Under the axioms that are grounded in clear and distinct conceptions, Descartes for the first time specifies the sentence, "All that is has a cause or a reason." (Cf., for example, *Principia* I, 11.52 and *Oeuvres*, Adam/Tannery ed., 7, 112.135 ff. 164.)

19 Albert, p. 9 ff.

20 Cf. Albert, p. 11.

21 Cf. *Ibid.*

22 Cf. Hans Lenk, "Philosophische Logikbegründung und rationaler Kritizismus" in *Metalogik und Sprachanalyse*, Lenk, Freiburg 1973, pp. 88-109.

23 Under this title, T. W. Adorno avoids the same type of modern theory of knowledge which H. Albert rejects.

24 Cf. H. Albert, p. 23.

25 The absolute necessity of linguistic argumentation is correctly emphasized by K. Popper, e.g., over against the evidence-theoretical grounding of mathematics in so-called "intuitionism." According to Popper, only argumentation can ultimately give rise to a decision concerning the validity of mathematical sentences. "As soon as the admissibility of a proposed intuitionistically mathematical construction can be called into question (and, naturally, it can be called into question), language proves to be more than a mere means of communication which would be in principle superfluous. It proves to be rather an indispensable medium of discussion." ("Epistemology without a Knowing Subject" in *Proceedings of the Third International Congress for Logic, Methodology and Philos. of Science*, Rootseelaar-Staal ed., Amsterdam, 1968, p. 360.)

26 Albert, p. 39.

27 Albert, p. 40.

28 Albert, p. 39.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Albert, p. 40.

31 Cf. K.-O. Apel, "Programmatische Bemerkungen zur Idee einer transzendentalen Sprachpragmatik" in *Studia Philosophica in Honorem Sven Krohn*, ed. Timo Airaksinen et al., Turku 1973, pp. 11-36, and also in *Semantics and Communication*, ed. C. H. Heidrich, Amsterdam-London-New York 1974, p. 79 ff., and cf. "Zur Idee einer transzendentalen Sprachpragmatik" in *Aspekte und Probleme der Sprachphilosophie*, ed. J. Simon, Freiburg 1974.

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³² Cf. my introduction to C. S. Peirce, *Schriften II*, Frankfurt 1970.

³³ Cf. Y. Bar-Hillel, "Argumentation in Pragmatic Languages" in *Aspects of Language*, Y. Bar-Hillel, Jerusalem 1970, p. 208 ff.

³⁴ Cf. my essay "Von Kant zu Peirce: die semiotische Transformation der transzendentalen Logik" in *Transformation der Philosophie*, K.-O. Apel, Frankfurt 1972, Vol. II, p. 157 ff. (Engl. trans.: "From Kant to Pierce: The Semiotical Transformation of Transcendental Logic", in *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, L. W. Beck, ed., Dordrecht-Holland/Boston 1974.)

³⁵ Cf., for example, C. Morris, *Grundlagen der Zeichentheorie*, Muenchen 1972, p. 50 ff, and p. 57 ff.

³⁶ Cf. my critical introduction to *Zeichen, Sprache und Verhalten*, C. Morris, Duesseldorf 1973.

³⁷ K. Popper wrote in *Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London, 1959, p. 105) "Experiences can motivate a decision, and hence an acceptance or a rejection of a statement, but a basic statement cannot be justified by them — no more than by thumping the table." Popper even speaks alternately of a motivational and a causal relation (cf. "Reflections on Karl Popper's Epistemology," P. Bernays, in *The Critical Approach to Science and Philosophy, Essays in Honor of Karl Popper*, London 1964, p. 38) A. Wellmer correctly remarks, "The method of language analysis, which Popper holds in low esteem is not necessary for the demonstration of the untenability of the conception of a motivational relation between experience and its linguistic articulation... Popper overlooks, that not only experience sentences but also experience itself transcends our momentary here and now." (*Methodologie als Erkenntnistheorie. Zur Wissenschaftslehre Karl R. Poppers*, Frankfurt 1967, p. 156 ff.) Popper obviously cannot, no more than the logical empiricists, think of a conceptual alternative to the disjunction of logical sentence-contexts and empirical-psychological (external-causal) motivation-contexts or of linguistic universals and pre-linguistic evidence-experiences. And under this (nominalistic) presupposition, Popper is correct in discarding as a psychologism the "protocol-sentences" qua "experience-protocols" of the neo-positivists. (Cf. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, p. 95 ff.) There is no alternative but to trace back the validity of the "basic-sentence" to a "basic-decision." Suppose, however, that our certain experiences are always linguistically interpreted experiences and as such transcend their momentary here and now. Then, on the one hand, their evidence as *interpretation dependent evidence* can never be considered infallible, while, on the other hand, it can and must function as the internal grounding of the meaning-content of our linguistically articulated judgments of experience. One will certainly not appeal to such experience-evidence in the way that a psychologist explains the convictions of a man by means of *experience-evidence qua cause*. But one will appeal to it, in argumentation (and also in critical argumentation), as *subjective testimony concerning objective evidence*. Popper is also unacquainted with this evidence-concept which is presupposed in *transcendental phenomenology*. Rather, he equates (as does logical empiricism, only more consistently in the verdict of psychologism) "evidence" in the sense of theory of knowledge with *evidence-experience* or *evidence-feeling* in the sense of empirical psychology (cf. Popper, p. 46 ff, and p. 99 ff.) — as if evidence did not also belong to the necessary but not sufficient conditions of the validity of psychological knowledge. If one reduces the *criterion of truth* (in the sense of a never infallible indicator) of *objective-evidence* (which to be sure must be capable of being testified to by a knowledge-subject) to a psychologically to be thematized *subjective evidence-feeling*, then there certainly results the necessity of replacing the notion of objective groundability by unlimited examinability or criticizability. But, without the pre-supposition of possible evidence, what meaning has the idea of examination or criticism? The reference to the fact that an infinite regress can be avoided in practice by a *decision* can scarcely be a satisfactory answer to the question concerning the positive meaning of criticism.

³⁸ Cf. this to *Speech Acts*, J. R. Searle, Cambridge 1969, chapter 2.

³⁹ I cannot here go into the consequences which, in the philosophy of science, result from the notion of the *language game interweaving of experience-evidences*. Suffice it to be indicated that experience-evidence can no more be seen as an interpretation-free basis for the inter-

subjective validity of knowledge than its language game "interweaving" can be understood as a clear dependence of theoretically precise language use. Such a consequence as it is drawn by the followers of T. Kuhn, particularly Feyerabend, leads to a language game-relativism or theory-relativism which K. Popper has correctly characterized as the "myth of the frameworks." There exist not only special language games but also, within and beyond all special language games, there exists the *transcendental language game of the unlimited communication-community*.

40 Cf. my edition of C. S. Peirce, *Schriften I und II*, Frankfurt 1967 and 1970, subject index.
41 Albert, p. 14.

42 C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, V, §§ 265 and 376.

43 For direction to the following Wittgenstein references, I am particularly indebted to a working paper of Dieter Mans.

44 L. Wittgenstein, *Ueber Gewissheit*, Frankfurt 1970, p. 39.

45 Cf., for example, L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, I 50 "There is one thing of which one can say neither that it is one meter long nor that it is not one meter long, and that is the standard meter in Paris. But this is, of course, not to ascribe any extraordinary property to it, but only to mark its peculiar role in the language-game of measuring with a meter-rule. Let us imagine samples of color being preserved in Paris like the standard meter. We define: 'sepia' means the color of the standard sepia which is there kept hermetically sealed... We can put it like this: This sample is an instrument of the language used in ascriptions of color... What looks as if it *had* to exist, is part of the language. It is a paradigm in our language game; something with which comparison is made" (tr. Anscombe). In addition, I, § 300: "It is — we should like to say — not merely the picture of the behavior that plays a part in the language game with the words he is in pain, but also the picture of the pain. Or, not merely the paradigm of the behavior, but also that of the pain" (tr. Anscombe). With clear reference to a priori certain convictions, is the following in *Bemerkungen zu den Grundlagen der Mathematik* (Oxford 1956, p. 30 f.): "Whence comes the feeling that 'white is lighter than black' expresses something about the essence of the two colors? — ... Is it not like this: the picture of a black and a white patch... serves us *simultaneously* as a paradigm of what we understand by 'lighter' and 'darker' and as a paradigm for 'white' and for 'black' ... That connection, a connection of the paradigms and the names, is set up in our language. And our proposition is non-temporal because it only expresses the connection of the words 'white,' 'black' and 'lighter' with a paradigm" (tr. Anscombe).

46 L. Wittgenstein, *Ueber Gewissheit*, § 105, p. 36.

47 That one cannot meaningfully doubt the *real outer world in toto* can be shown also from the point of view of the later Wittgenstein. One cannot with Descartes meaningfully argue that *all* that is supposed to be real is finally *merely my dream* (or, *merely in consciousness*), since the expression "merely my dream" (or, *merely in consciousness*) is meaningful only within the framework of a language game in which it is presupposed as paradigmatic that not *all* that is supposed to be real is merely my dream or merely in consciousness.

48 Albert, p. 36.

49 Cf. to this my "Introduction" to C. S. Peirce, *Schriften I*, Frankfurt 1967, p. 123 ff.

50 A theory of reflection that is formalizable in the sense of the analytic logic of science (a "symbolic model" of reflection) can certainly not be produced, as G. Frey has shown against the claims of a total objectification of and the corresponding cybernetic simulation of human consciousness (Cf. *Sprache-Ausdruck des Bewusstseins*, G. Frey, Stuttgart 1965, p. 37 ff. and "Sind bewusstseinsanaloge Maschinen moeglich?" in *Studium Generale*, vol. 19, 1966, pp. 191-200). However, precisely this insight shows that there is a transcendental-philosophic knowledge concerning the theoretical distinction between every thinkable level of the metalanguage hierarchy and the level of reflection of philosophical sentences — a knowledge that can be philosophical-theoretically explicated. Cf. this to the explication of the "self-stratification" of mind and language in *Denken und Sein*, T. Litt, Stuttgart 1948.

51 Cf. my essay "Szientismus oder transzendente Hermeneutik? Zur Frage nach dem

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Subjekt der Zeichen-interpretation in der Semiotik des Pragmatismus" in *Hermeneutik und Dialektik, Festschrift fuer H. G. Gadamer*, ed. R. Bubner et al., Tübingen 1970, vol. I, now also in *Transformation der Philosophie*, K.-O. Apel, vol. II — Cf. this to the explication of a "discourse"-theory and a "consensus"-theory of truth J. Habermas has presented in "Wahrheitstheorien" (in *Wirklichkeit und Reflexion, Festschrift fuer W. Schulz*, Pfullingen 1974, pp. 211-265).

52 Cf. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, I, § 65 ff.

53 Cf. "Russell's Philosophy of Language," M. Black, in *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, P. A. Schilpp (ed.), Evanston, Ill., 1944, pp. 227-255, as well as the above concerning the "para-linguistic" introductions of a philosophy that understands itself on the basis of the paradigm of constructive semantics.

54 W. W. Bartley, *Flucht ins Engagement*, München 1964, p. 180 ff.

55 H. Lenk, p. 105 ff.

56 H. Lenk, p. 107 ff.

57 L. Wittgenstein, *Ueber Gewissheit*, p. 105, cf. the above.

58 W. Stegmüller, *Metaphysik, Skepsis, Wissenschaft*, 2nd edition, Heidelberg-New York 1969, p. 169.

59 Cf. K. Popper, *Die Offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde*, Bern 1958, vol. II, p. 110 ff.

60 Cf. above note 33.

61 An interesting example of an early anticipation of this confusion and of the modern reduction of philosophy to logical semantics is the following text ascribed by the commentator on Aristotle, Ammonius, to Theophrast: "Since discourse (logos) has a twofold relation ... one to the listener for whom it has a meaning, the other to the things concerning which the speaker wishes to produce in the listener a conviction, Poetics and Rhetoric exist with regard to the relation to the listener ... however, the philosopher will be particularly concerned with the relation of discourse to things, by refuting the false and demonstrating the true." The logic of language of logical empiricism has revived this division by posing empirical pragmatics in the place of Poetics and Rhetoric. Since, however, modern language analytic philosophy was preceded by transcendental philosophy of the knowledge-subject, we should today be in a position to see that this division is incomplete with regard to the interpreting subject. The completion can certainly not be undertaken by a transcendental philosophy of consciousness, which — like Kant — expels linguistic discourse in general into "Anthropology in a pragmatic sense."

62 Cf. "Cogito, Ergo Sum: Inference or Performance," J. Hintikka, in *Philos. Review*, 71 (1962), 3-32.

63 Analogously, Stegmüller shows by the very *performative* act (through which he claims validity for his thesis "that the problem of evidence is absolutely insoluble," [Stegmüller, p. 168]), that the existence of evidence is a necessary condition of the possibility of meaningful argumentation. Naturally this does not contradict his observation that the existence of evidence cannot be *demonstrated* (i.e., logically deduced) without logical circularity. But it indicates that the reduction of the grounding problem to the possibility of logical demonstration in the framework of an objectivized syntactic-semantic sentence-system amounts to an "abstractive fallacy" when it comes to the problem of fundamental-grounding. For Stegmüller himself, after all, cannot avoid entering the sphere of (transcendental) pragmatics. He does this through the conclusion that the arguing subject, faced with the dilemma that the existence of evidence can be neither denied without self-contradiction nor demonstrated without *petitio principii*, is compelled to a "pre-rational decision concerning certainty." However, this transcendental-pragmatically unreflective entrance into the pragmatic dimension fails to realize that the *reflective insight* that the existence of evidence is a condition of the possibility of argumentation which can be neither denied without self-contradiction nor be logically demonstrated without *petitio principii*, as insight into the pragmatic situation of argumentation renders a *pre-rational decision* in favor of the supposition of evidence completely superfluous. For, as an insight of *transcendental-pragmatic reflection*, it is not an insight into a *formal-logical dilemma* but an insight into an indispensable condition of the possibility of performative

arguing.

⁶⁴ Cf. E. Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen*, The Hague 1963, 2nd ed., p. 58.

⁶⁵ One has to observe Husserl's uncertainty in the following formulation (Husserl, p. 60): « ... this "phenomenological epoché" and "parenthesizing" of the Objective world — therefore does not leave us (KOA) confronting nothing. On the contrary we (KOA) gain possession of something by it; and what we (KOA) (or, to speak more precisely, what I (KOA), the one who is meditating) acquire by it is my pure living with all the pure subjective processes making this up, and everything meant in them: the universe of "phenomena" in the phenomenological sense » (Tr. Dorion Cairns, The Hague 1970, pp. 20-21.)

⁶⁶ When Husserl declares, "By my living, by my experiencing, thinking valuing, and acting, I can enter no world other than the one that gets its sense and acceptance or status in and from me, myself" (Cairns, p. 21), then he looks through the language (game) presupposed a priori by his thought as through glass — no differently than did Descartes at the beginning of the epoch of philosophy grounded in the evidence of self-consciousness. Certainly if this whole epoch is rejected as in error because of its reflection upon the subjective conditions of the possibility of knowledge-evidence, as has recently been done by W. Becker who supplies so to speak a destruction of the history of transcendental philosophy from the perspective of "critical rationalism" (cf. W. Becker, *Selbstbewusstsein und Spekulation. Zur Kritik der Transzendentalphilosophie*, Freiburg 1972) then, in my opinion, the baby is thrown out with the bath water. For neither the will to evidence nor the "reflection-model" (W. Becker) are to be rejected from the standpoint of critical discussion. One is to reject, rather, the confusion of *reflection on validity* with *genuine knowledge of a special sphere of being* (as in the cases of Descartes and Husserl) or with the substantive knowledge in general (partially in German Idealism) and the confusion of *actual evidence (for my consciousness)* with the *intersubjective validity* of knowledge. However it appears to me that these confusions can be unravelled and avoided through a transcendental pragmatics of language. For a convincing working out of the Husserlian aporetic cf. also H. Roettges, "Evidenz und Solipsismus in Husserls 'Cartesianischen Meditationen'" in *Philosophische Beziehungswissenschaft, Festschrift fuer J. Schaaf*, W. F. Niebel, D. Leisegang (eds.), Frankfurt 1971.

⁶⁷ To that extent I must not only add to Hans Lenk's characterization of the non-criticizable rules of the "institution of rational criticism" but also must transcendental-philosophically "dramatize" them, to use an expression of H. Albert. "The rules and the notion (or institutions)" of rational criticism are, in my opinion, not only "bound together by linguistic convention" (Lenk, p. 108), but also, in this case, linguistic convention is only the "conventional realization" of rules that originally make possible explicit conventions ("agreements"). More clearly, the notion and institution of rational criticism is not just an historical form of life among other possible forms of life, although it, in a form familiar to us, is grounded, i.e., is conventionally realized, for the first time by the Greek philosophers. It may be that the institution of rational discussion has contributed to the realization of "homo sapiens," but obviously it could do this only because it made mutually explicit the fundamental conditions of the meaningful interaction of all men and of all human forms of life. In any case, today the situation is such that not only "can the notion of rational criticism not renounce itself" (Lenk, p. 109), but, also, we cannot renounce it without renouncing ourselves as men in a non-pathological sense. Naturally, this does not mean that all men must be philosophers (in the academic sense) or even disciples of "critical rationalism."

⁶⁸ Cf. J. Habermas, "Vorbereitende Bemerkungen zu einer Theorie der kommunikativen Kompetenz" in *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozialtechnologie*, J. Habermas and N. Luhmann, Frankfurt 1971, pp. 101-141.

⁶⁹ For an attempted execution of this program cf. my essay "Das Apriori der Kommunikationsgemeinschaft und die Grundlagen der Ethik," in *Transformation der Philosophie*, vol. II, pp. 358-435. Also see there (p. 397 ff.) objections to the Albertian proposal (cf. above p. 242) to treat competing systems of morals as empirically falsifiable theories

of science. Such a treatment already presupposes, in fact, an ethical norm.

70 Cf. my essay "Die Kommunikationsgemeinschaft als transzendente Voraussetzung der Sozialwissenschaften," in *Transformation der Philosophie*, vol. II, pp. 220-263.

71 Cf. my essay "Arnold Gehlens 'Philosophie der Institutionen' und die Metainstitution der Sprache," in *Transformation der Philosophie*, vol. I, pp. 197-221.

72 Cf. above note 6.

73 To that extent Popper's commitment to the voluntaristic tradition from Duns Scotus to Kant (*Die Offene Gesellschaft*, p. 283, note 6) is justified, but only because the engagement of the will in favor of the realization of reason is not directly synonymous with the establishment of self-justification by means of a decisionistic "*Sic volo, sic Jubeo; stet pro ratione voluntas*." This viewpoint, however, must, it seems to me, not only be brought to bear against Popper's decisionism but also against Habermas' argumentation in "Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus" (*op. cit.* p. 152, note 405). Indeed, I concur — as I scarcely need to emphasize — wholly and completely with Habermas' theory that we men (not only as arguing beings but also as acting beings) have always implicitly recognized the validity of norms of ideal communication through the contra-factual anticipation of an ideal communication situation. Nevertheless, it seems to me necessary that transcendental reflection on this "fact of reason" be mediated by the reflection of the arguing being upon the conditions of the possibility of its exercise. Since only by argument can the conditions of the possibility of all meaningful action within the framework of language games be made explicit and can it be made impossible to avoid recognizing those pre-conditions as pre-suppositions of arguing. However, more important than this methodical viewpoint is the circumstance that reflection upon our always having necessarily recognized ethical principles does *not* remove the necessity of a (ever renewed) *deliberate affirmation* of this recognition in the sense of a commitment to the *realization* of reason. This demand amounts, in my opinion, not to a "residual-decisionism," but rather to the bringing to bear of the indispensable function of good will in the sense of an ethical unity of knowledge and interest.

74 Cf. K. Popper, *Die Offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde*, p. 284.

75 The decisions against the realization of reason signify as a rule no denial in principle of the transcendental-pragmatic rules of rational discourse. On the contrary, one claims only the exceptional exemption — the Devil lives on such things so to speak.

76 That it depends decidedly on the train of thought of *transcendental reflection* is indicated, in a very interesting way, by the dilemma of a pure constructivism in the case of the Erlangen school. Although Paul Lorenzen would like to solve the problem of fundamental-grounding in the sense of a reconstruction of the Kantian transcendental philosophy, he thinks that it must be granted that an "act of faith" must stand at the beginning, since "the term 'justification' makes sense only after one has accepted ... principles" (*Normative Logics and Ethics*, Mannheim/Zurich 1969, p. 74). However, this problem situation, obviously analogous to that of K. Popper, occurs in my opinion, only if one either no longer recognizes *transcendental reflection* upon principles, which one must necessarily have always accepted, as a legitimate move in the philosophical argumentation-game or simply overlooks this possibility. This appears to me, to be sure, to be a typical modern conceptual-compulsion: One wants to practice Kant's Copernican revolution and, hence, begins immediately with an act of construction. We must, however, in order to be able to present a *logical construction as the reconstruction of our competences*, first reflect on that which is not capable of being meaningfully questioned, the conditions of the possibility of valid criticism which are implicit in the transcendental language game. Only this act of transcendental-philosophical reflection saves us from the "framework"-relativism grounded in decisionism on the one hand and from a naturalistic absolutization of the empirically exposed (e.g., ideology critical) self-reflection (in the sense of the "nothing but" reductionism of the 19th century) on the other hand. Cf. to the distinction between *transcendental reflection* and *critical self-reflection*, J. Habermas, "Nachwort" to the paperback edition of *Erkenntnis und Interesse*, Frankfurt 1973, p. 411 ff.