Günther’s work consists chiefly in a plan of a Philosophy of Logic. Rather than being a finished systematic construction of a new logical $n$-valent calculus, its strength lies on the capacity to critically depict the ontological and grammatical foundations of the traditional binary logical mentality. It goes further than propositional Logic. Its object is also different from a conventional propositional calculus.

In the development of his project, Günther connects the need for the examination of the foundations of philosophical Logic with the emergence of research fields and philosophic horizons justifying new tools for the understanding of new difficulties.

I’ll summarize some of these new problems in the following:

- the discussion of the topic “order from noise” (cf. Günther’s comments on H. von Foerster’s vs. Schrödinger’s solutions to the problem of the coming out of life) and the formation of systemic boundaries in life morphogenesis;
- the temporal and reflexive horizon of the objects of the Geisteswissenschaften (discussions of the so-called “Positivismusstreit”);
- the reflexive object of Cybernetics and the logical problems raised by the new language of machine self-control (see the evolution of the theoretical writings on the foundations of Cybernetics since the 40’s);
- a reassessment to the “solutions” for some paradoxes on the foundations of Meta-mathematics and the problems concerning the relation of Mathematics to Logic (see the

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1 The present study is a partial development of the research project on “Individuation of Modern and Contemporary Society” and preserves the essential argument of the initial oral presentation at the International Conference Beziehungen des Selbst – Selbstreferentielle Prozesse in Philosophischen Perspektiven, Coimbra, 12-14 March 2009.


discussions between intuitionists and formalists since the beginning of the XX century until Gödel’s papers⁴);

- the problem left open by Hegel and the German Classical Philosophy, generally speaking, of the construction of a system of logic adapted to the description of subjectivity, consciousness and reflexion.

 Günther’s ideas on Philosophy of Logic came from two important books (1933 and 1959): one on Hegel’s Logik and a Treatise on a “non-aristotelic “ Logic⁵.

From these beginnings resulted a narrative about the actual situation of the logical investigations which tries to depict how binary thinking is anchored on ontological prejudices concerning the form of the articulation of Being and Thought.

The affirmation of the binary oppositions Being /Thought, Being / non-Being, Being / Reflexion is a pre-socratic delineation which the Aristotelic syllogistic formalism consolidates.

According to Günther’s narrative even the calculus with functions is aristotelic, because it doesn’t defy the well-established consensus of the Metaphysics of Identity and the dualism of its departure point. Thus, in logical matters, what is “aristotelic” is the habit to represent any logical calculus as a set of operations based on binary exclusive combinations reinforced by the “excluded third” principle.

On the other side, excepting other remarkable cases, in the History of Philosophy the so-called “German Idealism” was especially attentive to the limitations of the binary calculus and to the limitations of its identity concept.

From Kant to Hegel one is able to follow essays in order to show why “formal validity” is never an isolated formal validity, but has always ontological underpinnings.

The Hegelian ideas about the conceptual unit of reflexivity, negativity and subjective-objective identity show that the aristotelic legacy represents a calculus with a very limited ontological depth, even if effective and successful.

The XX century separation of the Logistic field from Philosophy leads to a deliberate denial of the Hegelian interrogations but also to the paradoxical result of a general suspicion regarding the possibility and the need of a Philosophy of Logic.

As a consequence, thanks to the unsatisfactory responses to the Hegelian challenges contemporary Philosophy went into directions apparently freed from logical concerns, for instance in the so-called “existentialism”, obeying to claims for a thought abstracted from logical constraints or logical rules.

Technical specialized Logistics denying an appropriate Philosophy of Logic and the belief on a thought without logical rules are two faces of the same medal.

In his own description of the nihilistic drive of an hegelianized existentialism, Günther observes (Idee und Grundriß einer nicht-Aristotelischen Logik) that this is an episodic, regional or provincial historical result of European culture and has no “world validity” (Weltgültig).

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