

June 21

Today is the longest day of the year. Last night, after dinner, I felt like another walk. I needed time with myself; Between Gaya and the writing there was hardly any rest. I went to the west corner of Edam, by the big church, to watch the sunset. The church clock was striking ten. Ten at night? Ten in the evening? It didn't get dark here until eleven, and even then it wasn't **really** dark. It was **completely** quiet. Except for animal sounds, of course. Mainly birds, but also an occasional cow. The sun was just setting. I took a deep breath and thought about the Mexican. Well, I'm Ok. Much more **like** the American. I thought to myself: This is the feeling, or thought, that artists try to capture in their creation. Or **one** of the feelings. Are they really **different** from each other? (I mean the really **good** moments. The ones filled with **magic**.) I think not. I believe they are all one and the same, just differing in **degree**. I also believe, that **everyone** (and **definitely** every speaker) knows it; had experienced it. Maybe this was the feeling Gaya's duck experienced in his breakfast the other day. For myself, I've had it quite a number of times. But in unprecedented frequency, here in Edam. You know what I believe? I believe this is the feeling, the property, the concept, the **object** (this word crept from below the line) of the **Good**. This is my **belief**, and it is therefore true, by definition. Don't ask me to substantiate this claim with a (rational⁴⁵) argument, which in itself must be based on some

⁴⁵ **Rationality**. What is rationality? and why now? Here is my meaning of the word, the relevance self-evident: To me, Being **rational** is what I thus far referred to as being a **speaker**. I don't know whether all humans are rational, or whether only humans are. But I do know what a speaker, a **rational** user of language, is: It is a logical system, equivalent to P₁, (hence consisting at least of the object F) **and also** equipped with a moral perception; a notion of preference, of **good**. The second characteristic can also be perceived as the worn down concept of **intentionality**⁸⁴. I perceive **logic** and **morality** as the (only) two ingredients that make up a rational being. These two constituents, corresponding to **belief** and **desire**, are the "Yin and Yang" of rationality. The dichotomy between the two is no other than the age old dichotomy between **facts** and **values**, or **determinism** and **free will**.

Logic without an interest, a point of view, "objective logic", is empty. Just meaningless syntax. It has a kind of **truth**, but no **meaning**. An a-moral, objective logic reduces the world to nothing but a twofold reference: one **T** and one **F**. meaning does not even enter the picture; There is no one to **care**. On the other hand, morality without logic is **unintelligible**: There is no analysis, no distinction; Just a chaotic "good" floating around, in want of language to express it. Rational speakers **understand**, because they are equipped with **both** logic and morality. Combined, they are the necessary and sufficient condition for the formation of a belief system; a conceptual scheme.

The deepest source of **skepticism** is the disregard for morality's role in the determination of meaning and truth. Based on logic alone, there is no **certainty**: To arrive at true conclusions, true premises are required. And who would supply those? The first premises are always moral: They provide the context, the framework, the basic, 'primitive' concepts; the **irreducible** ones. It is a process that cannot be logically justified. It is **moral**. Without morality to determine (or, rather, **constitute**) the truth of the premises, logic is helpless. Without logic, morality has nothing to **judge**, accept or reject. Morality is **choice potential**, but alone it cannot recognize the **possibilities**. It has no language, no thought.

Morality is inherently **objective**. As *Moore*⁸⁵ pointed out, the notion of **good** is inherent, innate. It is the only thing, besides **contradiction**, that all speakers share. In a manner of speaking, only **it** may be considered a **completely** objective **reference**. Complete intersubjective understanding is achieved only in cases of agreement not only regarding the truth values of a set of propositions, but also regarding the **value**

other **premise**. No premise is more primordial, more **basic**, than this one. I **know** what is **good**, or what **Good** is, which are the same thing. It is **this**. Now, how can I convey to you this **this**? By creating a statement. A statement is a part of **language**. This was exactly Gaya's point with **art**. How can **I**, particularly, convey to my friends this **this**? What I basically want to do, is to give them a **description**. A description of the **Good**; not of **reality**. Reality is something Aristotle invented. The **Good** is something **I came with**. It comes from within me. And it is always **this** that actually gets described. Language does not describe the world. It describes, in an infinity of variations, the concept of **Good**. I felt a close, almost spooky intimate identification with **Plato**. The idea of the good. The idea of the good provides the light, by which everything else is seen, conceived. To **understand** something is to know how it is good; how it **can** be good; how it can **bring about** good. Or bad, of course.

Sitting there by the church, watching the red glare the sun left behind it, I realized that I am starting to understand **the** life (the world), instead of understanding **about** life. It is the difference between **knowing** and knowing **about**. The major difference between Gaya and me, is that she knows **the** things, while I talk **about** them, separating myself from them. I suddenly understood the difference between western thought and eastern thought. I should have devoted more time to eastern... No! I am regretting again. What I did was **right**: It got me **here**. I consciously pulled myself up from slipping back into my normal, **analytic** way of thinking. But still: Are there causal connections between (prior) events and actions, and between this wonderfully **good**⁴⁶ experience I am having now? Can it deliberately be brought about? Gaya would know.

I thought about the book. I called it "the book", because I could neither call it "the thesis" nor "the diary". One would not be complete without the other. Like Yin and Yang. Writing is the only way I know, to **describe**. Writing and talking. Socrates was against writing. He did not leave a word behind him, and still had an enormous influence. Even more than he received credit for. But I'm sure he wouldn't mind. He wouldn't have it any other way. Just like Lao-tse, who shared his century. How far they were from each other, and yet how close! Like one person speaking in two very different languages. One person speaking two different languages. Expressing the **same** thing. The **only** thing. The only **objective** thing there is. **Intentionality**. Desire. Preference. Will. **Good**. Everything has been deteriorating ever since. Well, in some respect. In another, the age of *Pisces* served an important purpose. The divergence between the two **ways** of thinking, of apprehending reality, became an **abyss** over the last two thousand years, the last **age**. Neither, in itself,

of the thing considered. The **Good** is the compass for **real** understanding. Maybe this is what Plato meant by his simile of the sun.⁸⁶

⁴⁶ However, the common usage of the term *good* is not as an object, but as a predicate – a "non-existent" concept, residing only in the conceptual scheme of its beholder. Treated as a regular predicate, let us look at the proposition $P \supset G$. "Being P entails being good", or simply "P is good". Similarly:

P is good $\Rightarrow P \supset G$ P is not good (Not 'P is good') $\Rightarrow \sim(P \supset G)$
P is bad $\Rightarrow P \supset \sim G$ P is not bad (Not 'P is bad') $\Rightarrow \sim(P \supset \sim G)$

was able to provide a complete answer. The eastern and western way of thinking are **thesis** and **antithesis**. Only when combined, when **synthesized**, a new product shall emerge: Another (**metaphysical**) paradigm. A different way to understand what it is all about. Some have called it “new age”, others “salvation”. Sitting there in the twilight, I visualized a magnificently interesting future.

Nothing external invoked these thoughts. They could have “caught” me in my room, or back at home. The surroundings were inspiring, and I was already under a strong influence of Gaya, but it could just as well have happened two weeks from today, on another peaceful moment in my back yard. In fact, Everything I wrote so far, and everything I was going to write in the remaining ten days, could just as well be written as sheer fantasy. That is what writers (of fiction) do. Does it **really** make a difference to the few who are going to read this, that it **really** happened? Does this **really** make it more **interesting**? I think not. Maybe the contrary: I think a story that comes from inside its writer is a much more impressive achievement. The amateur Japanese painters **need** the scenery to invoke the feeling they want to record. Great masters don’t even need that. Well, I never wrote anything before. I may still seek the help of my surroundings, the stories they provide, the feelings **they** invoke. Gaya would probably laugh at this; at my attempt to separate myself from the surroundings. She would say that it is **I** who brought the surroundings about, by picking this place, planning this trip, by **coming** here. I am writing these lines almost in a state of *automatic writing*, not knowing what the next sentence will be. I am just trying to relive, or reconstruct, yesterday’s feeling. In a way, what happens to me now is exactly what I just said: I am not (now) **there**, by the church. I am here in my room, **remembering** yesterday by the church. Is there **really** a difference, even for **me**, whether I **actually** sat by the church or just imagining I did? For a second, I am not even so sure that I did. But I did. Or did not. What is the difference. Do you think people will contemplate on the question whether I **really** did or not? What could **possibly** be their motivation in doing so? It would just be a reflex - an Aristotelian reflex.

The moment was over. It must have lasted fifteen, twenty minutes. I was just left with a feeling of **confidence**. Until now, I was still quite insecure about my writing. I was not sure I had something to say. And even if I did, I was not sure I will be understood. I was afraid to be too superficial for my professors and too boring for my friends. I felt those fears evaporating. Not that I was suddenly sure that I **did** have something to say, or that it is **not** boring. It was simply the realization, that I am doing exactly what I planned to do: To say all (and only) what I have to say. If it turns out not to be enough for anyone, it still is for me. I believe that what I am writing portrays my *worldview* as accurately as I am able. And this is all I came here to do. If my footnotes do not entitle me with a Masters degree, then, by the standards of **my own** world, I do not deserve it.

I had trouble falling asleep, and I woke a number of times during the night. I was dreaming like crazy. I was dreaming every night since I arrived here, which is very odd. Back at home I never remember having dreamed. As if my subconscious, or whatever, is extremely busy here. I dreamed about work, about home, about Gaya and mostly about logic and epistemology. I dreamed I got stuck in an airport, on my way to **Moscow** (yes,

Moscow!) but have lost my ticket. This business with sleeping and dreaming is still beyond me. (This was S.H. Bergman's topic of philosophical interest during the last years of his life). Another thing I must ask Gaya about. My new Oracle.

I woke up to the sound of German outside my (permanently) open window. A group of German tourists were gathered outside, **just** by my window, one meter from my sleepy head. I was annoyed: How inconsiderate! Don't they realize that someone must be sleeping on the other side of the window they are sitting by? The phone rang. It was my father. Just to say Hello. Incidentally, he tells me, there is a problem that requires my attention But it can wait until I return. I ask him what it is. He tells me. We say goodbye, I hang up, and feel annoyed twice: Firstly at the person my father was telling me about (I'll spare you the details), and secondly at my father, who should not have brought it up in the first place, if it can really wait. I was annoyed three times before getting out of bed. Usually I don't get annoyed three times in a **month**. I get up, trying to make some noise, to attract the attention of the people outside my window. I sit at my computer, hooking up to my Email box in Israel. I get a message from Rivka, my associate, complaining I didn't answer her previous message. But I did! Annoyed again. I was tired and confused by the dream attack. It was late. I was afraid I won't make it to breakfast before ten. I took a quick shower and ran for breakfast. Gaya wasn't there. Dekker relayed a message from her: She had to go to Amsterdam early in the morning. I should have known, with a morning that started like this. Maybe better so. In fact, **definitely** better so. I didn't want Gaya to see me in this miserable mood. What a contrast to yesterday evening! I immediately thought of her words: Excessive good is harmful.⁴⁷

I went on the morning walk alone. I went straight to the church, without even thinking where I was going. I sat on the same bench, and realized the bench, the church and the view had nothing to do with it. Everything was just as it was yesterday. Different, but still as beautiful. I could recognize this beauty despite of my slight depression. It cannot be the surroundings that are responsible for magic moments. It is **internal**. I realized I was thinking western again, separating inside from outside. But this time I didn't try to suppress this way of thinking. A man passed by and did not say hello. Neither did I. One cigarette later I got up and started walking back. Moments later, the church bells started ringing, continuously, as if they were out of order. They rang without pause, and sounded just like a fire alarm, or some sort of emergency bell. I became worried: What is the meaning of this? A **coincidence**? It sounds **just** like an alarm, warning me against great danger. I searched my mind for possible catastrophes. None. I searched my mind for something I **should** have done but didn't. Something I did **wrong**. Something I have neglected to **care** for. Nothing. I was approaching *De Fortuna*, and the alarm was still sounding. Suddenly I heard a noise behind the door of the house I was passing by, and a squirt of water shot out of the mail slot in the door and completely wet my pants. I was totally surprised. I looked at my wet pants, at the closed door, and realized that a kid had just shot me with a water gun. I burst out laughing, standing alone in the street, releasing

⁴⁷ Many things are self-refuting – too much of them brings about their opposite. This claim has the feel of an oxymoron – a contradiction. I wonder how Plato would treat the notion of "too much good".

all the tension that accumulated within me since I woke up. I reached *De Fortuna* just as the bells stopped ringing, and saw Gaya standing, smiling cheerfully.

We sat down and had coffee. I knew what I wanted to talk about. I said: “I have two questions for you”. She smiled attentively. “Can magical moments be deliberately brought about?” I was prepared for an ordeal before she actually answers: ‘What are magical moments?’ or ‘What is ‘deliberately?’ or something of the sort. Obviously she surprised me. Her surprises were not surprising any more; “But of course!” she said. “I know a cute story about a question like this. A Frenchman I once knew, Arnaud DesJardins, told me that he spent years in searching a particular Tibetan master. When he finally found him, the master was just leaving. DesJardins was extremely disappointed, and asked the master to give him a general advice, whereas it was impossible for him to stay, or for DeJardin to join him. The master agreed, despite the unorthodox request, especially in the east. He looked at DesJardins sincerely for a while, and then said: ‘Take what I am about to tell you, seriously. You don’t really need anything more than it’. He looked DeJardin in the eye, and said: ‘**Be happy!**’⁴⁸. Then he left, and DeJardin never saw him again. When he told me the story, he said that these two words were the most meaningful and the most effective piece of advice he ever received. If he was a Zen-Buddhist, he would call it ‘enlightenment’. And this DeJardin was no child - he studied with the most renowned masters in the east. He claimed to have understood the key to happiness, to “magical moments” as you called it. I tend to agree with him: All it takes, is a conscious decision to be happy. But for you, I’ll throw in a condition: You must be *whole with yourself*’. This sounded enigmatic. I inquired: “Whole with yourself? In what way?” “Ah, this you already know” said Gaya. “You must not **feel sorry**. You must not **regret**. If you made a mistake, correct it. If you don’t, it will cloud your happiness, as much as you desire it. What is your second question?”

Apparently she didn’t want to elaborate on the first one. I moved on: “Tell me about **dreams**”. “Don’t you have dreams?” she asked. “Of course I do. That is why I am asking”. “So you know them. What do you want me to tell you?” Was she playing? “What they **are**. What is the significance of the phenomenon”. “I am not avoiding your question” Gaya was reading my mind again; “But your question is like asking ‘what are trees’. Trees are trees, and dreams are dreams. I can give you a detailed description of trees, and a similar detailed description of dreams. But this is not what you are looking for. What **exactly** don’t you understand?” I tried a different angle: “To **understand** something involves knowing why, or how, it is good, or bad..” I remembered yesterday’s conversation about the holocaust: “Or **important**, right?” “Yes?” she replied. “So what is their **function**. What are they good or bad for. Are they important?” Gaya seemed to prepare for a long answer. I leaned back in anticipation. “Dreams are experiences; feelings, thoughts. When you have a waking experience, and you choose to articulate it, you put it into form of language. More often than not, into **words**. This is how you can

⁴⁸ How to formalize “I am happy”? I would say as “I **am** good”, or I⊃G. Of course, I must abandon this belief every time I am unhappy, or feel bad. This nicely exemplifies Socrates’ most basic moral claim - the equation “I **am** good” ≡ “I **feel** good”⁸⁷.

later give yourself and others an account of what you have experienced, of your **memory**. If you do not **pay attention**, or, rather, the things that you do not pay attention to, will not be remembered.” She pointed out the window; “See the man walking there in the street? He is carrying something. You don’t know what he is carrying. If I ask you tomorrow what he was carrying, you would not know, or would not ‘remember’. If you now pay more attention, you **will** be able to tell me, tomorrow or in a year, what he was carrying. It is up to you what you remember and what you don’t. You were trained to pay attention to church bells, and ignore dreams. But there is no difference in **kind** between the two. Church bells ring only when there is a church around, and dreams occur only when you sleep. You are now in a period of extreme receptiveness. That is why you have so many dreams. You **pay attention** to them. You pay more attention to everything. No. Let me rephrase that. You pay more attention to **yourself**. There is no ‘place’ in which dreams **are** one thing or another. Dreams are part of you, as anything else is. Many people, especially of the western persuasion, do not pay attention to dreams. This is not **wrong**. For them, dreams **do not exist**. It is absurd to say ‘I have dreams, but I do not remember them’. At most, it could be said ‘I **could** have dreams, but I don’t’. Scientists claim that they can determine that a sleeping person **has** a dream, although he later claims to have had none. It is like telling someone ‘you have **pain**, but you do not **feel** it’. Having a dream, like having pain, or any other experience, is inherently subjective, it was not (yet?) added to the domain of **objective** phenomenon. If and when western science will **devise** a theory of dreams, that will conform with the rest of scientific theory, then your question will be answered by **it**. But for now it is outside this domain. Like Astrology, Tarot cards and a thousand other things⁴⁹. Science does not provide a theory, so **you** are left with the decision what it **is**. No one can do it for you”.

⁴⁹ **Ethics** are clearly **outside** the realm of science. It is not part of the objective (scientific) world, as Astrology and Tarot are not. Psychology, particularly versions of *psychoanalysis*, has tried to offer an objective account of phenomena that were, until Freud, considered purely subjective. I believe Ethics **can** be incorporated in a “scientific” theory. But there will be an **ontological** price to pay.

On the connection between Logic and Ethics, Carnap⁸⁸ wrote: “There is no place for ethics in logic. Let every one build his own logic, i.e., the structure of his **language**, as he pleases. But he is obliged to state clearly **what he intends to do**. It is not to ask: ‘Are certain marks (in logic) **permitted**?’ Because what is the point of **permitting**, **if no** ethics are involved?” Carnap is confusing consequent with antecedent: Is the irrelevance of ethics his **premise** or his **conclusion**? He continues: “One must therefore just ask: ‘How shall we **want** to create a particular language? Shall we allow or refuse certain marks?... We are discussing here the **choice** of a certain language structure...” Carnap is **almost** there, although he explicitly denies it. Ethics provides the **basis** for language. It is impossible to adjudicate between languages, or logical systems, by using a **logical** criterion, whereas a **logical** criterion already presupposes the **logic** it belongs to. Allowing or refusing “certain marks” are nothing but the application of such an impossible criterion. The criterion which Carnap himself implicitly applies, is a teleological one: “...*what he intends to do*”. One who proposes a new language, a new logic, must disclose his **motivation**. If we **like** this motivation, we shall embrace the proposed system. If the *telos* seems worthy, the proposal will be accepted. The consideration in picking a language, a logical system, is **moral, ethical**. If it is **good**, it is to be accepted. Two languages may be (internally) consistent, but the **good** one is the **right** one, the one to employ. “Transcendental truth”, which is not system-dependent, is a **moral** truth. Only the **good** is external to every system.

I could not complain. Gaya gave two detailed answers. Now she wanted something in return: “Tell me about your writing”. “I thought you’d never ask” I said. “Really? and I wanted to be polite. Serves me right”. “I am writing more or less about the things we talk about, only **technically**”. I replied; “Philosophy of language, mostly. And logic. Some pseudo-formal logic. And ontology. and Ethics..” Gaya laughed; “You must be kidding. Didn’t you leave anything out?” Again I was surprised by her reaction. “How can you say that! You are the one who taught me that everything is connected, that...” Gaya interrupted. “Sorry, sorry. You are right. It is a western reflex I acquired over the years. Please go on”. “Well, it’s not so absurd. Philosophy of language and logic go hand in hand. My thesis maintains, that the **reference** of language, what language **describes**, is not **ontological**, but **ethical**. I claim that ontology, what **exists**, is a convention, a human construction. On the other hand, **ethics** is primitive. The *Good* is there, *apriori*. Not the world. You know all this stuff. Many people do. I only try to articulate it for my fellow westerns”.

“Nice project” Gaya said. “Ambitious. Many have failed.” I agreed: “Yes, but times change. I see clear signs that western thought is ready for a change. A lot of relativism and pragmatism going round these days. French solipsism⁵⁰ is also gaining ground. Do

⁵⁰ It is now high time, half way into this book, to bring up the term which appears in the title: **Solipsism**. I share Christine Franklin Ladd’s⁸⁹ view: ““I **am** a solipsist; It seems the only coherent epistemological persuasion. I always wondered why there were not more of us around”. The way I understand the term *solipsism*, it applies to Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Derrida (very partial list). Phenomenology⁹⁰ is intrinsically solipsist. Modern French thought is intrinsically solipsist (The only ‘deviation’ they make from pure solipsism is the notion of “*the other*”, the mysterious entity that is **posited** by the French solipsist behind his fellow’s eyes.)

“*Relativists do not, indeed, generally go quite all the way*” Says Hilary Putnam⁹¹ in “*Why is a Philosopher*”. Putnam claims relativism to be self-refuting. However, he implicitly presupposes a realist premise: The independent, shared objective reference. This is hardly surprising, as the term “relativism” is often used as an insult - as a title for a doctrine that is either **futile** or **incoherent** or both. The almost automatic condemnation of relativism is often coupled with the claim that the arguments leading to relativism remain valid all the way to **solipsism**. And as solipsism is evidently a ridiculous position, relativism is too. Maybe solipsism is what frightens Putnam’s relativists who “do not go all the way”. The problem with this reasoning, is that solipsism is so ridiculous, that not much attention has ever been devoted to understand it. In an important way, radical relativists (who more often than not happen to be French) are solipsists; Radical subjectivism (e.g., existentialism) is essentially solipsist. The last thing solipsism is, is **incoherent**. Nevertheless, it is often considered **uninteresting**, and sometimes immoral (or at least **a-moral**).

Solipsism is commonly understood as the denial of the **existence** of anything **outside** the subject. Its rejection is based on a **realist** understanding of the terms “existence” and “outside”. When a solipsist says “I deny the existence of anything outside of me”, he clearly understands those two terms very differently from a realist who counter claims “I affirm the existence of things outside of me”. If the solipsist is sincere in his claim, **his** “existence” is something that he accepts of **himself**, but denies of anything or anyone else. On the other hand, “existence” for the realist is something that he accepts both of himself **and** of other things (including other speakers). The same holds for the second term, “outside”. The solipsist (who is naturally also a phenomenologist) considers the whole world a **part** of him, **inside**, hence his claim there is nothing **outside**. The realist, however, does not consider the phenomena he experiences as a part of himself - he considers them **outside**. (Similar discrepancies prevail for the terms “I” and “anything” appearing in the disputed statement). The argument between the radical relativist (or solipsist) and the realist is a battle

you want to read a small non-academic passage I wrote to demonstrate my view?" "Naturally" said Gaya. I went to my room to bring it. This time Gaya did her own reading. Here it is:

*"Picture A and B both **pointing** to object O, while A utters "this is good", and B utters "this is bad". This situation has **two** possible explanations: The first is based on the prevailing paradigm in the philosophy of language, identifying (at least in this simple case) the **meaning** of "this" with a **physical, objective reference**: A and B share the meaning of "this", but they **differ** in their understanding of "good" and "bad". But there is a second explanation: What if they **do** share the meaning of "good" and "bad"? If they do, they must have **different references** for "this"! This second explanation represents a **challenging paradigm** in the philosophy of language, which does **not** assume **objective reference** - one that accepts **objectivity only** for evaluative, **moral Concepts**. There is no paradox in assuming A and B refer to **different Concepts** while saying "this". On the contrary: their **disagreement** regarding O's value, or desirability, is the best **proof** of this fact. A and B **speak different languages**, while moral judgments are the **yardstick**, the **criterion** for meaningful communication."*

"This is what you call 'not academic'?" asked Gaya when she finished. "Well, I had a version with two of my daughters and a tomato. One of them loves tomatoes, the other does not. Do you think that by 'tomato' they mean the same thing?" Gaya giggled: "**The** same thing? Who is to compare?" I took the page she was reading from, and before putting it in my pocket I noticed the paragraph that came next to the one I marked for her to read. I quickly read it, and returned it to her: "Look at the next paragraph. It is the best explanation of what I think I am doing. I must have written this a year ago".

between paradigms - each employing its own vocabulary. The only hope of conducting a fruitful philosophical debate between two sides that speak different languages, is for one of the parties to agree to put himself in an inferior position by adopting his adversary's language, and try to present his case in a language that is ill-suited for the task. That is precisely what Putnam is doing in the abovementioned article. He is a relativist who wants to **communicate** with realists, to speak their language (i.e., accept their basic metaphysical premise). Putnam undertakes a courageous task - that of an **interpreter**. As such, he places himself in double jeopardy: of being accused by relativists for being a confused realist, and by realists for being a living example of the absurdity of relativism. A perfect example of such criticism from realist circles is provided by Michael Devitt in *Realism & Truth*^{??}. Devitt devotes a whole chapter to the **Renegade Putnam**: Once a realist, who lost his (philosophical) senses and joined the fashionable anti-realist opposition. Devitt is not misled by Putnam's vocabulary: He perfectly understands Putnam's relativism concealed in his "version" of realism. But Putnam is on a mission of mediating, of opening a channel of communication between two alien points of view, and therefore deserves support, rather than criticism..

Putnam is in good company. Quite a few distinguished thinkers share his relativism. Richard Rorty^{??} is a good example of a renunciation of the realist premise. He no longer presupposes objectivity in his thought. Nevertheless, Putnam interprets Rorty as having his own brand of objectivity: of ideas that (objectively) "*pay their way*". In this interpretation, Putnam "blames" Rorty for holding an **objective** notion of truth after all. Putnam seems to sympathize with this view; but Rorty went "too far" in his relativism - to the extent of waiving the realist premise. Putnam gently pulls him back into the ranks of analytic philosophy, by recognizing the (supposedly inevitable) implied **objectivity** in Rorty's position.

*“All philosophers described **concepts**, existent in their minds. They each used **words** to describe their interconnecting concepts. They used **different** words, which is not surprising, as they spoke different languages (**different** in more ways than one). But how different were the **concepts** these words described? I would suspect they were much more **similar** than was ever suspected. Did Plato, when discussing the idea of the good, have a **different** concept in mind, than Spinoza had when discussing God? If **anything** is similar to anything, it is these two concepts (As well as Heidegger’s ‘Dasein’, Hegel’s spirit and others). This similarity is evident from two perspectives: In the **inter-relations** of concepts within each of the corresponding languages, and also from the strong convictions of the corresponding thinkers, expressed very explicitly, even in Wittgenstein’s case. Every **new** philosophy must be able to reconcile all of history’s “competing” philosophical theses, to **translate** them all into **its** language, showing them all to be **isomorphic**.”*

Gaya seemed impressed. “Very nice. Was it a part of a paper?” “No.” I replied. “I wouldn’t dare turn in something like this. I would be expelled. I don’t think anybody has read this before. Maybe my oldest daughter. Or my wife. They go through my stuff sometimes”. “Include it in what you are writing now” said Gaya. “As it is. It has a nice rhythm, and it’s short”. So I did.

I went for lunch to my regular place, and had my regular toast. I was paying attention. I watched the people walking in the streets. Two old ladies were walking down the street, arm in arm. One was old, the other **very** old. The very old one was speaking to the other. Not speaking, **shouting**. She must have been hard of hearing, or without control over the pitch of her voice. As they were passing by me, I had a short conversation with the less old one. She apologized for the yelling, and explained that the old lady, probably her mother, is a little crazy (or hard of hearing, or both), and look what she has to put up with. She said it good naturally, not as a complaint. I nodded and we both laughed. The whole conversation was in Dutch. Well, I didn’t do much speaking. But I understood. Everything. At least everything relevant, everything **important**. I thought to myself, that one does not have to know the meaning of single words to speak a language. He must have an understanding of **situations**. **Human** situations. In this case, Dutch situations. I started to understand the people, Their **attitude**, not the particular sounds they happen to utter on a particular occasion. The same occasion fits infinitely many combinations of

^o Putnam identifies the problem of **representation** (or the lack of it..) with the problem of **intentionality**. The positivist reductionism does not cohere with the (personal, subjective) phenomenon of intentionality. Intentionality is not **observable**. It cannot be verified; It does not “fit” into the positivist worldview. Intentionality cannot be denied, therefore something must be wrong with positivism. The relativists, on the other hand, have no feud with intentionality; On the contrary: relativism is **based** on this intuitive notion. Relativism denies the **objectivity** of the object of intentionality, not intentionality itself. If it was not for intentionality, the problem would not have arisen. The debate concentrates on the question “what **is** the subject’s intentionality directed **towards**?” Aristotle’s answer was “to the **objective** world”, to **reality**, and (almost) everyone followed suit. The relativists, on the other hand, deny the need for an **external** object of intentionality. It is intentionality **itself** that is the subject of their investigations.

words, but there is only one situation, one thing to understand. If you got **that**, you got everything.

Two men came down the street. They seemed like workmen, returning from their lunch break. I looked in their eyes, although they didn't notice me. One of them was clearly drunk, although he walked and acted straight. But I saw the alcohol in his eyes. They were misty, a bit unfocused. He seemed in a good mood, looking around him in interest. He looked pretty much like me, constantly looking up and around at the beauty of Edam. But in his case it was different. Edam looked interesting to him because he was **drunk**, sedated, stoned. And then it hit me: That is what drugs do! They enhance the feeling, the one Gaya preaches for, that **It is (all) You!** The man in the street knew he was tipsy. He must have done it thousands of times before. He knew the feeling: The world looks slightly different. Among other things, more interesting. His drunkenness paints the world in a slightly more favorable color. By drinking, he knows he can change the world for a little while; Change it into something a little more enjoyable. The objective world is hard and cruel. There is nothing he can do about it. But there is! He takes a drink and changes the world. It always helps. The world **does** change. True, they say that it **actually** doesn't, but who cares when you're drunk! By drinking, the man takes charge of his own, **personal** world, and changes it to be more pleasant. Drinking enhances the eastern, solipsist attitude: It ignores **the real** world, and "artificially" creates a more friendly environment.

The man does not really need the drink to change the world into what it becomes when he drinks. But **he doesn't know that**. He's been told that there are no "private" worlds, just one big public one. And it is unchangeable, at least not significantly, definitely not by a hard working Dutch workman. But if one drinks, he is told, certain things happen **to him**. What **actually** (ha ha!) happens to him, that his inhibitions drop. He is not as much tied down by the dogmas he was raised under. He lets himself go; creates a nicer reality. In the case of heavy drinking or stronger drugs, a **much** nicer reality. What drugs do, is they "officially" transfer **control** over reality, from "nature" or "the outside", to its rightful **owner**: To oneself. This is why drugs were never a serious problem in the east, most of its drugs production intended for export. Because drugs do what for them comes naturally: They unite the person with his world. This is also why drugs and alcohol are so dangerous (excessive good!): At first, they do wonders: You feel as good as can be. But the addict does not **know** that it is him. He thinks it is the chemical. He **endows** the

° Putnam makes **Quine**, on the other hand, much more relativistic than Quine seems to have intended. He interprets Quine's holism and his deflationary notion of truth as evidence for his (almost **French!**) relativism. Putnam does not attempt to uncover Quine's hidden "objectivity", as he does Rorty's. Instead, he feels protected enough to walk with Quine "all the way" to the wilderness, only to discover the horrifying **solipsism** awaiting at the end of the path. Quine, although a self-proclaimed devoted empiricist, is **too relativistic** even for Putnam. As an empiricist, Quine accepts the objectivity of reference; But as a holist, his deflationary **truth** renders **truth** system dependent, **relative**. Putnam, on the other hand, takes an opposite position, similar to that of Davidson: Insist on an objective, explanatory notion of truth, and still reject the objectivity of reference.

chemical with a wondrous **property**, the capacity to bring about a magnificent feeling. And science backs this story. In fact, the addict creates a world, in which there is one **good** chemical, the remainder a bad, vague bore. And this is the world he is stuck with. And it is **reality**, sheer reality: That is the world he created for himself; This is the man he is. Drugs **make it happen**; They enhance **subjectivity**, and thus present a major danger to the objective world. That is why the objective world defends itself against them. They are 'restricted materials', like explosives: They make an important contribution, in certain circumstances they are essential, but yet extremely dangerous, if not properly handled. At the same time, drug abuse is the ultimate manifestation of an objective-materialist *worldview*: It is the attribution of the extreme **good** (feeling) into a material **substance** (and, consequently, also the extreme **bad**).