



# Professor Dragstedt's “Introduction to Triumph of the Wills”

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1. Adorno ascribed the positivization process to the reification of thinking he saw in the dominance of Formal Logic as adjudicator of truth, and was perhaps reminded of Marx's joke about logic being the 'money of the spirit.' But this is to take Formal Logic at its own appraisal, and then complain: in Adorno's case, to adopt the stance of a Marxist esthete, interpreting the world as ugly, no doubt, but not changing it. To be sure, neither CEOs nor generals are selected for their moral imaginations; their representations and intentions are disassociated from the consequences of their calculations and systemic constraints prevent deliberations about the common good, since the rationality in place is the partial one of a deduction from assumptions.
2. But this creation of such a thing as Formal Logic may stand as our primal example of a triumph of will over logos: as that rationality which includes the discovery of premises and principles. One could speak of the will of Stoic propositional logic triumphing over the universal-based term logic of

Aristotle, as universals and particulars are mastered as types with their tokens. Plato and Aristotle have no word for 'will,' and might regard such a posited organ as a speech pathology arising from the separation of soul from logos. It arises out of the Stoic presentation of man as having the five organs of sense, the reproductive organ, the logos organ and the mastering, hegemonic one. Formal Logic seeks to master Aristotelian syllogism by including it as a special case, but universals must be eliminated by it as having anything beyond a special naming function. An entirely different relationship of speech to consciousness is entailed along with an incompatible ontology. Speech, on Stoic grounds, is reified as a tool with a non-essential relationship to thought, having no necessary relationship to logic, which thus can be thought of as grounded, e.g., in mathematics. The Stoic soul is not in a dialogue with itself, rendering an account as the self-judging of logos, but is to be judged by its strength, its tenos. At the limit, one may quote Hitler, that "No one asks a victor if he told the truth," with a weaponization of speech being

- in accord with the principle of total mobilization (totale mobilmachung). The Stoic orator is a "good man, skilled in speaking." He had better be good, because a sage will have to be able to lie to a people drowning in opinions.
3. Deliberation is all an illusion, on the Stoic understanding, and invention or discovery of new meaning in new premises as entailing a free movement of mind among universals must be banished from the realm of rationality, which thus becomes reduced to a deductivity achieving consistency with assumptions, rather than truth. The identity and stability of concepts was exemplified for Aristotle above all by natural species and genera surviving through the perishing of their instance and are, as universals, available to the deliberations of a Sophocles, e.g., crafting a universal figure Oedipus, out of insights into the psychological aspects of his cleverness in hitting upon hidden causes, and who makes us forget the uniqueness of a fate that brings him to encounter precisely his father on a path, whence the only slave to escape is precisely
  - the one who was to expose him, but gave him to that slave who was precisely the one who brought the tidings of Polybus' death; so it isn't the plot which exhibits universality.
  4. Both Marx and the Church are to be located within the Aristotelian tradition, as doctrines of human liberation. Marx includes Hegel's theory of the state, in working out his own theory of how to eliminate the state, but both have been beset by that positivization process which can be observed at its deepest level in the Stoic destruction of the dialectic of speech and consciousness, with the concomitant instrumentalization of logic. Philosophy turns into a medicine to cure such anxieties as wonder, as a technique of will-triumphing, and sciences are accorded an independent legitimacy, and need provide no account of their contribution to human flourishing. This positivization in the class struggle has expressed itself in the 19th century scientism of the Social Democracy, as it has removed all understanding of the contradictory nature of capitalist development. Stalin needed to add nothing to this cheer-leading

for science, more proper to the Pragmatism and Positivism of the 20th century: democracy must be defined out of Socialism, which withers into industrialization without classes (only a caste). Marx's vision of a free association of producers is a view of man able finally to deliberate about what to produce or even whether the realm of necessity can be satisfied without production. Science can thus finally be brought to bear on the ecology and man will so flourish that Aristotle, Goethe, Marx will be the average Trotsky.

5. Though both Heidegger and Adorno were seen and saw themselves as antipodes, they both construed the problems facing mankind as based upon a technology that had become independent of any mindful control, and would prepare the world as unlivable for man. "The grandeur and inner truth" of Nazism had to do with mastering this process, even at the cost of employing the Racial madness (Rassenwabu), as Heidegger put it. For Adorno, the Nazis were the ultimate expression of an instrumental reason as the reification of everything, which

is characteristic of capitalism as it finally shapes itself through the defeats of the working-class through Stalinism and Nazism. "Can one still compose lyric poetry after Auschwitz?" That question seemed to define his stance as that of an esthete of Marxist aura, but for whom the class struggle had ended; if not in Marcuse's one-dimensional man, then at most two dimensions could be conceded. Not enough to confront, much less negate, the process of accumulation of capital.

6. His colleague, Bruno Liebrucks, responded by proposing that the triumph of will over "the good of the intellect," as Dante put it, as evidenced at Auschwitz (and many times and places there after) required that there now be more lyric poetry than ever before, unless poetry were merely an ornament or decoration of horrors, in which case it were better that there never have been such a thing as a poem. This positivization of the world, through the severance of knowledge from the good and the establishment of the separate sciences as sole authoritative repositories of truth, be traced to the dominance of a formal logic

- which had to deny its origins in logos (das Logische) as displayed in the Science of Logic, but which is to be traced back to the tradition of Plato and Aristotle.
7. This positivization appears most immediately in the fact that all law is positive to the extent its norms cannot be grounded in anything, but must [be] set out or posited; and if the position holds, it is through a triumph of the will. "The will of the leader is the highest law," as Carl Schmitt puts it, who is hailed as the greatest legal theorist. The German term for this mastery-knowledge, Herroschaftswissen, points to the primacy of will which is implied by the motto, 'knowledge is power.' It is not a response to wonder, trauma, which both Plato and Aristotle propose as the origin of philosophy such that a philosophical guardian would be enabled to decide whether to deploy power or not. A river is to be dealt with, thus prepared by Francisco Bacon, as a possible contributor to the improvement of man's estate through its reduction to a problem in hydroelectrics, rather than as an elicited of wonder as a possible dwelling of naiads, and then as a function of a totality which might only come into view of an ecologist using final causes as tools for investigation. A relationship to nature would thus be recaptured, which would be free to master the river or not.
  8. Rather than to accept Formal Logic at its own appraisal, as the adjudicator of rationality, it needs to give an account of itself, as blithely assimilating the logic of Aristotle to that constructed by Stoic in conscious and total opposition to it; in opposition to universals by which Aristotle's logic stands or falls. But universals introduce indeterminacy, the possibility of rational freedom achievable through deliberation and expressed in a practical syllogism which brings a universal and singular premise into the unity of an act. The unity of theory and practice is a possibility for Aristotle's logic, but excluded from the preparation of the world as the realm of the positive by a Stoicism which can only disdain universals as labels which have gone into orbit and exert, as final cause revealers, a "tug from the future."

9. The ancient philosophical schools proposed to adherents an entire way of life as opposed to the fashion of a contemporary philosophy department, which might stress phenomenology, ordinary language analysis, or the like. The paths of salvation were incompatible in a total way. Aristotle's *Organon* presents the exhausting of the potencies of human speech by way of providing a linguistic vehicle for the pick-up and conveyance of knowledge and defeat of sophistic pretensions to knowledge, so the Stoics must present an alternative rhetoric, grammar and, above all, logic. They can be said to have invented grammar in the modern sense: something that had no importance for Plato and Aristotle, it seems. They construct their own semantics and ontology to counterpose to Aristotle's *Categories*, on *Interpretation* and *Posterior Analytics*. And their propositional logic is constructed to dispense with the concepts of Aristotle's term logic. As for their rhetoric of paradox, it is what Cicero thinks you should study if you wish to become mute. When they come

to Aristotle's treatise, the *Topics*, the largest in the *Organon*, they neither have nor can have anything to counterpose, since it has to do with those logical relations which are present in human speech as such, required for arguing and deliberating independently of scientific principles and are, therefore, the expression of freedom in the case of man, the deliberating animal, as Aristotle characterizes him. He starts with expressions of pain and pleasure, advances to concerns of advantage and disadvantage, and rounds out with deliberations of justice and injustice as final cause or function of the development. But can this be formulated with scientific precision and elimination of final causation? Aristotle might respond, No! and so much the worse for the formulas.

10. What does stand in for invention for Stoics, if the *Topics*, based on accident, genus, property and definition, are intolerably compromised by universals? I am reminded of anecdotal accounts of the inventiveness of a great logician and of a great mathematician which was said to be spurred on by dosages of amphetamines. The Stoics

recommended hellebore, which is useful as a cardiac and pulmonary depressant, and as an insecticide. What must be stressed is the independence of Aristotle's logic as emanating from the logos itself: a syllogism that requires nothing from outside for its necessity to be plain, and the derivative character of propositional logic. An Olympian family of absolutes, the Functors, are proposed for the genuflection of the mind: Implicator, Conjuncter, and Disjuncter. If it is day, Implicator pronounces that it is light. Either it is day or it is night, so Disjuncter pronounces the necessity of choice. But whereas the hymn to a Homeric Olympian can relate birth, deeds, and benefactions to mortals, the absolutes of the positive world are posited with arrow or horseshoe for Implicator, and v (upside or downside), whose deeds are replaced with a truth (or, better value) table, and whose benefactions are an improvement in man's estate under a certain description which separates 'improvement' from the 'good.' My concern is to demythologize the phalanx of Functors by noting their posited

and, hence, derivative characters: Implicator doesn't mean anything until one has specified whether the relation between day and light is to be taken as causal, temporal, logical or some combination. We leave the positive sciences as they were, but under the description: derivative, dependent on a good which can only come from outside them. And the exclusion of teleology is based on an unsustained claim to knowledge.

11. Two philosophical traditions emerge into view, which differ irreconcilably in their relation to logos, as the basis for necessity in speech, or logic: the one positing it as a Kreon of deductivity, and the other, accepting Antigone - fashion, of the origin as "unwritten," not posited, and one knows not whence. But the Stoic, positive relationship to logos, which by excluding universals, presents a theory of speech and consciousness which excludes deliberation and freedom, has continued down the so-called history of philosophy, without being clearly distinguished from the Platonic-Aristotelian inventive relationship to logos. This latter tradition seeks at all costs to be adequate to the

human experience of  
deliberation as the basis of  
rational freedom.

12. The Stoics propose so separate a status of reason and speech as to be located in different parts of the soul, and, hence, Chrysippus can hypothesize a syllogizing dog who, following a rabbit by its scent, comes to a crossing either right or left, A or B. He smells A, but his nostrils negate ;it so, with a quick sacrifice to Disjunctio, he charges off on B, on the basis of the exclusive or and negation of A. His logic is in his nature, not in speech, and the dog can live homologously with nature as the Stoics insist, without the self-deceiving pretense of deliberation.
13. This problematic of deliberation was formulated by Chrysippus in an interpretation of Medea. For Chrysippus, she may say that her ego (thymos) is stronger than her deliberations, but that is just to acknowledge the illusory nature of her belief in the freedom of her choice to exact vengeance on Jason through the murder of her children. Her fussing in the logos part of her soul is just the chattering of the monkeys and

parrots at the tops of the trees, while what matters is the silent and deadly slithering of the snake on the jungle floor of her hegemonic part, which provides a chariot on which she is whisked away from humanity to testify, as Seneca's Jason puts it, that "wherever she is there are no gods." We would be able to understand her as driven by ,a representation (phantasia) of herself as desperate housewife of South Corinth, frittering away an inglorious existence as Jason seduces away the love of her children with his princely assets, and the like. Better then, to enter world literature as a figure of heroic dimensions in willful transcendence of the nurturing paradigm which has been such a hindrance to the flourishing of total woman. Her act comes from the tension among the material relationships constituting her soul, and all references to speech have to do with rationalizations which she rapidly moves among and oscillates between to suggest to herself that she is earnestly seeking the good.

14. The term 'will' emerges within Stoicism as a phantom organ or muscle, which can be strong or weak, hence strengthened by



appropriate discipline. I am reminded of Adolf Hitler, engaged in will-strengthening exercises, scowling into a mirror for long periods. Such an agency of action is posited as independent of speech, and therefore of the relationship of universal to singular proper to Aristotle's practical syllogism. In fact, Aristotle will interpret Medea as weak, not as strong-willed. But her weakness, *acrasia*, is a weakness of her relationship to *logos* as that of her whole person, rather than that of some will-organ or muscle. The representation or *phantasia* of herself leading an unheroic life isn't something posited by her nature as a given, but is the basis for an intention as she might search and find such a universal as penance for fratricide as the basis for the rational choice (*prohairesis*) of a mediocre life. Her weakness is in her inability to find and retain the universal relevant to the performance of a finally-caused act, an intention!, with all the implications of teleology.

15. So there are two incommensurable and incompatible philosophical traditions, differing throughout

on the basis of a differing relationship to speech and thereby to logic. For Plato and Aristotle, wonder is the origin of thinking, and for the Stoics wonder is a pathology. The sage wonders at nothing: *nil admirari*. Philosophy becomes the cure for that pointless mental perturbation, wonder *thauma*. A duty ethic emerges with value put, with Kantian rigorism, only those acts which are against appetite as expressive of the ethical work one has done on oneself. The goal is to become the warden of one's own prison, or the prison of one's self, as Foucault put it. Aristotle thinks man desires to know, there being appetites as the most basic level, the satisfying of which can constitute an eligible liveable way of life, accepting of wonder with (even) an appetite for it. The employment of mental potencies becomes a final cause, as happiness.

16. The power of the deductivity of propositional logic appears in its ability to check the rigor of an Euclidian proof, for example, though the invention has happened elsewhere: in the analysis of the construction of a dodecahedron, as one gropes back through universals to an

insight that the placing of regular pentagons as sides would be the cause of such inscribability! The strangeness of Aristotle's instancing of the right angle in the hemisphere, ignoring the actual proof suggests that he may have felt a superfluous need to drag Euclidian argument into syllogistic form beyond necessity.

17. Returning briefly to Medea, we may try to schematize her problem as a need for justice. Roughly: "It is just to exact requital. Jason has destroyed my assets (as Princess of Colchis, etc.). I must destroy his assets (children)." A deliberator would seek under the topic of definition for the 'what is it' of asset. Are children assets for use and abuse? Or are they persons under justice-claims? Medea (and Jason) may be represented, per contrarium, as the children's assets (for use and abuse), hence the interpretation of the children as assets fails. So if an injustice to one is bad, a fortiori an injustice to Medea plus two children is worse.
18. Now the initiative and energy of her acts of murder don't come

from evil as a mere deprivation of good, but from a positive power taking advantage of her impulse towards justice. This eruption of positive power is compatible with an *acrasia*, a weakness in tolerating the ambiguity of her unjust situation long enough to attain and entertain the relevant meanings of 'justice,' 'assets,' and 'persons,' whereby she might present herself as a free deliberator. The universals were provided her by *logos* itself, virtue as a genus of justice; injustice wrought upon one Medea is bad, so a *fortiori* injustice wrought upon Medea plus two children is worse. In the event, she never finds a practical syllogism which would be moved by an account as grounds for her act. But out of the Stoic tradition, her act may count as coming from a special organ, the will, which may be taken as strong in her case, but is independent of the special organ known as *logos*: the residence of speech as grammar, etymology and the implications of propositions.

19. The Stoic way of life (to be homologous with nature) of the self-disciplining of the personal warden filled a lacuna, or a perceived one for the Hellenistic

man. What Aristotle offered was the life of theory along with the practical life, addressed, to speculative being and changeable being. One might have expected from Aristotle the validation of a third poetic life of general creativity addressing productive being, but his third eligible life is the life of indulgence, the apolaustic life. The artistic citizen may now for us seem preferable to the consuming citizen in all regards, but no kind of citizenship was on offer to the post-polis man. So for some 500 years Stoicism provided the common language of philosophy, with a limitless ability to present new terminology. So Paul and Origen are found employing locutions which have arisen in a philosophy not of freedom but of control. It is possible that the sudden disappearance of Stoicism right after Marcus Aurelius endowed chairs of philosophical schools had to do with the realization that, however deep Stoic doctrine might seem, it was incompatible with the fundamental emotional awareness of free choice. However much Stoics may argue that such emotional awareness is just as caused as any other, and

that, rather than being a given, it enters the mind through a judgment, they can only present an ever more complicated metaphysical description, to be targeted as mere dogmatism. And yet, Stoic thinking continues in various ways through the Catholic tradition, breaking free, at length, under Martin Luther's affirmation of faith as the yes-saying (synkatathesis) of Stoicism.

20. The Renaissance is more and more now viewed as a renaissance of Stoicism. The self-preserving ego as the basis of Stoic anthropology is manifest in Hobbes, Spinoza, Descartes, Newton, and Adam Smith. The international jurisprudence of de Groot (Hugo Grotius) is Stoic cosmopolitanism. When Descartes identifies soul with mind (anima with mens), he takes the principle of life out of extended thing (res extensa). A world is prepared in which nature with final causes is absent, and there is no Newton of a blade of grass (Kant). Reality is things (res) with a law of gravity expressed as tugs in the present, yielding an orbit as the tugs approach infinity. So nature yields to its interpretation

as a manifold of natural laws. Since, as Carnap put it, it must be regarded as a "great stroke of luck" that logic and mathematics have anything to do with the world. The positivist interpretation is imposed through the priority of the "will" organ over logos, and one must not express surprise that freedom (along with God and immortality) becomes a postulate: a request which is merely compatible with Kantian reason, but which may be denied by Kantian reason.

21. We have the term 'Weltanschauung' (worldview) from Kant, but I think it may be used to distinguish the Stoic approach from Aristotle's and Plato's wonder as a relationship to nature. The Stoics view nature, as does positive science, as a self-sufficient, dynamic system: a representation of a technical fire (pyr tektikon) into which one must fit oneself through the adoption of a system of values appropriate to one's condition, and such a representation functions as an ideology. The struggle against sophistry was no longer a burning issue for Stoics and speech could just be taken as

reducible to a naming function whereby the deflating of the cognitive significance of universals was the basic task. The challenge posed by Gorgias' denial that, if anything could be known, it could be communicated, requires the middle-term, revealed by universals, as the indispensable linguistic vehicle for the realization of knowledge, lifting truth out of the flux of psychologism: the reduction to subjectivity.

22. The two premises of an Aristotelian syllogism are the material cause of the final cause, the conclusion whose finality is the revelation of a necessary connection by virtue of the terms being where they are and how they are, regardless of some psychological act of a syllogizer. The lack of total finality in the case of second and third figures has to do with the diminished presentation of the necessity of [a connection] not with validity, as Kant supposed. Stoic, propositional logic, on the contrary, proceeds without a natural end in conclusion which ends a finite process, but goes on indefinitely until an ending is decreed to be the conclusion

through the irrational act of what could be termed a triumphing will, one triumphing over the expectation that it give an account of its decision. However indispensable as a tool for checking the validity of argument, its task is defined by the checking of consistency: of correctness rather than truth, in the sense of consistency with the assumptions. Since such logic eliminates the function of universals and final causation, one cannot complain of its formal dispensing with the good of the intellect: no one gives what he doesn't have. The question of the good is shifted to the axioms, ideal types, values or personal choices over which "men can only fight," as the Milton Friedman of Positive Economics put it. Rationality becomes deductivity, on this understanding, and the bases for deduction get pushed into the context of discovery, where hellebore grows, and validation comes from utility: the mastery of nature through master-thinking (hurs chafts denken).

23. The modern avatar of Stoic positivization is Immanuel Kant, who never read a Platonic dialogue, to all evidence, and for

whom Aristotle represents the pre professional philosophy of teleology: all to be ignored, save some of Aristotle's Analytics. One notes how dead this whole tradition had become, since Descartes recommended that one do mathematics instead, by detecting strange errors in Kant's understanding of reduction itself and belief that the two modes requiring indirect proof could be reduced. But what is startling is his conflation of term logic and propositional logic into that something which gets called Formal Logic, whereby all that matters is that a judgement can be elicited from both, which is the fundamental cognitive act for Stoicism. Speech is necessarily absent from his work as the realm in which consciousness develops, and the definition of truth itself he is content to take from Formal Logic, although he has brought into play the new perspective provided by Transcendental Logic required to locate the achievements of Newtonian physics. Speech is separated from logic and acquires an incidental relationship to thought, as if it were a tool which might be put down and replaced with something else.

24. Both Hegel and his student, Marx, had to negate this philosophy in which freedom is merely a lifeless postulate, in a total way, and both celebrated Aristotle as the mightiest mind of the past. The Church has roughly the same relationship to Aristotle, and also proposes a doctrine of freedom. Both traditions have struggled within an environment characterized by a positivistic challenge to separate freedom from rationality, robbing mankind of its deliberative capacity. Not for nothing was St. Paul regarded as close to 'our Seneca' (Seneca noster), and Pauline Christianity is not obviously identical to that of the Gospels regarding freedom, though Paul's organizational tasks make clarity hard to achieve. The sign over the most sensational expression of the triumph of wills reads 'Labor makes free,' but Himmler doesn't tell us what it makes free. For students of Marx, labor frees up capital to move whither it listeth: it is just working human beings who work themselves into ever deeper dependence, as the polarization of wealth proceeds apace.

25. Efforts toward the liberation of mankind must not be based on philosophies which render freedom a meaningless word. If one thinks of Kant as expressing the freedom compatible with the positivization of the world, one must say that his autonomy (of the power of judgment) implies an Antigone who makes up her own unwritten laws, stands in no tradition and would have condemned herself to a private language. But those doctrines of freedom within the tradition of Aristotle are open to being beset by positivization in many guises. The nature of knowledge available to those analyzing the capitalist mode of production yields the possibility of effective deliberation but nothing like the ability to predict lunar eclipse. Trotsky speaks rather of the prognoses that a penetrating diagnosis makes possible.

26. What is desiderated for changing rather than merely interpreting is a politics which is not that of class interest as such but of universal interest as the freeing of mankind from enslavement to the process of capital accumulation; names, that of the solvent of class interest, the interest of the

working class. Such politics is able to formulate the common good as achievable by **doing the truth rather than by preparing the triumphs of will over the common good.** Such a politics is that of the working class forming its own leadership, but this requires that an organization be acknowledged with the authority which comes from having the requisite theory at its center as a locus of deliberation. Such a party, as the memory of the class, achieves the cognitive status of leadership not as the notorious infallible Political Committee with the General Line (Generalnaia Liniia) decorated with deductivity, axiomativity and scientificity. The claim to predictive infallibility brings an organization membership in the Amnesia International. A leadership's claim can only be grounded in its ability to give an account of the relevant history, that relative to the deliberations required by the present state of the struggle over social surplus. Such history is of a different character from the history that is confronted by an interpreter rather than a changer. The Party (of changers) must see history as changeable through the nature of

the leadership of the working-class, in presence at various turning points in the accumulation process.

27. Such turning points might be illustrated in the post-war period by the breakdown of the Bretton Woods treaty on August 15, 1971, as the end of the American Empire as based on superior productivity and moving towards service sector investment to offset the declining rate of industrial profit. Then the Volcker recession and coordinated destruction of PATCO with subsequent self-liquidation of organized labor, enabling a totally parasitic financialization process to become dominant. Capital will accumulate profits, even as speculative paper, on and on regardless of social cost, and mocking the textbook model of producers working to satisfy the demands of consumers. Investors must continue to attempt to line up their 'animal spirits with the selection process effected by capital under an absolute systemic constraint. If they have a personal concern for the seventh generation from now, social extinction threatens them, nevertheless, at ever

shorter time intervals expressed in numbers of Quarterly Reports. Lary Summers may proclaim Economics to be a positive science (or, in his case, a despositive one, disposing of toxic waste in Africa, in accordance with "impeccable economic logic"), but will all the mathematicized precision enable the regime to fine-tune the howling void of Derivatives?

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28. If not, the ability of productive relationships characteristic of capitalism to unite mankind with nature as productive forces is called into question. If a leadership which can point to a peaceful reform of these relationships cannot become visible in time within a system of communication dominated by corporate profit-maximizing, there will be a selection for purveyors of violence to police the accumulation process. Such is the scientific worldview, with its truth-tables (or value-tables), and as for preferring life over death, that is a subjective value preference; and such a triumphing will is the alternative to the way, the truth and the life; as offered by Aristotle and other comrades of logos.