

## INTRODUCTION

Our second issue on metaphilosophy has a more heterogeneous character than the first. In his article "Mapping, Meaning and Metaphysics" Herbert Hochberg criticizes the view that metaphysical claims can be analysed as commonsensical statements about so-called "ideal languages". It is argued that the meaning of ontological claims is tied to the "mapping" of metaphysical concepts onto ordinary ones : the metaphysician is held to make certain extraordinary claims about ordinary objects. Formalized language schema are held to be useful expository devices to aid in the presentation of ontological controversies, but it is shown crucial concepts employed by the metaphysician cannot be explicated as meta-linguistic notions applied to such formal schema. Critique of the nominalistic positions of Quine and Goodman, and Sellars and Davidson's views on truth shows that their ontological conclusions rest on oversimplified and illegitimate uses of such schema and on a failure to appreciate the role of the philosopher's "talk" about such schema in clarifying issues and offering solutions to metaphysical problems. In noting how such philosophers have gone wrong one can get clearer about the proper uses of formal schema in philosophical analysis and gain some insights into the nature of metaphysical questions. Also in the analytic vein, S. J. Doorman in his article : "Suggestie voor een metafilosofisch onderzoeksprogramma" gives a survey of the problem of rational discussion, starting with the well-known proposal by J. Bar-Hillel and concluding with the recent contributions of W. Stegmüller. It is suggested to apply Stegmüller's so-called consensus-theory to metaphilosophical issues. In this way deadlock situations and immunization of metaphysical positions can be attributed to the existence of radically different issues, to the use of different fundamental conceptual structures, to different appreciation of the range of the conceptual schema or to a disagreement about the way the schema ought to be applied. In the following article entitled "Logical Reconstructivism as a metaphilosophical method of interpretation and discussion" H. G.

Hubbeling proposes a method of interpretation of philosophical texts. So-called "logical reconstructivism" enables us to elucidate arguments by tracing their presuppositions and, by making arguments as strong as is possible contextually, it helps us to discover presuppositions that were so self-evident for the philosopher in question that he did not deem it necessary to mention them. So "logical reconstructivism" facilitates a discussion with philosophers in a way as fair and unbiassed as possible. In "A Methodology for Moralists" Gerard J. Dalcourt outlines a theory of ethical methodology, i.e. a method of establishing moral systems. He distinguishes four main types and concludes that the inductive, the deductive and the empirico-rational types all seem inadequate compared to the so-called "dialectical method", initiated by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. This method, the most comprehensive, objective and open, takes into account a wide range of elements. On the basis of its principles the author concludes that a moral theory is best when it flows from the philosophy that is the most satisfactory explanation of the world as a whole and when it takes into account most adequately all the pertinent data provided by the sciences of man. In "Some Remarks on the Relation between Philosophy and the Study of Literature", J. J. A. Mooij argues that the study of literature can provide relevant material for philosophical analysis, e.g. in semantics, more especially for the problem of reference and the interpretation of metaphor. To illustrate his contention, the author examines K. S. Donnellan's analysis of "definite descriptions" and discusses the use of such definitions in literature. It is also argued that the study of literature can profit by philosophical analysis of such notions as "scientific method", "scientific theory", "art" and "value". In his article "On the Limits of Communication: A Metaphilosophical Inquiry" Lee Thayer contends that the metaphysical posture which informs Western science and social thought limits the possibilities for human existence and social evolution in two ways: in terms of our scientific understanding of the process of communication, and in terms of our everyday understanding of it. In this - technological - posture man and society are of necessity considered as objects of manipulation. This conception denatures man and leads to the growing malaise of our civilization. The author thinks that only a metamorphosis on the level of communication can improve the outlook for the future of humanity. In his general observations on the "Metataal van Overtuigen" J. P. van Praag argues that convictions, i.e. views of life, that are the result of mostly unconscious attitudes and lead to a way of life, can be discussed semantically and syntactically. This is

illustrated by the discussion of the author's own conviction, i.e. "autonomous humanism". Convictions are not decisively of a descriptive or a prescriptive nature, they rather can be described as "interpretative", and as such they can be justified by reality; that is, their normative aspect is more or less subject to falsification. Thus ways of life are not a question of pure preference or arbitrary emotional commitment but can be discussed in a "reasonable" if not "rational" way. In my own article "Harmony and Tragedy — Science and Metaphysics. General Interrelations" I try to clarify the relation between science and metaphysics from a conflictological and actionistic point of view. Whereas science is considered to be the adequate description of parts of the world that are essentially characterized by resolvable conflicts, metaphysics is thought to be the endeavour to universalize the scientific approach to the world at large. Considering that the universe as such is characterized not only by resolvable but also by essentially unresolvable conflicts, metaphysics is of necessity a heterotelic endeavour, the "tragedy" of the universalization of science. In this interpretation metaphysics starts as a scientific enterprise of universal scope and is progressively cut down to a system of concepts that "simulate" science but that in fact must be considered as an "intellectual" work of art. In the final article "Philosophia en Sophia. Wijsbegeerte en Wijsheid" Bernard Delfgaauw reflects on the origin of philosophy as "love of wisdom". His considerations lead him to plead for a synthesis of Marx and Kierkegaard to reunite exteriority and interiority, science and wisdom.

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