The dilemma as a prerequisite of truth according to Mezirow and Aristotle.

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Abstract: The present study aims to point out the dialectical course of knowledge towards the truth through the comparison of two representatives of dialogue according to the philosophy of education. The dilemma constitutes the core issue, as it is a crucial condition of reference towards a change of stance and orientation during a person's lifetime. The dilemma, as a dominant reference throughout the reasoning course of thought, contributes to the promotion of critical controls through the course towards the truth, as it brings about a reflective pursuit in times of crisis.

More specifically, both Aristotle and Mezirow attempt, each one from a different starting point and with a different pursuit, to engage in dialogue, through the critical accuracy of their reasoning and thought, to form those questions, which will constitute their way of reference to the truth. For this approach, the dilemma constitutes a starting point and at the same time a dynamic procedure that inseminates man's course towards the truth. In this way, we attempted to reflect on the dilemma as it appears in the two philosophical mindsets and proposed individual conclusive determinants, which will engage in further dialogue with these research approaches.

Key words: problem, dilemma, truth, aporia, reflection

Introduction

The present study attempts a parallel presentation of the concept of dilemma in the thoughts of both Aristotle and Mezirow. The former approachis connected with the dialectic of Aristotle while the latter is related to the transformative theory of Mezirow with the aim of forming a framing of their theoretical presentations. The purpose of the authoring undertaking is to point out the ongoing continuation of dialogue and thought so that a further prolific dialogue on the projections of the Self on the "becoming" of our world can be created. In other words, our attempt focuses on associating the Aristotelian dialectic with the consideration of the notion of dilemma as stated inMezirowin order to demonstrate the encounter of the Self with its dialectic projections.

The search for truth has been of course a constant concern in philosophical thought, (the continuation of thought, that is) in order to define the essence of life and the world. Aristotle picks up the baton from Plato in his quest for truth through conversation (Plato, *Phaidon*: 91b). During the dialectic course in the search for truth and its identification, dialogue is for-

mulated and through dialogue speakers come to a meeting of minds in terms of control and communion. As noted by Plato "but if, like you and me on this occasion, we were friends and chose to have a discussion together, I should have to reply in some milder tone suited to dialectic. The more dialectical way, I suppose, is not merely to answer what is true, but also to make use of those points which the questioned person acknowledges he knows" (Plato, *Menon*: 75d).

A parallel examination of the two thinkers,who belong to separate time periods and different milieus,is related to their shared propositionconcerning the dialogue with our own self. Thus, the Aristotelian "βούλευσινκαιπροαίρεσιν" (deliberation and choice) (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*: 113a.11-14) constitutes a deliberate action, which expresses the way weadminister possibilities which are available to us in order to reach a conscious decision. The same action is suggested by Mezirow as well, since he includes dilemma in the procedure of solving a problemin the course of transformative learning.

The questions we are to examine are connected with the reasoning of the dilemma during its delivery and concern the procedure of speculation that the person has to face each particular time. Hence, one might pose the following questions with reference tothe goals that have been set in the present study: in which way is the dilemma formed according to Aristotle and Mezirow? In which way is the person assisted by the dilemma mentioned above? Does the dilemma constitute a way of reading ourselves?

Therefore, we attempt, in the first place, to examine the dialectic of Aristotle in terms of forming a problem and then to peer the same problem from the perspective of transformative learning. On both occasions we examine dilemma, namely the Aristotelian "aporia" so that the dialectic formerly brought forward, will constitute a theoretical-philosophical proposition in the field of Adult Educationand butwith regard to*phronesis* (wisdom) (an intellectual human virtue) according to Aristotle.

1. The dialectic as a method of problem- solving

Dialogic talk has been a crucial condition of dominance in both judicial and political struggles and it has also been a method of logic. The dialectic process bears a systematized form in Aristotle's book of *Topics* (Aristotle, *Topics*, 105b.30) (it is an essay on dialectic which defines the ways of utilizing opinions through arguments). In this way, Aristotle composes a method for the investigation of truth through its detachment from metaphysics. Thus, the logical inference goes through the object and projects the truth of content. Hence, dialectic constitutes the logic of the possible against the necessary.

Moving on from the Socratic questioning to the Platonic hypothesis, dialectic sets a systematic methodunder critical controlin order toapproach truth in terms of scientific knowledge. The platonic dialectic is orientated towards the idea of Good, since truth constitutes knowledge of ideas which reveal themselves through the elevation of the intellect to the supersensory world.

Knowledge, as a memory, is a crucial dialectic function thus constituting a mental exercise during which listeners are expected to become more resilient and more inventive in order to "discover through reasons" (Plato, *Politics*: 287a).

According to Aristotle (Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations*: I, 8-9, 17b, 8-11), dialectic constitutes a crucial condition of arguments whichforms the interrogative determinants of aporia, in order to pose the suitable aporia each time according to the searching proposition that is put forward. In particularly, Aristotle notes that "a dialectical proposition is a question which accords with the opinion held by everyone or by the majority or by the wise" (Aristotle, *Topics*: A 10, 104a, 8-9).

According to the way of methodological mode of speech, that is to say, we attempt to select the optimum proposition among the endoxa (reputable opinions), so as to rescue the analogy of man to things as he retains his course towards the truth. The course towards the conquest of knowledge goes through the senses and during memories penetrates experience and moves towards science. The Aristotelian course is described in the following way: "thus sense perception gives rise to memory, as we hold and repeated memories of the same thing give rise to experience" (Aristotle, *Analytics Posterior*: B19).

The problem, on the other hand, constitutes the locus of using dialectic (Aristotle, *Topics:* A, 104, b 1-5), so that there is a recursion to the endoxa, that is the prior solutions to the problem (Raphael, 1974), but, moreover, to set an aporia (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*: B 995, a 24) which will lead the individual to a dead end (lack of resource) and then to a dilemma (which of the two) as far as the possibilities of our options are concerned (Salkever, 2007). Thus, aporia as a dilemmatic proposition (Politis, 2004) is able to establish, in this case, a remonstrative proposition, which does not concern solely the previous facets of a condition, but contributes to the creation of anew *space*of problem recordings and suitable approaches.

It is a kind of surprise, a feeling of admiration towards the world, which is part of an interrogative disposition-attitude of the individual regarding world interpretation. Thequestions raise an objection as far as individual arguments are concerned reducing them to problems "but that is not an essential error. These considerations must, then, be keptin view in meeting the charges contained in these objections" (Aristotle, *Poetics:* 1460b: 21-22). The existing interrogations, that is to say, explore the logical and dilemmatic posing of the problem thus forming a doubtful meaning, which marvels at the individual opposing sides, in order to cure the gnostic components of the above problem.

The problem as an interrogative proposition, therefore, is solved through the production of arguments which lie either for or against individual opinions. As a result, aporia and problem compose the canvas of the dialectic course by analyzing the particulars to universalsthus causing the inductive method as a reasoning course of producing arguments (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*: 1356a, 35-36-b, 1-6).

The above reasoning constitutes a fundamental type on which the progress of notions is based and evidence is formed. The reasoning course depicts the reason according to which we are

able to deduce conclusions from the presuppositions set above. Hence, reasoning according to Aristotle "is a discussion in which certain things having been laid down, something other than these things necessarily results through them" (Aristotle, *Topics*: A, 100a). The evidence, then, provides the definition and its resulting divisions, a definition which is confirmed through induction.

Dialectic, as can be deduced from the above, does not come under a unique way of mental exercise and communication through its interrogative nature, but poses the premises of a problemin order to pass through the truth posing control as a criterion of its quest. The critical control which is being attempted through the above reasoning, promotes those examinable routes, which contribute to the construction of a common space of reasoning assumptions. Thus, dialectical reasoning assists mental exercise, accidental encounters and conversations and philosophical sciences (Aristotle, *Topics*: A 101a, 27-28).

The quest of the essence concerning *τιονείναισημαίνον(*Aristotle*, Topics*: 101a) deduces a causal pattern, which is orientated to the definition of knowledge producing ontological questions. What is examined is actually the way in which it is necessary to know the *ov*.The examination of the causes (that is the quest of a token of correctness for the conquered knowledge) and their epistimological reference constitutes Ontology as a scientific field.

Aristotelian ontology is composed around a causal construction which defines the procedure of knowledge based on the central ontological question the *τιονείναι*. It is about the causal science, which attributes the knowledge of the essence of the *ov* in an interrogative way. Ontology and questioning put forward a reasoning course towards the truth by forming a critical proposition of the opposing sides.

2. The notion of Dilemma in Transformative Learning

The course towards the truth does not constitute solely a privilege of philosophical thought. On the contrary, it actually passes through theoretical references of adult education during the learning process, as well. More specifically, Mezirow proposes a reflective course towards the truth through which we transform our previous convictions. The impact of Freire on the development of Mezirow's set of thoughts, has to do with the encouragement of critical consciousness by analyzing questions and by assuming social action based on dialogue and critical consciousness (Freire, 1973; Taylor, 1998; Harris et al, 2008). In other words, the socratic*τιεστιν*and the aristotelian*τιονείναι*is brought back in this investigation of consciousness highlighting the social dimension of the question. In these terms, as was the case in the aristotelian proposition above, dialogue is included as a channel of prolific reassessment of our convictions.

In the current condition of reassessing our previous convictions a problem is also detected – the problem of discovering the distortions we are experiencing. So, critical reflection constitutes a crucial process in the problem solving procedure as long as it reframes initial reason-

ing and assumptions and encourages the adoption of a critical viewing of our previous distorted beliefs (Fisher, 2003; Lough, 2009). The dissatisfaction, the problem results from our dysfunctions and also from our difficulty to adapt to the new conditions we discovered during the forming of our new perceptions.

This means that our cognitive assumptions as well as our moral convictionshave an effect on the sense making of our experiences. The above frames of reference become dysfunctional during our interaction with different attitudes and interpretive convictions. In this case it is possible to reexamine our viewpoint and interpretive conviction by casting doubt on our previous set of values (Nohl, 2015).

The above procedure passes through certain phases during which transformation takes place (Mezirow, 2000; Reiman et al., 1997;Nohl, 2015). In this way we can inspect the course of our life as far as our values and interpretive approaches are concerned. The existing meaningful patterns – totals, which no longer constitute a viable starting point, are transformed into new viewpoints thus reassessing our initial scope. Tie critical procedure comes to the fore and proposes a procedure of self reflection, which activates a new course of action. This means that our way of receiving previous established convictions under a specific social and cultural milieu is called into question. In other words, the codified edifice which we had constructed during our previous assessments is unsettled. In this way, our previous experience is decoded and reflective thought on terms of rational management of our experiences is made necessary (Christie, 2015).

The point at which our initial convictions are being examined is the disorientating dilemma (the Aristotelian aporia, in other words), which can be the result of an enlightening conversation or of a work of art during contacting a different culture of thought and attitude. In this way, because of a crisis experienced during our life (Mezirow, 1978; Malkki, 2012) those conditions are formed which can *ram* our initial assumptions and reshape our opinions towards a totally different and unprecedented direction of our life (Laros, 2017; Tayrol, 2000). The intellectual models which can ram are those in which we can find "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures and images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (Senge, 1990, p. 8).

In which way does the transition from a chaotic and disorientating situation –since crisis creates an emotional chaos (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2005) - to a more definable sense making of our life take place? In other words, in which ways is dilemma connected with the transition mentioned above? The dimensions of social (Baumgartner, 2002) and emotional situation (Dirkx, 2001, 2008) constitute a significant part both of the forming of the disorientating dilemma and of the transformation of our previous thoughts (Taylor, 2000). A deeper understanding of our emotions contributes to a more conscious reception of our experiences and at the same time reinforces our self knowledge.

The restructuring of our earlier sense makings passes through the relations we build and through the emotional satisfaction we receive from the way of interpreting our life (Taylor,

2000; Roberts, 2006). As Sands and Tennant (2010) note that the moment you are taking off your shoes you negotiate with the terms of your lost story and you give new sense to the past notions of your life using new signifieds and following a new proposal of life. In this sense making from scratch we can find the intellectual dimension, as is proposed by Mezirow and has been registered by individual reviews as well (Illeris, 2004, 2007; Tayror, 2000, 2007; Holmes, 2015) concerning the above mentioned connection with our emotions and experiences.

Prolific dialogue and exploitation of the experience of the others constitute crucial presuppositions for the reassessment of our previous convictions and the formation of a new perception concerning the sense remaking of our actions (Moore, 2009). However, reflection is not part of an established attitude, since, even during the assumption of new actions, it creates new dilemmas, which can redefine the way of our perceiving life.

Consequently, the dialectic of our life conditions constantly forms new islets of conceptualizations ("cognitive survival"), so that we can negotiate on the new terms of our life (Boud& Walker, 1998). The formation of a new perspective, as Mezirow (2000) notes,is the result of our overcoming a crisis and accepting a new life.

The way in which dialectic restructuring of our meanings is realized is not connected solely with our reasoning propositions in the way they are connected with their logical expression but also with critical control, as it enhances the meaning of our life. It is a process of sense making which is made possible when we incorporate new meanings in our existing experience (Mezirow 2000).

Conversation

In the above examination of two approaches both of which concern the course towards the truth, the issue of dilemma was set in the centre of our analysis as a term of reasoning and existential reference. In this way, it forms a continual feedback of our thoughtin the course of the *ov* towards the truth. In Aristotle, it constitutes an interrogative expression of thought by controlling the impending propositions, while in Mezirow it follows the course of aporia, but it is not subject to the reasoning of an a prioriproof procedure but gives sense to our life by transforming previous distorted notions.

The Aristotelian view, on the one hand, is based on the dialectic of reasoning and produces ontological questions while the view of Mezirow includes a psychological-emotional proposition and brings change on ontological terms. It is not possible to claim that Mezirow follows Aristotle or that Aristotle poses interrogative propositions of psychological nature. Dilemma, however, constitutes a mutual position and forms the terms of existential quest. This means that aporia composes a set of questions, which place being in a new dialogue both with itself and withothers.

The comparative examination of the two thinkers was not a random one as it constituted a crucial question regarding the discovery of truth during the examination of reflection in the field of adult education. Critical control and aporia are in dialogue with the experience of adults thus forming a dynamic course towards the truth of being and redefining the set claus-es of their lives. Aristotle, on the other hand, following the way in which human thought is organized , did not only chart previous endoxa but also analyzed the way in which the *ον*refers to the discovery of truth. Hence, the examination of the two thinkers leads to the pro-duction of new questions within academic dialogue and during the investigation of our course as human beings.

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