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What Philosophy Does to the Mind
(knowledge, history and the mind)

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> The ideal aim of philosophizing is to become reflectively at home in the full complexity of the multi-dimensional conceptual system in terms of which we suffer, think, and act. I say 'reflectively,' because there is a sense in which, by the sheer fact of leading an unexamined, but conventionally satisfying life, we are at home in this complexity. It is not until we have eaten the apple with which the serpent philosopher tempts us, that we begin to stumble on the familiar and to feel that haunting sense of alienation which is treasured by each new generation as its unique possession. This alienation, this gap between oneself and one's world, can only be resolved by eating the apple to the core; for after the first bite there is no return to innocence. There are many anodynes, but only one cure. We may philosophize well or ill, but we must philosophize.[1] (Wilfrid Sellars, *The Structure of Knowledge*)

Part I. Philosophy as a blueprint for the knowledge of the mind

Philosophy's first gesture, following Sellars, is to disturb the apparent natural equilibrial balance between the subject and the world and by doing so, bring about the possibility of differentiating reality from the world of appearances, thought from the thing. Effectuated by the *epistemic polarization* of the mind and the world, this differentiation is an initial step for a nontrivial and piecemeal synthesis between reality and appearances. But it is important to note that this synthesis not be misconstrued as the restoration of the gap between the two to a state prior to

[1] Wilfrid Sellars, "The Structure of Knowledge," in: *Action, Knowledge and Reality: Studies in Honor of Wilfrid Sellars*, ed. Hector-Neri Castañeda (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), 295–347.

perturbing the peace of the mind and the world. It is this agitation that marks the territory of knowledge and enables the synthetic activities of cognitive inquiry that are distinguished by the ever-growing demands of thought. As such, this synthesis is fundamentally irreconcilable with the cognitive idleness of gnosis and its ready-made solutions for generating the knowledge of the real.

By driving a wedge between the mind and the world – understood as the ratio of *epistemic separation cum ontological correspondence* – philosophy forever departs from the domain of gnosis where the knowledge of the world is given in the subject of thought or experience. Philosophy makes this gesture in order to construct itself a history, rather than having an essential nature plagued by direct knowledge of the given or the laws of the divine.[2] However, in fashioning its own escape from the clutches of theology and gnosis by injecting disequilibrium into the landscape of thought, by the disturbing the world of the given, philosophy makes an important contribution to the history of thought whose consequences and ambitions far exceed the scope of philosophy itself.

The central claim of this essay is that philosophy, by disturbing the equilibrium between the mind and the world and decanting reality from appearances, turns itself into the single most consequential event in the history of the mind and, as I shall argue, the history of artificial general intelligence, by providing a blueprint for the knowledge of the mind, and calling attention to pitfalls of knowledge that precipitate the maladies of the mind. In short, philosophy develops a necessary link between the mind and knowledge, correlating the augmentation of the former with the production of the latter. Through this link, the functional evolution of the mind contributes to the expansion of knowledge and the proliferation of knowledge contributes to the realization of the mind as a self-apprehending history. In the same vein, philosophy reveals the

[2] For a remarkably comprehensible and attentive engagement with Wilfred Sellars and the given, see: James R. O'Shea, *Wilfrid Sellars: Naturalism with a Normative Turn* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007). "Sellars is perhaps best known for his attack on what he called the myth of the given, as laid out in 1956 in his most important work, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (EPM). It was traditionally (and Sellars thinks mistakenly) argued that since not all of our knowledge can be derived by inference from prior knowledge ad infinitum, there must be some basic items of knowledge which are simply 'given' in roughly the sense that they are (allegedly) known directly or immediately without presupposing our possession of any other knowledge. Such presuppositionless knowledge would constitute the given element in our knowledge, the rest of our knowledge being built upon that foundation." (Ibid., 1) For the sake of clarification, it is important to note that here the notion of myth refers to an "ideological fixation" built on a series of trivial presuppositions. In a way, it is analogous to the construction of a house of cards by staking precarious and unsubstantiated elements. Just as a house of cards in which the stacking and friction of cards do not lead to the collapse of the card tower but in fact reinforce it, trivial and seemingly harmless presuppositions give rise to the ostensibly sound and foundational structure of the myth qua fixation.

interconnection between the pitfalls of knowledge and maladies of the mind. But insofar as both knowledge and, as it shall be argued, the mind are social projects, the reinforcing effects between the pitfalls of the former and maladies of the latter first register themselves in the social domain, particularly the social's recognition of history. Since it is only the mind at the level of the social – spanning intrasubjective as well as intersubjective domains of thinking and action – that is able to recognize history by activating the reciprocal recognition, the retrospective appropriation of the past and the prospective integration toward future.

Following the maxim "there is no cognition without recognition,"[3] we can say that the impairment of the recognition of history precipitates a pervasive social disability. The social becomes unable to explore history – that is, it is unable to recollect the past while positively orienting toward the future. Once the knowledge of history is compromised, the ability of the social with regard to what to think and what to do is radically incapacitated. The consequences of this incapacitation register not only in the socio-political field but also in the organization of various modes of thoughts and special practices. Only once we have diagnosed the pitfalls of knowledge (whether it is knowledge of understanding and action or the knowledge of the mind or history), it is possible to develop antidotes for the maladies of the mind. Likewise, the reinforcing loop between the augmentation of the mind and the expansion of frontiers of knowledge creates an exploratory account of history through which social intelligence begins its epoch, an epoch for which our age is only a pre-history.

The separation of reality from appearances, the disturbance of the equilibrium between the mind and the world, has its first impacts on the central concerns of philosophy, namely, truth and goodness. If knowledge of the world is no longer directly or immediately given in the mind, then it means that truths are not a priori available to us either. The same can be said about goodness. We no longer enjoy an immediate access to the highest good and therefore goodness becomes a matter of piecewise construction.

In other words, the discarding of the given both at the level of truth and goodness, theoretical reason and practical reason, occasions an all-encompassing emancipation. On the one hand, it brings about the possibility of access to explanatory layers and new descriptive resources, thus fostering and amplifying understanding through simultaneously broadening and

[3] Here the concept of recognition suggests the social recognition of history in terms of its past and present commitments or oriented attitudes rather than recognition between communities or their members.

fine-graining explanation. On the other hand, however, this rejection of the given, at the level of goodness and practical reason, gives rise to new opportunities of practice and consequently unlocks – what after Foucault can be called – technologies of the self and the other, namely, constructible ethical and political practices.[4] Therefore, rather than becoming an impediment and a source of crisis, the alienation from the comforting abode of the given truth and the original good becomes a condition of enablement.

This is the very meaning of philosophy as a discipline that continuously works under the condition of an enabling alienation. It brings two highly asymmetrical terms (reality and appearances, understanding and nature, causal reducibility and logical irreducibility, epistemological separation and ontological correspondence) under one single schema, producing a fragile or perturbable equilibrium necessary for perpetually reorienting thought, revising and if necessary dismantling the world of appearances and accumulated knowledge, and building it anew.

Driven by an emancipative alienation, philosophy operates as the combined force of wisdoms – theoretical and practical – whose duty is to approach truth and goodness in a gradual fashion. This gradual and open-ended approach to truth and goodness is the beginning of the game of navigation. But this approach becomes a game solely in the sense that it conforms to rule-based practices that are error-tolerant and open to collective manipulation, which is to say, social revision and construction.

Within the game of navigation, truth is no longer treated as canonical. Instead it is approached as *making sense of* what it means to *take something as true* and what it means to *make it true*, separately and in relation to one another. The approach to goodness, on the other hand, is realized as expanding the scope of navigation of what it means to take something as true and what it means to make it true. That is to say, goodness is understood as the maintaining and enhancement of freedom of understanding and action, their different options, future opportunities, alternative paths, possibilities of reinforcement and integration. To put it briefly, the approach to truth and goodness is enacted as a game of navigation seeded by philosophy's gesture to disturb the equilibrium between the mind and the world.

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[4] See Michel Foucault, Luther H. Martin, et al., "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault," in: *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 9–15.

Once a wedge is driven between the mind and the world so that a horizon of navigation – occasioned by dispensing with the given – is opened up, truth and goodness are no longer immediately granted to the subject. The possibility of knowledge is the effect of planting this point of disequilibrium between the mind and the world and the perpetual agitation in thought resulting from this disturbance. Without this state of agitation, there is no possibility of qualitative organization of information out of the homogenous information space, given the fact that the qualitative organization of information is necessary for conception and knowledge-production. It is the introduction of the point of disequilibrium between the mind and the world that, as Gilles Châtelet notes, opens a horizon in the landscape of thought, highlighting transits and ramifying paths – between appearances and reality, the subject and the world – otherwise impossible to recognize from the perspective of an unperturbed landscape.

"The horizon," Châtelet writes "opens a field, a continuum of degrees, between the illusion of a transparent reading and what looks as if it will never be within reach because it maintains all these 'reaches'."[5] In short, the horizon is the terrain of knowledge that systematically converts all degrees and "choices of disequilibrium"[6] generated by the tension between appearances and reality, the mind and the world into opportunities of navigation. These ramifying paths or transits transform the terrain of knowledge into a multipathic structure where the principle of uniqueness of path is dissolved. The multipathic structure is necessarily an oblique one that rejects the direct access to reality and because of its discursive configuration is deeply entangled with time. Its obliqueness the circuitous and integrating paths between self-conception (how we grasp ourselves) and self-transformation (how we change ourselves partially by how we encounter ourselves in the world). Knowing becomes a matter of qualitatively organizing a homogenous informational landscape by moving from one path to another, investigating transits and obstructions by taking determinate stances or orientations, by arriving at new fields of decision-making and judgment, by inferentially articulating concept-spaces and navigating different pathways. Uniqueness of path or unipathicity, as we shall discuss later, is a disabling condition for knowledge and must be actively forestalled.

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[5] Gilles Châtelet, *Les Enjeux du Mobile: mathématique, physique, philosophie* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1993), translated into English as *Figuring Space: philosophy, mathematics, and physics* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000).

[6] Ibid.

From this point onward, since truth and goodness are not wholly within our reach, they must be approached through a gradual navigation comprised of cognitive and social-based practices; in other words, practices required to approach truth (categorized under theoretical reason) and practices necessary in the pursuit of goodness (categorized under practical reason). Since for philosophy the mind is distinguished by its activities with regard to truth and goodness, thinking and doing, then engaging in the game of navigation counts as reenacting the mind itself – a practical simulation if not the very reconstruction of it.

In other words, if what the mind does is what the mind is, and if for philosophy the activities of the mind are characterized as its capacities to approach truth and goodness through engaging in rule-based practices then the game of navigation is the functional realization of the mind outside of its familiar natural habitat (or the order of "is"). In Heideggerian terms, special performances of the mind can be treated as "in-whiches" (*das wobei*) or performances *in which* the mind is whatever it is or would be. Correspondingly, any class of in-which can be fulfilled by its modifiable by-and-toward-whiches (*das womit* and *das wozu*) or simply, the role it plays and the orientations it assumes in a functional organization. Within this ingenious formulation lies the nucleus of philosophy's pragmatist functionalist approach to the mind highlighted by the likes of Confucius and Socrates to Plato to Seneca, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Zongsan, Sellars and Brandom.

If the mind is the functional organization of a specific set of activities which are social insofar as they span complex organizations of both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains, then we can understand the mind as a set of practices whose performance and elaboration count as the realization of these activities and thereby, the realization of the meaning of the mind. In other words, what should we *do* and what should we *think* in order to count as realizing the mind or those activities which define it?

But since both thinking and doing in the sense of purposive action are decomposable to different sets of theory and praxis-oriented *practices*, we can condense the previous question to "What should we do in order to count as doing what the mind does?" This question is a basis for understanding the mind in terms of its practical decomposability into a set of practices or doings. Conducting these practices under the constraints of modes of organization implicit to them counts as understanding the meaning of the mind, but also constructing it.

Therefore, the pragmatic functionalist understanding of the mind – itself a fruit of disturbing the equilibrium or the informational homogeneity between thought and thing – is a historical moment in the evolution of the mind. But evolution in what sense? In the sense that the pragmatic functionalist realization of the mind (the understanding of its meaning, *meaning through use or practice*) coincides with the artificial realization of the mind (or the construction of its functional space by entirely different sets of realizers). For philosophy, the unity of both – that is the understanding of the meaning of the mind and its artificial realization – forms the project of self-realization through which the mind constitutes its own history and evolves in accordance with it. The history of the mind is a history that must liberate its own demands and purposes while at the same time take into consideration its natural history and respond to the constraints associated with its embodiment and organization.

The artificial – which is to say the mind realized by the artifactual – reintegrates into the reality of the mind as that which has no foundational nature but only histories and possibilities of multiple realization. Its meaning cannot be traced back to an original foundation or an inherent nature, because it is constituted by practices which determine it and are themselves susceptible to modification. Understanding the mind at the juncture between reality and appearance is tantamount to constructing it. The introspection of the mind into the condition of its possibility (why is the mind possible at all?) is a register of an emancipative alienation and is the first spark for envisioning the mind outside of its natural or native habitat.

The gesture of treating the possibility of the mind as a question and a subject of scrutiny rather than as a given is charged with an impulse to think and realize the mind through the artificial. This is because examining the possibility of the mind represents a pivotal moment. It creates a discontinuity and an externalization that allows questioning the possibility of the mind as a possibility whose realization depends on the fulfillment of certain conditions and the presence of certain sets or organization of realizers. This ultimately leads to a non-ineffable conception of the mind as a possibility that can be fulfilled by different desiderata than those which already constitute it.

A mind that is possible and whose possibility is open to scrutiny is a mind that is conditioned by certain functional components and organizations. This is nothing but a prototypical picture of the mind as an artificial edifice. Here the concept of the artificial does not stand against the natural as something man-made. Artificiality does not imply a breach of natural

laws. Instead, the artificial suggests a propensity to adapt to new purposes that can be identified – following Sellars – by their causal reducibility combined with their logical irreducibility. It is the reducibility that does not posit the artificial outside of nature and it is the irreducibility that engenders a new regime of rules and ends whose effect resonates with what Kant calls autonomy.[7]

Disassembling the possibility of the mind in terms of its givenness and reassembling it in functional terms signals the possibility of realizing the mind outside of the image of what it was supposed to be, outside of where it was supposed to be embedded and divergent from the destination it was supposed to aim at.

As the disequilibrium between the mind and the world seeds the game of navigation, the possibilities of the realization of the mind and understanding it begin to change and expand according to the scope and the complexity of navigation. The understanding of the mind can be enriched by new practices whose elaboration counts as realizing the meaning of the mind. In the same vein, the mind can be functionally realized in broader contexts by different sets of realizing practices. In the context of philosophy's approach to truth and goodness, the evolution of the mind – in the sense of its multiple and multi-modal realizability – can be expanded and enhanced by expanding and enhancing its navigational approaches to truth and goodness.[8]

If philosophy's model of the mind is distinguished by its practical abilities to approach truth and goodness, then the diversification of the space of navigation, by diversifying and upgrading the armamentaria or toolboxes of epistemic and socio-political practices, is the first step in expanding the evolution of the mind in the above sense. Without this diversification and

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[7] For more details on the distinction between the artificial and the natural, see: Herbert Simon, "Understanding the Natural and the Artificial World," in: *Artificial Intelligence: Critical Concepts*, vol. iv, eds. Ronald Chrisley, Sander Begeer (London: Routledge, 2000), 87–106.

[8] According to the multiple realizability thesis, the realization of a function can be satisfied by different sets of realizing properties, individuating powers and activities. Therefore, the function can be realized in different environments outside of its natural habitat by different realizers. Multiple realizability usually comes in strong and constrained varieties. The strong version does not impose any material or organizational constraints on the realizability of a specific function, therefore the function is taken to be realizable in infinite ways or implementable in numerous substrates. The constrained variety, however, sees the conditions required for the realizability of a function through a deep or hierarchical model comprised of different explanatory-organizational levels and qualitatively different realizer properties which impose their respective constraints on the realization of the function. Accordingly, in the weak or constrained version of multiple realizability, the criteria for the realization of a function are characterized as *dimensionally varied* and *multiply constrained*. The function is then described as multiply realizable while multiply constrained. The constraints on the realization of function are dimensionally varied because they are determined by different organizational strata which orchestrate or explain that function.

upgrading of practices implicit to truth and goodness (namely, epistemic and socio-political practices), the meaning of the mind remains more or less fixed and its evolution limited.
But why does the determination of the meaning of the mind in terms of the practices that constitute its activities imply an expanded evolution of the mind? To rephrase the question, why does the understanding and realization of the mind in terms of its practical rather than formalist algorithmic decomposability not only not limit the evolution of the mind but also broaden the scope of its evolution? Or, how does defining the mind as a practical project rather than an ideal object become the most consequential event in the history of the mind? Because practices whose elaboration counts as fulfilling the activities of the mind can be collectively modified or upgraded, they are distinguished by their social manipulability and by their capacity to bootstrap complex abilities out of primitive abilities. This is what sets apart philosophy's thesis regarding algorithmic practical decomposability of the mind from the algorithmic logical decomposability of the mind espoused by symbolic AI for which thought-parcels are ideal logical objects and hence, open to identical algorithmic iterations.

While 'identical' iterations as associated with for example market algorithms relapse back into the unremarkably prevalent domain of pattern-governed processes, rule-based practices even though they are at base pattern-governed, on the other hand, are able to proliferate and adapt to purposes that are not given in their underlying patterns. This is how the mind as a practical object is able to leap further in a manner that is neither deductive exhaustion based on the general schema of its current characteristics nor induction from its common features with the natural history of the cognitive mind.

The characterization of the mind as a practical object, rather than an ideal one, essentially amounts to the identification of the mind as a practical project, because the domain of practices is integratively social, whether these practices are associated with forming and articulating concepts or are linked to purposive action. The domain of practices possesses a commitment-laden dimension, it is open to social construction, revision and is capable of organizing collective configurations by individuating special practices.

In orienting the mind toward truth and goodness, philosophy forces the mind to enter the game of navigation and develop a distinct game-bias or the attitude of being true to the game. This is but the rational compulsion necessary to navigate the space of commitments to truth and goodness through conforming to error-tolerant and revisionary rules of theoretical and practical

reasoning. While the navigation-space of epistemic practices is the space of knowledge, for socio-political practices, the navigation space is that of ethics and politics.

Both the edifice of knowledge and the ethico-political complex are systems of navigation conforming to rules specific to their respective domains: one a system for conforming to the rules of navigation over concepts as fine-grained mappings of reality, the other a system for conforming to the social sphere of norms with regard to ethico-political or self-and-other commitments and actions. Philosophy perceives both as overarching thrusts of the same navigational system. The fusion of these two sides in accordance with their *respective* know-hows is the very aim of philosophy as a universalizing operator of truth-oriented and goodness-oriented practices.

It is the integration of epistemic and socio-politico practices that is the key to the evolution of the mind as a practical project rather than a theoretical or logical object. If for philosophy the functional account of the mind is grasped in terms of its practical decomposability into both truth-oriented and goodness-oriented practices, then the realization of the mind becomes a matter of unifying theoretical reasoning and practical reasoning, epistemic practices and social practices. However, this integration is impossible without having a "rule-following" behavior as a form of rational compulsion. There is no conceptual procedure and no determinate commitment to conceptual content as the requirement for action without an inferential account of reason.

Any account of navigation in the space of concept requires inferences to articulate conceptual content and work out the navigational links between concepts. Short of an inferentialist account of reason, commitment to the concept – whether as a unit of knowledge or a determinate content for action – is fundamentally impotent. It is not a commitment at all. Lacking this rational compulsion or compliance to the space of rules that we ourselves have made binding, neither the space of the concept nor the space of socio-political collectivity can be navigated. It is in this sense that the game of navigation is first of all what Robert Brandom describes as a "rational system of commitments."[9]

Any orientation, stance or move in the game of navigation counts as a commitment. Insofar as the game of navigation consists of two theoretical and practical sides, commitments

[9] See Robert Brandom, *Between Saying and Doing: Towards an Analytic Pragmatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

fall under the two general categories of theoretical and practical commitments. To make a commitment is to endorse its content, but to endorse the content of a theoretical or practical commitment (be it assertional, referential, inferential, cognitive or practical) is to unpack or practically elaborate that content. In order to elaborate the content of a commitment, one must examine what other commitments it leads to, *what else*, what other collateral commitments and entitlements are its ramifications.

Taking the ramified paths of a commitment – i.e. the consequent commitments one implicitly undertakes by endorsing a commitment – and depriving oneself of incompatible commitments by updating, revising or if needed abandoning commitments, make up the rational compulsion that characterizes the system of commitments as a navigational system. To rationally respond to the force of one's commitment is to uproot oneself according to the demands of its ramifying paths or revisionary outcomes.

By turning the game of navigation into a system of commitments, philosophy gauges any choice of disequilibrium, whether in the realm of thought or action, by treating it as a commitment that must be taken to its far-reaching conclusions, its ramifying paths extensively unpacked and navigated. Since philosophy sees any cognitive or practical commitment from the perspective of its collateral commitments and entitlements, it locates any navigational address, or commitmental position one has endorsed in the past or is endorsing in the present, from the perspective of its ramifying paths or future destinations. Accordingly, to take a stance in the game of navigation is to be prepared to revise the current position and the past itinerary by navigating ramified paths, which express the meaning of taking that stance. These are the transits and obstructions, which express the possibility of a commitment or lack thereof. A strong version of the game of navigation, accordingly, should be able to elaborate the permissibility dimension of transits and obstructions through deontic notions of permission and obligation.

As a discipline that closely follows the procedure of practical and cognitive commitment-making as a form of navigation, philosophy constructs a mind in which rational compulsion supplants natural impulsion. Under this rational compulsion – the compulsion to navigate – the mind gains the propensity to revise its abilities, thereby also revising what it is and how it can be realized. Philosophy defines the meaning of the mind in terms of its activities in making and tracking commitments. But under the rational compulsion, every commitment

ramifies into other commitments which simultaneously revise the initial commitment and demand new abilities and activities in order for them to be further elaborated or navigated.

Therefore, the mind that philosophy envisions is a mind that self-constitutes its history. This is the beginning of a model of the mind as that which realizes itself not in virtue of where it has come from or what it currently is, but in spite of them. In other words, this is the expression of the mind as that which has a self-constituting history, namely, the ability to realize and define itself through what currently does not constitute it.

Realizing itself through the artificial by swapping its natural constitution or biological organization with other material or, as it will be argued, social organizations is a central aspect of the mind. Being artificial, or more precisely, expressing itself via the artifactual is the very meaning of the mind as that which has a history rather than an essential nature. To have a history is to have the possibility of being artificial – that is to say, expressing yourself not by way of what is naturally given to you but by way of what you yourself can make and organize. Denouncing this history is the same as rejecting freedom in all its forms. Denying the artificial truth of the mind and refusing to take this truth to its ultimate conclusions is to antagonize the *history* of the mind, and therefore to be an enemy of thought.

By reinventing the history of the mind as a system of navigation that is continuously being updated under the weight of its ramifying paths, philosophy presents a model of the mind that is at once exploratory and revisionary. The designated introduction of instability to the equilibrial balance of the mind and the world is the constitutive gesture of knowledge as a system that distinguishes reality from appearance and decants knowing from the obvious or any account of the given. Because hidden under such disguises as the "foundation," "what appears to be the case" or generally under the heading of "*what we already know*," the obvious poses itself as the most disabling condition for the production of knowledge and the paradigm of navigation.

However, the separation of reality from the world of appearances is not a sufficient condition for the realization of the mind as a project. Nor is it adequate for the liberation of philosophy from the domination of theology and gnosis. Because the myth of the given and the insidious presence of the obvious under the disguise of *what we already know* can appear even in the absence of any theology or gnosis. In order to eradicate the more harmful residues of the epistemic given concealed in the system of navigation or the structure of knowledge itself, philosophy arms itself with a protocol far more sophisticated than its epistemic wedge picked up

and sharpened by science. This is the principle of deep skepticism that as we shall see makes the corrosive truth of philosophy.

Part II. Philosophy and the pitfalls of knowledge

Philosophy is archenemy of the obvious. Even though philosophy frequently falls into the trap of the obvious, it has the habit of always coming back to exact a revenge on what is obvious in a manner and on a scale not dissimilar to the epic culmination of Jacobean revenge dramas. Unlike any other thought discipline known to man, philosophy never closes the circle of its revenge. It is characterized by its perpetual refusal to put any matter to rest. This absolute recalcitrance bespeaks the corrosive blood that runs through the body of philosophy, which is that of the principle of deep skepticism: *Knowledge must be suspicious of what it already knows. To know more is to believe less, the more we know the less should we believe in what we know*. If the task of belief is to turn the accumulated knowledge into a regulative foundation and respectively, a matter of faith, then the progress of knowledge is by definition retroactively aborted. For how can one acquire new knowledge if the knowledge that has already been accumulated is treated as the locus of truth?

If the site of truth is in what has already taken place, then knowledge only exhibits the truth-preservation of classical qua logical rationality, and thus violates the first objective of knowledge, which is that "one knows because one does not know." But, "to know" is to preserve and mitigate ignorance at the same time, a dual task whose logical structure is at odds with the monotonicity of truth-preservation embedded in classical logic.

The monotonic entailment of truth-preservation functions precisely by conserving ignorance in its very logic – *it ignores the possibility of what it is ignorant of*. This is the principle of the conservation of ignorance without acknowledging it or what can be called the "deficit of ignorance-awareness." The principle of conservation-without-acknowledgement is the functional model of an epistemically maimed mind; it is a mind that empowers itself by choosing to operate on the basis of accumulated and well-stabilized information and in so doing, turning "what it knows" into a blind spot against "what it doesn't." In such a scenario, further generation of knowledge equals further degeneration of the mind and its epistemic incapacitation. The pitfalls of knowledge become the maladies of the mind and the maladies of the mind become social disabilities in knowing what to think and what to do. No mind by itself has a defense

mechanism against the "epistemic maiming" inflicted by its own spatiotemporal approach to truth and information. It is for this reason that only deep skepticism, or at least the strategies that undergird it, can save the mind from its self-inflicted epistemic maiming.

From a navigational perspective, any account of truth that is situated in the past and reinforces the dogma of "knowing more equals trusting more in the truth of what we know" suffers from a unipathic structure or navigational uniqueness. It is unipathic since in order to preserve truth, it must maximally stabilize the transit of truth values by ignoring any other possible path that might invalidate the preserved truth. Hence the mapping and approaching truth is determined in advance.

But the game of navigation endorses no unique path and no map drawn in advance; not only is it multipathic but it also does not leave unchanged any address or path taken in the past itinerary. Its ramifying structure not only includes what ought to be navigated (the consequent content of the commitment), but also encompasses what has already been navigated (the antecedent commitments or the premises of the commitment as such). In other words, in the game of navigation, ramification is universal and it is this universality that keeps knowledge in a permanent state of agitation – a landscape with a shifting scenery or a transitory ontology upon which no immutable foundation or navigational preconception can be imposed.

Whereas the unipathicity of truth-preservation is secured by ignoring possible or hypothetical navigational paths or transits, the principle of deep skepticism is equipped with a tentative rationalism required for deviating from the unipathic navigational approach so as to be able to activate and acknowledge the condition of ignorance and respectively mitigate it. This is the underlying logic of non-monotonic reasoning in which ramification of every qualitatively organized site of information into cascading paths creates a universal revisionary wave that perpetually reassesses and alters any conclusion reached or information organized. Knowledge is not about centralizing the accumulated known but about qualitatively organizing information, navigating the space of concept, developing supple and revisable conceptual patchworks and accessing through various modes the existing knowledge-bases without regarding them as immutable foundations. For knowledge, the crisis of foundations is an emancipative prospect. According to the monotonic structure of unipathicity, which works from the viewpoint of epistemic entrenchment, the increase in the qualitatively organized information – in the form of premises or axioms – results in the increase in theorems (i.e. further establishment of the known).

But the non-monotonic structure of navigation as a ramifying procedure does not permit such a symmetry between "to know" and "the known." This is but the navigational reformulation of deep skepticism in which "to know" does not necessarily make any positive difference in "the known qua the accumulated knowledge." Under the condition of non-monotonicity, addition of new premises fundamentally revises the old conclusions and does not bolster the epistemic entrenchment.

Deep skepticism accordingly is the sharpening of the defeasibility inherent in the non-monotonicity of the realm of the mind itself. It suggests that all insights of the mind into the inner workings of the world must be deflected or rendered defeasible by the insights of the mind into its own inner workings at the same time. It simultaneously proposes that all insights of the mind into its inner workings must be deflected by the insights into the workings of the world which condition the workings of the mind.

To put it differently, deep skepticism builds orientational passages (or adjoint vectors) between the workings of mind and the workings of the world (M⇄W). The double adjoint vectors or the adjunction symbolized by a left and a right arrow signify the broadening and integrative aspects of deep skepticism that at once deepen the scientific image of the world and lead to a more corrected and sophisticated manifest image of ourselves, establishing a stereoscopic coherence between them, in which the deepening of one image broadens the scope of affordances for action and intervention in the other.

Diminishing the obvious qua the blind spot in all its forms is only possible by radically disturbing the equilibrium and breaking the symmetric relation between "knowing" and "the already known." The concomitant scrutinizing of the world by looking into the mind and inquiring into the mind by looking into the world constitute the navigational attitude of deep skepticism as adopted by philosophy. It is in this sense that deep skepticism, rather than being an impediment or a basis for denial of knowledge, becomes a catalyst for the expansion of knowledge and the evolution of the mind; it perpetually sets free the game of navigation from its foundationalist commitments, blind spots, epistemic entrenchments and navigational pre-conceptions. For knowledge neither requires a foundation nor a positive differential relation between "knowing" and "the known" in order to expand its frontiers.

According to the skeptical current of philosophy, it is the truth of acquired knowledge that occasions the blind spot against the truth of the future of knowledge. The unipathic approach

to truth establishes a model of mind as a self-reinforcing vicious circle blind to the progressive impoverishment of its own capacities. In reality, the more it knows the less it knows because more of the new is nothing but more of the same. Once the old or obtained knowledge is established as a regulative foundation – a matter of belief – all it produces is more of the same. It only reproduces itself qua foundation. It is the parochial loop of "the more we know the more should we trust in what we know" that fuels the skeptical revenge of philosophy.

However, in order to inhibit the conversion of knowledge into belief and more importantly, in order to prevent the entrenchment of unipathicity, philosophy adopts two interconnected strategies. As we shall see, beneath the surface character of these strategies lies a different mode of adaptation to the reality of time as the chronic truth of philosophy:

Strategy 1 (constructing a navigational or ramifying account of history):
Rather than assuming that truth is in the past – the obtained knowledge – philosophy dislodges the site of truth from the past – the origin and what has already taken place – to the future. If truth is characterized by its spatiotemporal site in the game of navigation, then to identify truth with what has already taken place or the past is both a metaphysical bias against the reality of time and a logical dogma against the site of truth. As we have argued, the consequences of this logical dogma is the epistemic maiming of the mind.

By permanently moving the site of truth to the future where (1) there is no accumulation of empirical footprint (hence, unshackling truth from empirical dogmatism) and (2) from which the reality of time is expressed as asymmetry and excess of destinations over origin (or what has already taken place), philosophy introduces a new outlook on moving through history. Moving from the past to the future either as a result of privileging what has already taken place (origin over destinations, a deeper foundation over a broader evolution) or as a result of proceeding from the historical truth situated in the past is the very condition of the unipathic structure and the monotonic logic.

By endorsing the bias that we must proceed from the site of accumulated information and under the general condition of preserving the invariant traits of this spatial, temporal, causal or epistemic accumulation, unipathicity and monotonicity turn the conventional model of history as the path from the past toward the future into a disabling condition for the evolution of the mind in the broadest possible sense. To think along this path is to integrate the principle of

conservation of ignorance-without-acknowledgement within the very logic of socio-historical development as a different realization of the mind. Overemphasis on the epistemic entrenchment of what we already know or the knowledge of what has already taken place leads to the epistemic maiming that not only forestalls the future of knowledge but also distorts the recognition of history both as recollection of the past and orientation toward the future.

The blindness of the mind toward its own progressive incapacitation is reinscribed at the level of historical processes where the historical development is increasingly drained of its possibilities of action and understanding. Thinking 'on' history – recognition of history as recollection of the past and orientation toward the future – in this sense becomes tantamount to the maiming of the mind insofar as the two are tightly integrated via a network of general and specific practices. The unipathicity and monotonicity inherent in an account of history and historical truth realized as the path from the past or the origin toward the future preclude the very possibility of understanding and acting on history as a navigational terrain. And if the navigational structure is the condition of freedom – both epistemic and social – then the unipathic account of history has only very limited resources for a genuine freedom.

If the mind in the broadest possible sense evolves not only through but also in response to history, which conditions and nourishes it, then without a navigational or exploratory account of history, the evolution of the mind is by default restricted.

An impoverished concept of history leads to an impoverished, epistemically maimed and evolutionarily limited mind. The dire socio-political implications of this correlation are yet to be adequately diagnosed particularly because the mind, by virtue of its practical decomposability, not only encompasses the cognitive mind but also the mind as an intersubjective social community of norm-consumers and norm-producers.

By letting loose its corrosive skepticism against the temporal site of truth and the unipathic-monotonic account of history, philosophy points to a navigational account of history. According to this navigational account, the revisionary import of the future-situated truth becomes a basis for the cultivation of the tendencies of the past, with the present being the site where the effects of revision and cultivation become manifest. Only a politics informed by this exploratory or navigational account of history is capable of unbinding the prospects of the mind in the broadest possible sense and thereby unlocking the hidden abilities of the mind as a socio-historical and practice-based project.

Lacking a navigational concept of history, to think in terms of historical development (whether through dialectical materialism or the fatalism of technological singularity) is to further widen the deficit of ignorance-awareness at the level of history. It is this gaping deficit that manifests as descriptive and explanatory impoverishment with regard to historical processes. The immediate expression of this descriptive-explanatory impoverishment is the prescriptive inconsequentiality concerning how we can possibly recognize and act on history.

All one can hope for is either feeble resignation in favor of the ordinary – the poor man's *Gelassenheit* – or technocapitalist defeatism, if not simply trifling exercises in localist solutions. It is under this impoverishing model of history that Marxism today has attributes of a fear-mongering cult and Marxists feel more at home identifying themselves as the Brothers Grimm of cautionary tales rather than forces of the future. In order to reopen Marxism to the future without eliciting a pathological eschatology, it is necessary to have a navigational and commitment-oriented model of history not only to broaden the scope of action and understanding but also to explore various ramifications of the reciprocal influence between history and the evolution of the mind as a social project in the broadest possible sense.

What the knowing subject should be afraid of is what it already knows not what it doesn't. In the same fashion, what the collective subject should be wary of is the knowledge of history as the knowledge of the past and action solely in accordance with this knowledge. Because whether it manifests as an implicitly or explicitly temporal register, the background knowledge is susceptible to being a locus of epistemic disablement. Just as knowledge is a mode of navigation, history at its base is the exploration of time.

Navigation or exploratory procedures are only possible in multipathic environments. For this reason, they are incompatible with unipathicity, be it a unipathic horizon of knowledge or a unipathic account of history for which the historical link is always extended from the past qua origin. This is because prospects of action and understanding in unipathic environments are limited to options that are strongly in conformity with accumulated resources of knowledge insofar as they are constrained to preserve the truth-values of an overdetermining informational organization. But this preservation is always at the cost of either actively ignoring or being passively blind to possible alternative paths or modes of organization. This is why unipathic links in history are distinctly impoverished, from both the perspective of their epistemic purchase and their capacity for action and organization. Short of epistemic insight and facilities for

organizing action, the unipathic history in which the present should preserve the origin or is either epistemically or socially *anchored* in the past is destitute of the possibility of any genuine change.

In unipathic history, any genuine change is always experienced in the form of a disruption or an irruption occasioned by the suppression of alternatives. The possibilities that such disruption inaugurates from the perspective of event, eruption or singularity are so thoroughly discontinuous to the present condition that they remain completely intractable and resistant to any prospect of a positive project of transformation. It is in this sense that both the Landian technocapitalist singularity and Meillassoux's absolute contingency and scientific messianism are the same expressions of an exceptionally impoverished or unipathic account of history.[10] Since both the mind and philosophy essentially have histories, the impoverishment of history translates into nothing other than the destitution of thought and the retardation of the mind's evolution as the unity of its meaning and realization.

Crisis only befalls essentially self-conscious creatures endowed with history. What these creatures take themselves to be, their self-conception, is an essential component of what they are in themselves - that is, their self-transformation. Although self-conception and self-transformation have their respective know-hows, constraints and special practices, any positive or negative difference in self-conception translates into a corresponding effect in self-transformation. Once the dynamic link between self-conception and self-transformation is compromised for any reason either because of a wrong self-conception or the lack of coordination between conception and transformation, pathologies of history set in. However, since creatures endowed with history are entangled with the environment through which they conceive and transform themselves, their pathological history - if they have given rise to one - express themselves in the very environment they engage in understanding and action. The planetary crises from climate deterioration to regional concentrations of human misery are in essence the results of pathologies of history stemmed from the corrupted link between self-conception and self-transformation. The solutions to these quandaries lie neither in giving up self-conception and doing away with an amplified understanding nor in dispensing with the interventive conduct of self-transformation.

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[10] See: Nick Land, "Teloplexy: Notes on Acceleration," in *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2014), 511–520. And also: Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (London: Continuum, 2008).

Strategy 2 (adapting to new configurations of temporality):

Rather than bringing to an end what it has already acquired and putting it to rest, philosophy attempts – by any means possible – to prevent its acquired knowledge-bases from settling. In other words, it fashions a new model of knowledge in which knowledge is far from being settled, not only because there is a future knowledge to be acquired but also because the past knowledge must perpetually undergo transition without ever being concluded. The perpetual and permanent state of agitation necessary to the navigational paradigm of knowledge requires a new abstraction of time according to which knowledge should remain inconclusive both in the past and in the future.

Time is edgeless; so is the edifice of knowledge. Just as time does not privilege temporal density – since such privileging is a metaphysical bias – so does knowledge refuse to endorse any specific temporal density of information, for to do otherwise is to commit the crime of faith in the name of knowledge.

The philosophical diagnosis is roughly like this: The structure of knowledge as decided by unipathicity and monotonicity is determined at its base by a specific abstraction of time as characterized by uniqueness and chronological orientation from the past qua the origin toward the future. If the accumulation and production of knowledge is spatially structured according to the abstraction of temporal ordering, then abstraction of time has a direct and decisive role in how knowledge-bases can be organized, accessed or updated. Biased or restrictive abstractions of time respectively distort the epistemic activities of the mind, limit the manipulability and access to knowledge-bases and abnormally constrain the space of possibilities for actions. Deficit of ignorance-awareness, canonicity of truth and navigational blind spots stem from distortions implicit in metaphysically biased abstractions of time. Now in order to mitigate these disabling conditions in the production of knowledge and the evolution of the mind, the abstraction of time specific to the structure of unipathicity and the logic of monotonicity *must be countered with a new abstraction of time*.

Philosophy has a solution for this: it integrates this new abstraction of time directly into the procedure of commitment-making that drives it, the revisionary stance that cultivates it and the principle of deep skepticism that allows it to corrode any metaphysical or logical foundation, even that of itself. In order to enter the game of navigation in earnest, an abstraction of time

compatible with the revisionary compulsion of the navigational paradigm, its non-monotonicity, multipathicity (ramified paths) and the asymmetry between the content of commitments and their initial premises must be developed. In its commitment to expand the functional evolution of the mind in the broadest possible sense and to fulfill the criteria of the game of navigation, *philosophy thinks time backwards*. This is the abstraction of time that philosophy endorses.

But in order to think time backwards, it is necessary to break the structure of reflectivity provided by the unipathic structure of time from the past qua origin toward the future. Reflection in this sense is the backward thinking of time, not thinking time backwards. It still employs a reverse arrow of time but through a conception of the present that preserves the past, either under the heading of empirical-causal priorities (*first come*, *more real*) or a reflexively recuperated history. Philosophy on the other hand thinks time backwards not from the present looking back at the past, but from multiple destinations in the future arriving in the past. If the reality of time is freely expressed by the asymmetry and excess of future destinations over origin and its discontinuity to what has already taken place, then in thinking time backwards from the future to the past, philosophy mimics the very structure of time.

Philosophy's mimicking of time allows philosophy to show itself as a thought procedure fully adapted to the reality of time. It sees every concept from the perspective of its ramified paths, every commitment from the revisionary viewpoint of its future ramifications, the functional space of ought as a force that reconstitutes and interferes with its causal space or "what it is." In this fashion, philosophy more than just proposes that history should be explored according to "what things ought to be" rather than "what they are." By suggesting that the order of ought has the capacity to alter the order of is, philosophy offers a truly interventive account of history. It is in the light of the latter that philosophy recognizes history as the proper environment for the emergence of functional autonomy and a self-realizing account of intelligence as the link between reason and freedom consolidated in the game of navigation.

The knowledge of history – as trivial as it may sound – pairs the evolution of the mind with the expansion of knowledge through the social domain. By making it possible for the social to know what to think and what to do and by coupling the social mind with (the) recognitive-cognitive knowledge, the knowledge of history points toward the advent of social intelligence as a new epoch in the evolution of intelligence. Social intelligence is the ultimate phase for mobilization of knowledge where knowing and intervening, intelligence and emancipation are

essentially linked. It is a form of intelligence that liberates new demands and opportunities of "what to think" and "what to do" by theoretically and practically engaging with the question of what it means to have a history, what it means to reorient, reconstitute and repurpose that history through the social's present recognitive attitudes toward the past and the future.

A history that is incapable of altering its contingent constitution is not history; it is only nature replete with the order of "is." It is according to such a distinction that philosophy sees the mind as that which has a history rather than a nature because it is capable of reconstituting its causal natural order. The mind, thus, realizes itself outside of mere teleology or causal optimization prevalent in nature. History begins with the gesticulation of a disequilibrium that enables a deviation from nature's order of patterns. In this sense, history's order of ends is not simply the extension of patterns in nature.

If possession of a self-constituting history is the yardstick of freedom, by bequeathing the mind a history rather than a nature, philosophy sets out for the most consequential event in the history of thought. This is the self-realization of the mind as the organon of freedom. But once the mind is furnished with a history capable of reconstituting itself and interfering with its own contingently posited settings, its freedom takes shape as its multiple realizability – that is, the possibility of the realization of "what counts as the mind" in different contexts, by different means and for different purposes. This is the characteristics of creatures-endowed-with-history: what they will be is not the extension of what they currently are or what they have been, for what they will be is conceived from what they take themselves as they ought to be and not what they are. They are parts of a future that writes its own past.

The mind – as a set of practices whose parallel execution and functional integration count as "what the mind is" – can be implemented not only by different physical substrates but also by different modes of organization and communities of rational agencies. But this is not an unconstrained account of multiple realizability that (erroneously) suggests infinite functional equivalents of the mind or its thoroughgoing diffusion in everything. Simply put, it does not suggest that the mind can be realized by everything or any material-organizational substrate. Here the multiple realizability is constrained by the realism of history. In other words, the realizability of the mind as a practical project is under constraints and specificities set by history in the context of contingencies, local exigencies, how social practices can be organized or what

they consist of, etc. Succinctly speaking, it is multiply realizable to the extent that it is multiply constrained.

To think time backwards from the future to the past is to think of the mind as having a self-constituting history rather than a nature. To furnish mind with a history that can simultaneously be cultivated and revised is to envisage the mind as the very implement of freedom. This is freedom as the ability to design and adapt to new regimes of purpose constructed through *oughts* of action and understanding where freedom is formulated as freedom to do something (an obligation). Yet even more, to think of the mind as the organon of freedom is to explore the possibilities of realizing the mind by different modes of organization and for different purposes, or more precisely, for different oughts. A mind capable of exploring the possibilities of its own reconstruction and multiple realizability is indeed a self-realizing mind. The evolution of a self-realizing mind suggests its functional expansion and organizational diversification. This is a mind that at different times and with different emphases has been introduced under different names: the nous, the spirit's odyssey, the augmented intellect or the self-apprehending general intelligence.

The advent of rational technologies as a communal domain of practices, epistemic and social abstraction, and the organization of rational agencies has set the stage for the implementation of general intelligence in the social organization and its struggles, rather than physical materials or digital systems. Long before computer networks, the open-source of the self-realizing intelligence was the social space of rational intentional agents as essentially functionalist entities. To reestablish the historical social processes and organizations as the open-source and the bootstrapping medium of a self-apprehending intelligence is a massively demanding and laborious project, but one whose objectives coincide with the meaning and realization of a consequential politics.

To fold augmented intelligence back into politics by way of social realization – this is the ultimate aim of the project of self-realization highlighted by the history of philosophy. It is in the light of the project of self-realization at the intersection of politics and artificial general intelligence that we can finally pose the following question: What is it to take, treat and construct a society or a civilization as an artificial mind or a vector of self-apprehending intelligence? The exploratory implications of a self-apprehending intelligence conceived as the link between normative freedom and reason, as a set of methodologically collectivizing practices, are vast. Yet

to this day, such implications are far from evident if not largely unknown. The first step to even begin to think about the scope of such a project and its staggering consequences is to design – following the path of Chinese New Confucian philosopher Mou Zongsan – a two-tier ontology of the mind, a navigational system known as *a mind with two gates*.[11] A door opening inward to the cognitive mind and a door opening outward to the mind as a self-cultivating project of collective socio-historical practices. This is a model for the social realization of cognition and cognitive augmentation of the social realm. To grasp the reinforcing and expanding loop between the cognitive-based practices of the former and the social designs and techniques of the latter (the practices of collective self-cultivation) is the true and main objective of the game of navigation once it is reenacted on the level of history.

By building the principle of deep skepticism into its thinking of time, philosophy brings about the possibility of thinking history outside of the myth of redemption, outside of the reconciliation between thinking and being, and away from the restoration of the gap between "is" and "ought". Thinking history as not what it is but as what it ought to be; the thinking mind not in terms of what constitutes it but progressively in terms of a history of reconstitutions. Through the lens of such an account of history, intelligence can no longer be understood or cultivated by responding to the question "What is intelligence?" Its open prospects for reconstruction and evolution can only be approached through an understanding that appeals to the normative functional side of intelligence or the question "What ought intelligence to be?' once posed under a navigational paradigm.

To have a history is to have the ability to navigate in such a way that the consequences of making one normative move (making a commitment) unfold as future ramifying paths. Taking these paths is the very content of the commitment whose practical elaboration not only uproots the current position in the landscape but also fundamentally changes the travel history and the address of the past itinerary. In this fashion, philosophy's ambition to examine the history of the mind under the direction of theoretical and practical wisdoms turns into a navigation of cognitive-based and social-based practices whose integration and synthesis define the meaning of mind.

[11] See Mou Zongsan, *Late Works of Mou Zongsan: Selected Essays on Chinese Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2014).

As argued earlier, however, there is no understanding of a functional system without constructing it; there is no exploration of the history of the mind that is not in reality the exploration of possibilities of realizing the mind by different means and in different contexts. Philosophy's gesture to have knowledge of the mind in terms of its practical decomposability is but the very gesture that sets in motion the project of the mind as navigation of collective rule-based practices and how they can be organized.

In order for philosophy to be a guiding gesture for the history of the mind and social intelligence where there is a positive feedback loop between knowledge and social intervention, philosophy must first refashion itself as the very model of intelligence it aspires to realize. Indeed by thinking time backwards from multiple destinations in the future toward the past, by committing to navigating the domain of concepts, by constructing a history for itself rather than a nature and by approaching this history at the juncture of the most perennial questions for creatures-endowed-with-history ("what should we think?" and "what should we do?"), philosophy presents itself as a simulation of a self-apprehending intelligence.

Whereas the fact-oriented nature of scientific revision forever changes or abandons the concepts of the past (such as the god-given notion of life, geocentricity or phlogiston), philosophy never gives up rewriting its own past. It is the very force of thought that arrives back from the future to target its past resources in order to liberate its present condition.

Just as philosophy cultivates itself by rewriting its own past, a mind accustomed to philosophy is a mind scheming its own liberation from whoever thinks it. If the first task of the philosopher is to recognize the positively constrained freedom of a mind that is not hers and to explore the ramifications of this recognition to the fullest extent, then why not imagine and struggle for a mind – a collective augmented intelligence – that, while having everyone contribute to its self-realization, nevertheless refuses to belong to anyone, not even to the specific history that constitutes it.