

HERMENEUTICS
AND
LITERATURE

PHAINOMENA

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PHAINOMENA

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»... v presežnosti jezika.« Pripis

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Babette Babich

DIMITRI GINEV

(JULY 3, 1956–JUNE 5, 2021)*

Dimitri Ginev was so energetically creative that a book was already ready—in line to be published as it was, posthumously, *Practices and Agency*,¹ along with other texts, when he died, early this past summer, 2021. In my preface for his forthcoming article in the journal, *Social Science Information*, I wrote that Dimitri was

an elegant man, gifted with a rare rigor and, still more exceptionally, of a systematic scope that kept his work at the highest level. That high level could (and often did) mean that colleagues did not always know his work or were, at best, challenged to understand it.²

* The homage to the late Bulgarian philosopher, which was originally published in the journal *Divinatio* (vol. 50, autumn–winter 2021, pp. 9–24), is reprinted here with the gracious permission of the author.

1 Dimitri Ginev, *Practices and Agency* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2021).

2 Babette Babich, “Dimitri Ginev (1956–2021),” *Social Science Information*, 61 (2022): 5–7.



Image 1:

Dimitri Ginev, November 30, 2013, Zürich.
(Photograph: Babette Babich.)

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As Tracy B. Strong is fond of reflecting, and you can see him in the photo above, behind Dimitri on the left: “*death always comes from outside the frame.*”

I wrote a different memorial for the rock star—and stage and film actor—Meat Loaf (1947–2022) who held views contra the currently received, i.e., government-decreed “health” mandates: “Dionysus in Music,”³ less to explain his award-winning single *I Would Do Anything for Love* (trending, non-hermeneutically, on Twitter) than to counter calumny.

There’s no calumny in Dimitri’s case but there is complexity. And, by the same token, there is also a great legacy, his texts, that can be revisited.

3 Babich, “Dionysus in Music: On the ‘God of Sex and Drums and Rock and Roll,’” *Los Angeles Review of Books. The Philosophical Salon*, January 31, 2022, https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/dionysus-in-music-on-the-god-of-sex-and-drums-and-rock-and-roll/?fbclid=IwAR25nqhKZKIRKk_ciDGaxkrFIazal-8QdYF9ZMtW9YilRuG0Yyozq1C690HA. For a version including images, see: https://babettebabich.uk/2022/01/31/dionysus-in-music-on-the-god-of-sex-anddrums-and-rock-and-roll/?fbclid=IwAR3m4Ss1fYIGrIZQwRoRFBU4UCLFYeMzFfrYW1uVeW4JDwSI78_o_AOTns.

Hermeneutics is about right reading and right parsing, interpretation and thus the metonymic association with Meat Loaf, love. Philosophy is the love of wisdom and the *ars interpretandi*, as we know, is hermeneutics. “Two out of Three,” Meat Loaf tells us, “Ain’t Bad,” which leaves science, a fairly non-wordish affair. Hermeneutic philosophy of science thus needs the doubling nuances Dimitri added, and for a *triple* hermeneutics, I’d supplement what I have named a material hermeneutics.⁴

In my editor’s contribution to *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*,⁵ I opted to render the plural in the title not, Rickert-style, by adverting to the various *Geisteswissenschaften* because, and this is also culturology in part, in all their diversity (Rickert takes care to foreground history for obvious reasons having to do with his own formation along with psychology crucial then and crucial today to then-positivist and today’s analytic trends in philosophy, now rebranded as cognitive science or neuroscience, depending on whether one’s affinities run to information or life sciences) what was at stake for me was the various kinds of philosophy of science. Aligning, this is an editor’s task, the table of contents, like a dinner party list, after Steve Shapin, who judiciously avoids even the word hermeneutics in his “The Sciences of Subjectivity,”⁶ I set Dimitri’s “Studies of Empirical Ontology and Ontological Difference,”⁷ followed by my editor’s contribution, “Hermeneutics and Its Discontents in Philosophy of Science,”⁸ in which I revisited themes including Alan Sokal’s feigned hoax back in the mid-1990s,⁹ on the very idea of hermeneutics in science discourse.

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4 Babich, “Material Hermeneutics and Heelan’s Philosophy of Technoscience,” *AI & Society*, 35 (Apr. 14, 2020), <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-020-00963-7>.

5 Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017).

6 Steve Shapin, “The Sciences of Subjectivity,” in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*, 123–143.

7 Ginev, “Studies of Empirical Ontology and Ontological Difference,” in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*, 143–162.

8 Babich, “Hermeneutics and Its Discontents in Philosophy of Science: On Bruno Latour, the ‘Science Wars,’ Mockery, and Immortal Models,” in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*, 163–188.

9 Babich, “Sokal’s Hermeneutic Hoax: Physics and the New Inquisition,” in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science, Van Gogh’s Eyes, and God: Essays in Honor of Patrick A. Heelan, S.J.* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), 67–78, and cf., too, my “Paradigms

I highlighted an interpretive ambiguity that is the legacy of literary scholarship and criticism, infused as this is with theological sensibilities or (sometimes) Marxist ideology. The problem is not a matter of politics per se, though it can be, as much as it is the text as such. This is the *sola scriptura* that sets “hermeneutics” as the most durable legacy of the protestant revolution in texts, a revolution that was as successful as it was not least because it told everyman that nothing need come between himself and his reading—whatever he was reading, be it the *Bible* or Hobbes or Nietzsche or Heidegger, or indeed Galileo. As Bruno Latour (1947–) puts it in his 2013 book, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence*, using a certain amount of rhetorical polish:

didn’t Galileo triumph all by himself over institutions, against the Church, against religion, against the scientific bureaucracy of the period?¹⁰

548 Galileo is his own problem and I will come back to this below. There, I argued that the problem of hermeneutics had been under attack for some time, positivism being what it is but also in the wake of György Márkus’s contribution to the first issue of *Science in Context* in 1987, using the rhetorically simplistic tactic of assuming one’s conclusion in advance, *petitio principii* already in his title: “Why is There No Hermeneutics of Natural Sciences?”¹¹ I pointed out that Márkus spared himself the trouble of reading those who had actually written on the topic, skipping over to a traditionally historical understanding of interpretation as opposed to hermeneutic philosophy of science as such. We know the tactic today as what social media names “cancel culture.”

I argued that, by arguing in his own closed circle, Márkus used his literary critical prejudice as prejudice works best to automatic effect. Thus, repeating the canard of supposed hostility to the natural sciences, Márkus made only

and Thoughtstyles: Incommensurability and its Cold War Discontents from Kuhn’s Harvard to Fleck’s *Unsung Lvov*,” *Social Epistemology*, 17 (2003): 97–107.

10 Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 5.

11 György Márkus, “Why is There No Hermeneutics of Natural Sciences?” *Science in Context*, 1, 1 (March 1987): 5–51.

passing reference to a single article by the physicist and philosopher, Patrick Aidan Heelan (1926–2014), a name he manages to misspell throughout and to reduce (rather than to expand as Heelan would) to Polanyi, and thus without noting Heelan’s published legacy of arguments for a hermeneutic philosophy of physics, specifically advanced with reference to nothing less crucial for the natural sciences than quantum mechanics.¹² Márkus also made no reference to Joseph J. Kockelmans (1923–2008), if he does note Theodore Kisiel (1930–2021) from whom he seems to have gotten the reference to Heelan but not Thomas Seebohm (1934–2014) or Gerard Radnitzky (1921–2006)—in fact there are quite a few names he skipped over, though he does mention Manfred Riedel (1936–2009). When Heelan wrote a detailed response to Márkus’ first article,¹³ which Márkus had subtitled as if inviting discussion, “A Few Preliminary Remarks,” Márkus would offer no response.

To mistakenly limit hermeneutics as a literary critic, Lukács-style as Márkus was, is to limit hermeneutics to what he called the “interpretive encounter of a reader with a text” thereby missing the text as existentially active as Ginev would argue, or as working “otherwise,” as Gadamer would argue¹⁴ but not less as experimental setup or instrumental context articulated in and through Heelan’s language of “readable technologies.” I.e., and in terms of Heelan’s “objectivity,” this augments and complements Dimitri’s double hermeneutics on the level of the subject, and is thus, as noted above, specifically *material*.¹⁵

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Now Heelan himself, who was absolutely charmed and delighted by Dimitri, was concerned with mathematics and measurement which he read as laboratory observation which he expressed in Husserlian and Heideggerian terms of the scientist’s perception and of the “world” of the laboratory for the sake of what Heelan called, speaking as a physicist, “objectivity” and “meaning making.” The active engagement of the scientist as a researcher is indispensable,

12 Patrick Aidan Heelan, *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965).

13 Heelan, “Comments and Critique: Yes! There Is a Hermeneutics of Natural Science: A Rejoinder to Markus,” *Science in Context*, 3, 2 (1989): 477–488.

14 See on this Babich, “Understanding Gadamer, Understanding Otherwise,” *International Institute for Hermeneutics*. Online first and archived: https://www.academia.edu/66050431/Understanding_Gadamer_Understanding_Otherwise.

15 Babich, “Material Hermeneutics and Heelan’s Philosophy of Technoscience.”

requiring what Heidegger for his own part unpacks as the logic of questioning. The critical logic of questioning is, as I seek to unpack this, the method of experimental, critical, juridical science, quite as Kant specifies for his own part in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. As Heelan writes in his first book, *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity*, “Of itself, the instrument is ‘dumb’; it waits to be questioned by the scientist, and the form of the question structures its response.”¹⁶ In my own work I argue, and Heelan remains useful here, that it is essential to raise the question of models in today’s age of “pandemic science.”¹⁷

I was born in 1956, placing me in the same *Jahrgang* as the Germans say. As a peer in this sense, I knew Dimitri as colleague and friend. But that should be qualified as, although we saw one another with some frequency over the years, I never visited him at his own university nor was I able to find students interested in hermeneutic philosophy of science such that I might invite him to mine (as if I might compete with the many prestigious fellowships and invitations he already enjoyed). Thus I knew, and I do believe this recognition mutual, that I was far from knowing him as well as I might have known him.

550 The common projects we worked on were related, centrally so, to the names I have mentioned above on the topic of hermeneutic philosophy of science which resulted in a 2014 book collection, co-edited and inspired by (and in memory of) Kockelmans: *The Multidimensionality of Hermeneutic Phenomenology*.¹⁸

This was by no means an after-thought, a posthumous *Festschrift* for a man who never had a *Festschrift* (the honor is not extended to all scholars and publishers give you grief, as I know having edited two of these, if you propose one). Kockelmans, although today increasingly forgotten, even among Heideggerians (a bit unfair as he was a founding member of the American Heidegger Circle), was well known across the board: quite to the

16 Heelan, *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity*, 174.

17 Babich, “Pseudo-Science and ‘Fake’ News: ‘Inventing’ Epidemics and the Police State,” in: Irene Strasser and Martin Dege, eds., *The Psychology of Global Crises and Crisis Politics Intervention, Resistance, Decolonization*. *Palgrave Studies in the Theory and History of Psychology* (London: Springer, 2021), 241–272.

18 Babich and Ginev, eds., *The Multidimensionality of Hermeneutic Phenomenology* (Frankfurt am Main: Springer, 2014).

mainstream peak of being elected president of the Eastern APA, *the* foremost American philosophical society. The 1994 volume in his honor, *The Question of Hermeneutics*,¹⁹ covered mostly non-science themes limited to four essays on philosophy of science, including a contribution from Heelan and from Bas van Fraassen, who had been Kockelmans's student.

The association of hermeneutics and philosophy of science remains fraught despite efforts to integrate these perspectives. By addressing this multifarious character head on, Dimitri had hoped (I was and remain less sanguine) that by highlighting "multidimensionality" and including phenomenology the general vision of hermeneutic philosophy of science might be taken a little further. One might have wished, in a world of contrary-to-fact druthers, that Ted Kiesel would have been the man to celebrate Kockelmans at greater length—although Ted did offer us an essay on hermeneutic instrumentality attending to the working dynamics of GPS²⁰—but Kiesel's own life's work, coupled with the obstacles to hermeneutic philosophy of science, took Kiesel to vastly greater reception on the theme of the life work of Martin Heidegger.

To say that the volume we edited together was inspired by Kockelmans hardly means (indeed, it almost never means) that the contributors engaged Kockelmans. In fact, some of the authors of some of the chapters had never read a word Kockelmans wrote and, arguably, would not have known what to make of it if they had. This is ordinary, ordinal life in the academy and it is complicated, rife with fiefdoms and boundaries, all for the sakes of, as is often pointed out, tiny and increasingly tinier stakes: owing to the same pandemic that deftly reduces resources, automatically achieving, without debate, what university and other public administrators had long desired.

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19 Timothy Stapleton, ed., *The Question of Hermeneutics* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994).

20 Theodore Kiesel, "Heidegger and Our Twenty-First Century Experience of *Gestell*," in: Babich and Ginev, eds., *The Multidimensionality of Hermeneutic Phenomenology*, 137–152.



Image 2:

Ginev in discussion.

(Photograph: Babette Babich.)

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Dimitri generously wrote to thank me for broadening those stakes a bit in the essay I contributed to the beautifully produced *Festschrift* in his honor, a gloriously substantive book, edited by Paula Angelova, Jassen Andreev, and Emil Lensky: *Das interpretative Universum: Dimitri Ginev zum 60. Geburtstag gewidmet*.²¹ The breadth of this collection, the luminary voices who contributed to it, testifies to Ginev's life and work. Again: the editors' articulation of these contributions is instructive: beginning with Gadamer's outstanding biographer, Jean Grondin, reflecting on the hermeneutic circle,²² but also

21 Paula Angelova, Jassen Andreev, and Emil Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum: Dimitri Ginev zum 60. Geburtstag gewidmet* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2017).

22 Jean Grondin, "Entering the Hermeneutical Circle Also Means that One Wants to Get Out of It," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 17–26.

Scholtz on Boeckh and Droysen,²³ several essays on Dilthey,²⁴ textual voices include Renato Cristin on Husserl.²⁵ There is also an important reflection by Dean Komel on questioning,²⁶ this festschrift is as a *Festschrift* should be and as the graphic design on its cover suggests: a treasure trove. Science is there, including my own reflections on Ginev's "Double Hermeneutics" and the conflicting fortunes of designating collegial contributions "good" or "bad,"²⁷ sometimes rightly, often owing to other less-than-pure motivations (thus peer cartels are probably a greater "elephant" in the room of contemporary history and philosophy of science than any other hobby horse *du jour*), but also Nick Rescher on pragmatism²⁸ and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger,²⁹ about whom more below, among others—and, on political "science" and Europe on the crucial theme of "*Gastlichkeit*," Burkhard Liebsch,³⁰ in addition to Pierre Kerszberg, on music,³¹ and the late Peter Janich (1942–2016) on technology, nature, and culture,³² and so on.

23 Gunter Scholtz, "Interpretation und Tatsache. Überlegungen im Ausgang von Boeckh und Droysen," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 27–46.

24 Gudrun Kühne-Bertram, "Wilhelm Dilthey's Begriff der Philosophie" and Helmuth Vetter, "Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger und Heideggers Anti-Semitismus," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, respectively, 47–66 and 67–119.

25 Cristin, "Tradition in Husserl's Phenomenological Thought," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 121–130.

26 Komel, "Kontemporalität als Fragehorizont der Philosophie," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 471–484.

27 Babich, "Are They Good? Are They Bad? Double Hermeneutics and Citation in Philosophy, Asphodel and Alan Rickman, Bruno Latour and the 'Science Wars,'" in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 239–270.

28 Rescher, "Prismatic Pragmatism," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 131–150.

29 Rheinberger, "Über die Sprache der Wissenschaftsgeschichte," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 283–292.

30 Liebsch, "Angefeindet von innen und außen: Europa im Zeichen der Gastlichkeit," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 441–470.

31 Kerszberg, "Les trajets intérieurs de la musique," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 377–390.

32 Janich, "Technik im Spannungsverhältnis von Natur und Kultur," in: Angelova, Andreev, and Lensky, eds., *Das interpretative Universum*, 271–283.

I have not named every name but I am taking care to name more names than is typically done because one of the automatic ways of refusing scholarship is via non-mention, inattention, silencing—*Totschweigerei*. This is intellectual “ghosting” or banning, called “cancel culture” today in a world where calls for censorship have a good conscience, not that this is new if the blatant character of such calls can seem to be.

If Paul Feyerabend (1924–1994) continues to be *both* unreceived *and* admired in mainstream meaning analytic philosophy of science, a great part of the reason has to do with the complexity of his own writerly style, thus the need for hermeneutics which in his case includes the fact that as Feyerabend would explain, he had never studied philosophy as such. This did not mean that he lacked a broad formation: far from it.

554 Going beyond Popperian conventionalities with respect to the contexts of discovery and justification, Feyerabend reminds us in his *Farewell to Reason* that contextualization is constituted quite by way of an “unwritten” doctrine, as Cornford speaks of this,³³ as Hans Joachim Krämer speaks of this in his reading (with Konrad Gaier), of Plato via Schleiermacher articulating the relation between artistic morphology and philosophical content, as articulated by way of an “oral culture.”³⁴ Reading Feyerabend here requires reference to “the ‘living discourse’ Plato regarded as the only true form of knowledge” equating it with high level mathematics and for Feyerabend this extends to advanced physics:

The “hermeneutic” school in philosophy [...] tries to show that even the most “objective” written presentation is comprehended only by a process of instruction that conditions the reader to interpret standard phrases in standard ways in this manner: there is no escape from history and personal contact, though there exist powerful mechanisms creating the illusion of such an escape.³⁵

33 F. M. Cornford, *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950).

34 Hans Joachim Krämer, *Plato and the Foundations of Metaphysics: A Work on the Theory of the Principles and Unwritten Doctrines of Plato with a Collection of the Fundamental Documents*, trans. by John Catan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

35 Paul Feyerabend, *Farewell to Reason* (London: Verso, 1987), 111.

As we may read here in Jassen Andreev's essay, "Jimmy," as Jassen called him, admired Feyerabend and I corresponded with Feyerabend when I was in Germany and met him when I was teaching in Tübingen, when he was in Zürich, and thus, locative, I was put in mind of him when I last met Dimitri in the company of one of Feyerabend's students, Paul Hoyningen-Huene (1946–).



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Image 3:

Paul Hoyningen-Huene, November 2013, Zürich
(Photograph: Babette Babich.)

Photographs are hermeneutic objects to be read, an insight I develop in an ekphrasis of the iconic photograph of Heidegger and Gadamer, signed by Heidegger in 1975, and which waited more than 50 years after it was taken of the 23-year-old Gadamer to be sent to Gadamer (1900–2002) which he then featured in his *Lehrjahre*.³⁶ Gadamer was my teacher and when I read his philosophical autobiography, this photograph was revelatory for my reading of technology and so I paid for the rights to reproduce it in the text

³⁶ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophische Lehrjahre* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977), 33.

I contributed to our collective volume, reading between Heidegger's *Gefahr* and *Ge-Stell*.³⁷

Feyerabend was more radical than Dimitri and he was certainly more radical than his students tend to be. He referred to Galileo throughout his work and in his letters and he also sent me a draft of his *The Conquest of Abundance* and I did not take the hint—I didn't realize that was the reason, even though he wrote this quite explicitly in his letters to me, that I might edit it. I was consumed with respect and my approach to hermeneutics typically leads me to leave all the words of an author unchanged in context and to add more.

Now as I have written elsewhere, and in spite of Feyerabend's best efforts, Galileo remains the Teflon saint of science: no matter how many times the complexities of the discoveries that, as Feyerabend shows, were not quite Galileo's discoveries (or observational data or calculations that were not quite *his* data or *his* calculations, or instruments that were not quite or could not have been) as they were said to have been are spelled out in detail to Galileo's detriment, Galileo (one should perhaps attempt to sing this Freddy Mercury style), Galileo escapes unscathed.

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A scientist by formation, Feyerabend was, like Bob Cohen, another friend Dimitri and I had in common, an open-minded spirit in the philosophy of science and both lacked today's limitedly analytic formation in philosophy (this does not make one "continental"). Like Heelan, both were trained in physics not philosophy (though Heelan, being a Jesuit, promptly took a second PhD in philosophy).

Kockelmans articulated the theme of the *constitution* of modern science, in its technological and mathematizable (meaning measurable, calculable, model-oriented) expressions, as just this constitution was for Ginev highly significant. For my own part, embodied in the instrument as such, be it a telescope, think of Feyerabend's Galileo or a tablet today, I tended to follow Heelan's attention to the *making* dimension of meaning-making, in terms otherwise more reflected in the mainstream and highly visible work of Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (1946–). Thus highlighting the standardized manufacture of specifically institutional

37 Babich, "Constellating Technology: Heidegger's *Die Gefahr/The Danger*," in: Babich and Ginev, eds., *The Multidimensionality of Hermeneutic Phenomenology*, 160.

and standardizing technologies (from Geiger counters, an example of which Heelan was fond, to microscopes, as Ian Hacking spoke of these, to electron microscopes as Heelan also varied the metaphoric profile in ways inspiring for Rheinberger in turn and which, in another direction again, may also be found in Latour).



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Image 4:

Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, November 2013, Zürich.
(Photograph: Babette Babich.)

It is hard to trace connections of this kind and at this level. Elsewhere I attempt (one needs the provisional language of an attempt, the German “*Versuch*” is better as such indications are only effective if noted, footnoted, etc.) to point to the work of Louis Basso quite where Heelan emphasized Bachelard and scholars today, inspired by Latour and others, privilege Gilbert Simondon.

The photographs in this essay were taken during a November 2013 conference: *Ludwik Fleck and Hermeneutic Studies of Science*, organized by Dimitri Ginev at the Ludwik Fleck Center in Zürich. I spoke, on Dimitri’s invitation, as did everyone there, in my case, because I have long worked

on Fleck, on things medical and hermeneutic, titled, “Fleck’s *The Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* and the Pseudo-Sciences—Or How to talk about AIDS, Homeopathy, and Other Damned Things.”³⁸ The Ludwik Fleck Center maintains the lectures as research resource, archival access of which gives us the opportunity to hear Ginev in his own voice, including the dynamism of his presentation, on “Ludwik Fleck’s Implicit Hermeneutics of Trans-Subjectivity.”³⁹

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Image 5:

Ginev with Dr. Rainer Egloff, November 30, 2013, Zürich.

(Photograph: Babette Babich.)

Years ago, and there I failed him, Dimitri invited me to contribute to a project on feminist philosophy of science. Being a rigorous scholar, I knew that what he meant by that was what mainstream or analytic voices in philosophy and history

38 https://video.ethz.ch/speakers/collegium-helveticum/fleck/hermeneutics/1fa09d91-edf4-4b6f-a898-715c92d68272.html?fbclid=IwAR327WEE7cS05yBWJNeG4XH917QgOs-dp6Y_mEfM-yNF939Z9eN6C5VTaOc.

39 <https://video.ethz.ch/speakers/collegium-helveticum/fleck/hermeneutics/1310b9ca-1895-4648-ae3f-d611b1590b49.html>.

of science meant by that: dedicated to bringing out and setting in contemporary scholarly relief the unjustly neglected contributions of women. Traditionally in analytic philosophy of science, and Dimitri had many sympathies with this approach, the idea was to highlight otherwise unadverted to scholars, a reasonable undertaking as prejudice silences reception, along with, although by absent hermeneutics this works less well, attending to the influence of masculinist assumptions—for example, in paleontology pointing to the tendency to “read” artifacts as weapons (axes and the like) rather than as other tools (for cultivation, for example), although and of course specific identification as a specific anything may tell us more about the researchers’ assumptions than anything else. More significant, and here the historian David Noble’s work deserves attention, is the absence of women in general, typically or traditionally explained away by pointing out that women’s gifts would be found in other fields. Andrea Nye, whose work was poorly received until she shifted to the approach acknowledged by the mainstream (this is a *sine qua non* if one wants any colleagues to engage one’s work), wrote an early book that irritated scholars (she cannot be accused of a continental approach and the history of philosophy is an analytic rubric rather than hermeneutic or phenomenological), *Words of Power: A Feminist Reading of the History of Logic*.⁴⁰

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My reading is integrated into my take on the politics of professional philosophy.⁴¹ I invited Dimitri to contribute to a *Festschrift* for Heelan, a collection that remains somewhat unusual in the genre, dedicated to the triad of hermeneutic concerns reflected in Heelan’s work, from science to perceptual aesthetics and theology: *Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science, Van Gogh’s Eyes, and God*. It is unusual in that many of the essays reflect the multidimensionality of Heelan’s work. Ginev’s essay, which I set among the first chapters in the volume, remains insightful: “The Hermeneutic Context of Constitution.”⁴²

40 Andrea Nye, *Words of Power: A Feminist Reading of the History of Logic* (London: Routledge, 1990). Fulltext here: <https://archive.org/details/wordsofpowerfemi0000nyea>.

41 The text of my 2009 New School lecture is archived on Fordham University’s digital repository and *Academia.edu*: “Great Men, Little Black Dresses, The Virtues of Keeping One’s Feet on the Ground: On the Status of Women in Philosophy.” https://www.academia.edu/67767126/On_the_Status_of_Women_in_Philosophy.

42 Ginev, “The Hermeneutic Context of Constitution,” in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science, Van Gogh’s Eyes, and God*, 43–52.

I already mentioned the collective volume I edited, *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*, a challenging undertaking just to the extent that hermeneutics tends to be misunderstood, and this is surprising, precisely by social theorists. Ginev's contribution was key to the collection⁴³ and Steve Fuller's popularly explosive contribution,⁴⁴ if it does not quite illuminate the ongoing problem of hermeneutic philosophies of social science as such, is worth reading between Weber and Husserl and what is conventionally read, analytically speaking, as the much maligned "postmodern." Dimitri's own monograph would appear a year later, with its affinities clearly articulated in the title: *Toward a Hermeneutic Theory of Social Practices: Between Existential Analytic and Social Theory*.⁴⁵

Ginev wrote on the Dilthey scholar (and expert in positivism), Georg Misch,⁴⁶ cognitive existentialism, a variety, as he pioneered this to a great extent, of *analytic* existentialism as this may be compared with newer trends in philosophy, as Dimitri also worked on the most recondite but also mainstream and systematic accounts of social theory. His recent, *Scientific Conceptualization and Ontological Difference* shows the nuances of both.⁴⁷

560 But Dimitri's contributions are not to be ranged on the margins and if anyone can be said to truly work between the analytic/continental divide, which context has its own limitations complete with inviolate dominion (thus most German research institutes are open, typically, exclusively to analytic scholars), Ginev did so, though sometimes he wrote to me about the strain.

To this extent, the best person to write an encomium of hermeneutic philosophy of science valorizing analytic approaches would be the British born, Canadian philosopher, Patricia Glazebrook as she wrote an insightful review of Ginev's 2016 *Hermeneutic Realism: Reality Within Scientific Inquiry* but who discovered his work only late as all of us must now discover and rediscover his works, in print. Ginev published Trish's work and I believe that in future he

43 See, again, Ginev, "Studies of Empirical Ontology and Ontological Difference."

44 Fuller, "Hermeneutics from the Inside-Out and the Outside-In—And How Postmodernism Blew It All Wide Open," in: Babich, ed., *Hermeneutic Philosophies of Social Science*, 109–120.

45 Ginev, *Toward a Hermeneutic Theory of Social Practices: Between Existential Analytic and Social Theory* (London: Routledge, 2018).

46 Ginev, *Das hermeneutische Projekt Georg Mischs* (Vienna: Passagen Verlag 2011).

47 Ginev, *Scientific Conceptualization and Ontological Difference* (Berlin: de Gruyter 2019).

would have hoped for more collaboration as they were of affine sensibilities. Here I recommend her review, recalling the first line:

When Dimitri Ginev left a career in pharmacobiochemistry to avoid experimenting on animals, he was not at all happy with the state of philosophy of science that had displaced “mirror of nature” approaches by means of structuralist tendencies that make reality “a prisoner of formal semantics” (xi).⁴⁸

Trish could have been writing about me as Dimitri’s reasons for leaving his initial plans for work in the life sciences were my reasons for abandoning university studies in biology, complete with years of lab work, for philosophy.

The affinity between Glazebrook’s pro-analytic style and Ginev is patent and both thinkers find that hermeneutics may be read for its contributions to mainstream philosophy of science, that is significantly also a matter of what analytic philosophy calls *realism*.

For my part, I find rather more occasion for diffidence and even antagonism as analytic philosophy refuses both regard and interest, so much so that sometimes scholars opt to speak of “interpretation” in place of “hermeneutics” to avoid upsetting conventional, analytic philosophers and historians of science.

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Where I agree with Dimitri has everything to do with history and constitution and rigor and where I want to be wrong and I want him to be right is in his optimism concerning the openness of traditional philosophy of science to his approach.

Between philosophers and scientists, as the examples of Heelan and of Feyerabend already suggest, one finds sometimes more sympathetic alliances than between philosophers and philosophers. (The latter being the “internecine” battles of which Kant warned and Derrida mused latterly for his own part, only to suffer from them in turn, now resolved as analytic philosophy has since

⁴⁸ Patricia Glazebrook, “Dimitri Ginev, *Hermeneutic Realism: Reality Within Scientific Inquiry*,” *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, 2018.08.44, <https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/dimitri-ginev-hermeneutic-realism-reality-within-scientific-inquiry/>.

coopted his thinking having long ago coopted both Nietzsche and Heidegger).

On models, and I already noted that these are decisive in our lives today, I had already drawn attention to the reflections of mathematicians drawing on hermeneutics in addition to coastal scientists concerned with models, like Orrin Pilkey who took up the question of real-life feedback as it turns out that data is rarely used to modify models and thus he writes on the persistence of incorrect models over decades and decades as the received view turns out, very mathematically so, to be embedded in the allure of such models.⁴⁹

562 My approach to philosophy of science dovetailed with Dimitri's even as I pushed a bit more radically, arguing that it was to be thought and rethought in careful ways, as I sought beyond Ginev's doubling reflex, a hermeneutic of prejudices along with practices, conventions, or givens, and words. In this spirit, I countered Alan Sokal who dedicated an astonishing proportion of his own life-energies and time to calumniating not Meat Loaf but Bruno Latour.⁵⁰ Latour to be sure moves above the fray and in his own anthropological field, neatly doubled, social science of science, including the natural sciences, he began, after Azerbaijan, with field work at the Salk Institute in San Diego, thus with ethnographic studies of science and society, having left the concerns and objections of others, to be read on the merit, as is fitting, of his own work as this is not only rigorous but, and this is important in science as a matter of research projects, in terms of the further research programmes his work has inspired.

One last informal word, necessary in homage: Dimitri was an ailurophile, perhaps the quintessential trait for a hermeneutic thinker having that along with other things in common with Gadamer and with Heelan and myself.

I have included other names in this memorial reflection as tributes and owing to a certain astonishment, as Eliot wrote repeating Dante who was

49 See the latter part of Babich, "Hermeneutics and Its Discontents in Philosophy of Science," here 180 ff., on the challenges of deploying (and interpreting) mathematic models quite in the context of real or life-world application. It hardly needs to be said that we are living our lives today in the current and ongoing "pandemic" on the terms of such models.

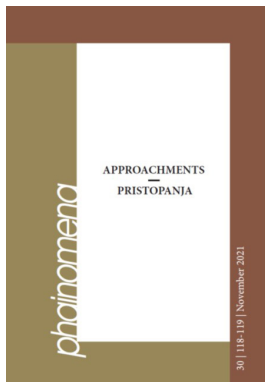
50 See on this a section of one of my several studies dedicated to the so-called "science wars," entitled "*Les 'Pseudos': Science vs. Pseudo-Science*," in: Babich, "Hermeneutics and Its Discontents in Philosophy of Science," 165 ff.

himself repeating the 2nd-century Lucian: *I had not thought death had undone so many*. It is our mortality that compels us to note those around us and not only the young to the extent that in academia, as in most of life, we tend to be future-oriented, ahead of ourselves. Thus we celebrate only the latest thing on the music horizon, the film horizon, the philosophical horizon.

Dimitri Ginev left us a great legacy. Even if we cannot hope to read adequately those contributions like Dimitri's that are, as noted at the start, "too much" for us, there remains a great deal to discover, a great deal to learn.

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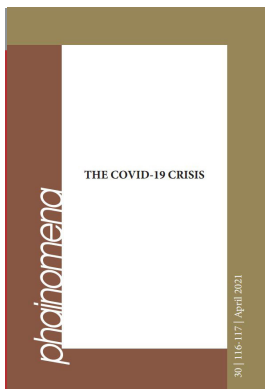
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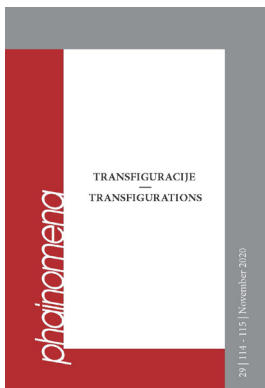


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