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ON FEYERABEND'S PRAGMATIC THEORY OF OBSERVATION

Feyerabend's philosophy performs special role in the contemporary discussions concerning "nature" of science and its place in human cognitive activity. This special role consists not only of criticism of scientism as a chauvinistic ideology does, but also of indication of some reorganization of our culture. This reorganization is to secure the freedom of a subjective thinking. According to Feyerabend this freedom is his main metaphysical foundation. Basing on this foundation he criticizes other philosophies and formulates his own one.

I

The starting point of Feyerabend's philosophy is his theory of experience which has been the most clearly presented in his pragmatic theory of observation. In this theory Feyerabend accepts foundation that he calls cosmological hypothesis "that there exists a real objective world that contains human observers, and that sensations, but not thoughts, are highly correlated with events in this world"¹. The author maintains that some general cosmological hypothesis is accepted by every philosophy. Postulated correlation between human sensations and objective world the author explains by comparing them with indications of a measuring instrument. Indications of the automatic devices are causally determined by an event of the ob-

¹ P. K. Feyerabend, Problems of Empiricism, [in:] Beyond the Edge of certainty, ed. Colodny Englewood Cliffs, New York 1965, p. 213.

jective world but without help of some theory, which interprets these indications, they are meaningless, and it is impossible to associate them with the events of the real world. Similarly, our uninterpreted sensations are meaningless, desintegrated and completely incomprehensible. The meaning of our verbal behaviour and the structure of our sensation give only a theory, which interprets them. The theory, which arranges our sensations into experimental facts and our verbal behaviours into meaningful statements, is completely independent of real, objective world, freely created by a knowing subject.

The idea presented above exists in the foundation of the pragmatic theory of observation. This theory has been the most clearly put forward in his paper "An Attempt at a Realistic Interpretation of Experience"². According to this idea sensations and verbal behaviours causally determined by a real world are termed by Feyerabend on observational language. This language is completely characterized by the following conditions: pragmatic conditions and interpretation. Generally speaking, pragmatic conditions are to qualify in what physical situations and to what sort of observers a certain atomic sentence is observational. Feyerabend formulates four pragmatic conditions as follows:

"It is demanded that for every atomic sentence a (of a class A) of the language considered there exists a situation s (a so-called appropriate situation) such that every C, when presented with a in s will run through a series of states and operations which terminated either in the acceptance of a or its rejection by the C chosen. This we call the condition of decidability. Any series of the kind mentioned will be called a C-series associated with a or simply an associated series. The function correlating atomic sentence with associated series will be called the associating function of the language concerned and it will be designated by the letter F. - Secondly, it is demanded that in the appropriate situation the associated series should be passed through fairly quickly. This we call the condition of quick decidability. - Thirdly, we

² P. K. Feyerabend, An Attempt at a Realistic Interpretation of Experience, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series, 58, 1958, p. 143-170.

shall have to stipulate that if (in an appropriate situation) an atomic sentence is accepted (or rejected) by some C, it will be accepted (or rejected) by (nearly) every C. This we call the condition of unanimous decidability. - Finally, we must stipulate that the decision made be (causally) dependent upon the situation and not only upon the atomic sentence presented or the internal state of the C chosen. This we call the condition of relevance. Any function correlating situations with either acceptance or rejection of a given sentence will be called a relevance-function and it will be designated by the letter R³.

The four conditions presented above thoroughly characterize pragmatic properties of the considered language since these conditions correlate every atomic sentence with a class of observers C, an associating function F, a physical situation S and a relevance-function R. Shortly, the pragmatic properties of a certain observational language may be completely characterized by a class (C, A, S, F, R) which Feyerabend calls the characteristic of an observational language. By means of this characteristic Feyerabend defines the notion of the class of the observational sentences as follows: "we may say, that, given three classes, A, C and S, the class A will be called a class of observable sentences (used by observers C in situation S) only if, unanimous and relevant decision with respect to those A for which the chosen S is appropriate"⁴.

We have already mentioned that Feyerabend's notion of the observable language is used in a meaning that exceeds its common understanding. This notion denotes not only human utterances but also indications of instruments as well as our sensations. Observational sentences understood in that way are meaningless in contradistinction to the observational statements. The difference between observational sentences and observational statements Feyerabend illustrates with the help of the following example: watching the movement of an indicator, any measuring instrument or any automatic device, which according to Feyerabend is identical with a production

³ Ibid., p. 144-145.

⁴ Ibid., p. 145.

of a sentence, we don't know what these instruments measure without further conditions exceeding the pragmatic conditions. Whereas we only know that a movement of an indicator is causally determined by a certain physical situation. These further conditions Feyerabend calls the interpretation. Thanks to this interpretation the physical events, described by their characteristic, become meaningful utterances. In Feyerabend's opinion "the interpretation of an observation-language is determined by the theories which we use to explain what we observe"⁵. This thesis is called by Feyerabend the contextual theory of meaning. This thesis maintains that a sentence makes as many observational statements as many different theories there are which explain the considered events. Every time these theories give the different meanings to the same sequence of sound that is the observational sentence.

According to the above consideration the pragmatic theory of observation definitively deprives an experimental fact of the meaning of the "independent data". As such an observational sentence without an interpretation has not any meaning so an observational situation without an interpretation isn't any fact or object. An uninterpreted observational situation contains only sensations which arise from the real world. From these sensations perceived objects of various types can be constituted according to what theory is accepted.

In this way we are approaching the fundamental distinction in this ontology and epistemology namely: "we must distinguish between appearances (i.e. phenomena) and the things appearing (the things referred to by the observational sentences in a certain interpretation). This distinction is characteristic of realism"⁶.

Appearances of the real objective world are the sensations and verbal behaviours "highly correlated with events in this world"⁷. By no means, these appearances reflect cognitively the stimuli of the objective world. Nobody knows what they mean, they can't be described and even cannot be realized.

⁵ Ibid., p. 163..

⁶ Ibid., p. 164.

⁷ Feyerabend, Problems..., p. 216.

Uninterpreted effects of observation that is appearances of objective world are absolutely no facts which have either structure or sense. The structure and meaning provide them only a theory which converts them into objects or statements. A change of a theory leads inevitably to the change of perceived world and meanings of the observational statements and terms.

After all the notions used by us such as: a theory, a phenomenon, a statement come into being - as Feyerabend's claims - in result of abstract divisions of initially homogenous event. In Feyerabend's conviction the reproach to the abstractness is concerned in making an arbitrary division of something what doesn't stand any division adequate to its "essence" at all.

"To start with, we must become clear about the nature of the total phenomenon: appearance plus statement. There are not two acts - one noticing a phenomenon, the other, expressing it with the help of the appropriate statement - but only one viz. saying in a certain observational situation "the moon is following me" or "the stone is falling straight down"⁸.

According to the author the unity of this total phenomenon is a result of learning a language which containing theoretical points of views in itself, provides interpretation of sensations as well as sentences. We may even say that the unity of an interpretation ensures the unity of the whole phenomenon mentioned above. According to this point of view, theories which imply the appropriate interpretations are the ways of seeing the world. The theories are created and then abandoned in result of criticism that originates from alternatives. Eventually the acceptance of a new theory is a change of the image of the perceived world as well as the meaning of the observational statements. In an extreme situation, when a new theory differs radically from a previous one, that is in case of so-called incommensurable theories, observational statements as well as ontologies are incompatible. This thesis about the ontological and semantic incomparability of the incommensurable theories is a consequence of accepting the

⁸ P. K. Feyerabend, *Against Method*, New Left Books, London 1975, p. 72.

pragmatic theory of observation and the contextual theory of meaning. In accordance with ideas, the meaning of the statements as well as the organizations of the sensations into the certain picture of the world are completely dependent on the accepted theoretical point of view. The various points of views are accepted by a knowing subject in a less or more conscious manner. Generally speaking, every perception of the world or a meaningful statement implies a certain theory because a theory mediates every experience.

Summing it up, the pragmatic theory of observation establishes the point from which not only the essence of the cognitive research appears to us in a new perspective but also the problem of obtaining the most efficient progress of knowledge.

The pragmatic theory of observation rejects the widespread conviction of a decisive role of an experience in a cognitive evaluation of importance of a theory. As facts of an experience are theoretical constructs so their comparison with "their own" theory is not the very efficient way of testing them. This way can only serve to mask difficulties, as for instance, with the help of ad hoc hypothesis. The limitation of this theory can be demonstrated only in confrontation with others points of view. Thus the most effective way of testing any theory is the criticism which arises from different points of view. On the other hand, the wrong way of conducting scientific researches is the accumulating of facts which conform to a theory. This is why the main principle of Feyerabend's philosophy is an appeal for proliferation of theories.

In Feyerabend's opinion this principle is confirmed not only by his analysis of processes of cognition but also by history of science. The examples from history of science presented by the author are to show that the significant progress in science took place only when a different radical theory appeared. It enables us to notice these facts which are inconsistent with an old, generally accepted point of view.

Estimating attainments of human thought which belong to many different cultures, Feyerabend sees in them the origin of alternative theories in relation to modern science. These alternatives are the components of myths, modern prejudices, witchcrafts, religious beliefs, metaphysics and even fantasies of

cranks. They contain theories of different stages of progression but they contributed or may contribute to the development of our knowledge, assuming that they get an equal chance of their development.

Demanding an equal opportunity of development for every opinion which was, is, or will be propagated at any time independently of any intellectual and even moral doubts which this point may raise in us, Feyerabend proclaims a radical theoretical pluralism. He opposes this to the idea of a cumulative progress of our knowledge. This idea is a result of metaphysical conviction that we have a possibility of an open contact with the Being. The conviction that the real, objective world is open, at least in part, to our cognitive faculties makes it possible to accumulate objective knowledge. This conviction is according to Feyerabend not only false but also harmful since an antypluralistic philosophy of science threatens further development of whole culture of mankind and it impoverishes science. It eliminates from the vision of scientists alternative theories with the help of various kinds of indoctrination procedures, for instance, by persuading that alternatives are meaningless, unscientific or contradictory to human nature.

Meanwhile, rejecting alternatives we deprive ourselves of the only means of a critical examination of a prevailing theory which is a really efficient way of examining it. Of course, when a certain opinion is generally accepted, then this state is presented as an evidence that we are on the right track of a theory which draws us closely to the real face of Being. But the cost we would pay for this illusion would be the stagnation of monothoretical culture.

Feyerabend is convinced that the threat of stagnation is a real danger as our culture may become an unnoticeably monothoretical one. The commonly accepted theoretical point of view is contemporary science. It is considered to be the only way of the cognition of reality. Not only scientists contribute to the supremacy of contemporary science but also these philosophers who interpret the whole history of mankind's knowledge as a one-way process aiming at the most advanced level, i.e. modern science.

The most known interpretation of this kind is Popper's metaphor of the upturned tree of knowledge. Popper describes the tree of knowledge as springing from countless roots which grow up into the air than down, and which ultimately, high up, tend to unite all branches into one common stem. This stem symbolizes our objective knowledge. If Feyerabend intended to use an ecological metaphor, he would claim that our culture grows as a forest. In this metaphor an individual tree or a plant symbolize an alternative point of view in a different stage of its growth. The popperian tree of objective knowledge is the only one among them and on account of special cultivation it has become the most imposing and expansive one. But now by its imbalance, deterioration, decay and stagnation it may be a danger to the whole environment.

We can avoid this disaster only by guaranteeing freedom of personal thought. According to Feyerabend the security of thought's freedom will result in inventing various new theories and methodologies as well as in developing the old ones. By the way, we must remember that every alternative theory has its own methodology. For this reason methodological rules have limited extent in the development of our cognition. In result of these limitations of every methodology all attempts to find transcendental rules or laws of development of our knowledge become unsuccessful for such transcendental rules, principles or laws simply do not exist. Looking at the whole culture of mankind, Feyerabend claims that only one rule exists where progress of knowledge takes place. He calls this rule "anything goes". According to it every product of human thought should be developed by those research workers who highly appreciate it.

Following this rule without any exception demands social reforms, the fundamental premise of which is freedom of any subject in inventing and developing theoretical interpretations of appearances. According to Feyerabend, freedom of subject's thought, his activity and spontaneity is the absolute value which is worthy of a defence by all attainable means⁹. For

⁹ This problem I discuss in a paper of mine Utopia against Method, "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 1983, nr 3, p. 119-140 (in polish).

this reason Feyerabend calls his philosophy an epistemological anarchism. As it benefits the genuine anarchist, Feyerabend believes that culture, in which the principle "anything goes" will be commonly accepted, is the only one which helps man to achieve genuine human dignity and as such it is worthy of introducing even by force.

II

Presenting Feyerabend's philosophy I have tried to show that his controversial thesis concerning the role of an experience in criticism of a theory, incommensurability of theoretical points of views or epistemological anarchism are the consequences of his adoption of the pragmatic theory of observation.

Generally speaking, this theory is an attempt to characterize human verbal behaviours which are causally determined by Being. This kind of verbal behaviour is called by the author observational language. As we remember this language is characterized by two classes of conditions: pragmatic conditions and interpretation. According to Feyerabend, these conditions are to define completely different properties of any language: "The distinction between the pragmatic properties of a language and its interpretation is clear and unambiguous"¹⁰.

It is worth thinking it over whether it is really so as Feyerabend states because cohesion of fundamental assumptions of his philosophy and rightness of his conclusions depend on the answer of this question.

We are going to start our critical analysis from comments concerning pragmatic conditions.

1. Formulating his partial definition of the expression "observational sentence" Feyerabend explains it with the help of following expressions: "atomic sentence", "appropriate situation", "acceptance of an atomic sentence" etc. Let's try to examine the meaning of these expressions.

Speaking about an atomic sentence, Feyerabend means in some

¹⁰ Feyerabend, *An Attempt...*, p. 146.

formulations a sequence of sounds that is a physical event which has a spatio-temporal characteristic, in others - an abstract object which is a class of these events. This ambiguity can be easily eliminated for instance by reserving the term "atomic sentence" for an abstract object while for an atomic sentence that is a physical event, we can use the term "realization of an atomic sentence". Employing this differentiation, we can formulate the condition of decidability for example as follows: "It is demanded that for every atomic sentence a (of class A) of the language considered there exists a situation s (a so-called appropriate situation) such that every C, when presented with a realization of a in s will run through a series of states and operations which terminates either in the acceptance of the realization of a or in its rejection by the C chosen". Of course, employing the suggestible differentiation, we are able to remove easily the indicated ambiguity from other contexts of the pragmatic conditions but philosophical troubles appear when we try to answer the following question: in which way we decide whether the produced sequence of sounds is a permissible realization of the atomic sentence. This is the question about criteria of a classification of particular sequences of sounds into classes of atomic sentences.

Feyerabend can answer this question in two manners. However, in each case his answers will be contradictory with the most important principle of his pragmatic theory of observation.

The first answer would be as follows: the basis of distinguishing between two different sequences of sounds as realization of the same atomic sentence is a particular phonological theory for example the theory which describes considered language. Naturally, a change of this theory gives rise to another classification of the sequences of sounds into new classes of atomic sentences. In the case of a radical change of the theory, that is in the case of incommensurable theories, classifications of the sounds sequences will be uncomparable. Then Feyerabend would have to withdraw from his standpoint according to which all pragmatic properties differ "clearly and unambiguously" from interpretation. He would have to admit that at least some pragmatic properties

of an observational language depend on interpretation. But this statement contains potential danger. If other pragmatic properties turn out to be dependent on a theory, they will be useless as completely determined by interpretation.

The second answer Feyerabend could give us is contradictory enough to the basic idea of his pragmatic theory of observation that we mention it for regularity. Namely Feyerabend could state that the sequences of sounds are the realization of the same atomic sentence, if he described them "in the same way" in language independent of any theory. However, in this situation he would admit that sequences of sounds, as well as their description, are given us directly without mediation of any theory.

2. The expression "appropriate situation to an atomic sentence" is used by Feyerabend in two different meanings. They can be distinguished analogously as in the case discussed a moment ago and indicated ambiguity of the expression can be eliminated with relative ease. For example, the expression "appropriate situation to realization of an atomic sentence" can designate a concrete event while a class of these events can be termed by us "an appropriate situation to an atomic sentence".

Applying this differentiation we can formulate now decidability condition as follows: "It is demanded that for every atomic sentence a (of a class A) of the language considered there exists class of situation S (a so-called class of an appropriate situations) such that every C, when presented with some realization of a in s (where s is an element of S) will run through a series of states and operations which terminate either in acceptance of realization of a or in its rejection by the C chosen".

Analogously with the former note the troubles emerge on the basis of the pragmatic theory of observation if we try to answer the following question: which way can we decide that the situation the observer remains in, belongs indeed to the class of the observational situations of an atomic sentence a? After all the pre-cited decidability condition demands that (every) observer C, who is in the observational situation s, should accept or reject a realization of the atomic sentence a.

Likewise, as previously, Feyerabend could provide two answers to the above question. In each case he has to prove that a real physical situation s in which the observer remains, is similar in essential respects to an appropriate situation of the atomic sentence a. Qualifying similarity of any relation in some respect requires the employing of certain observational language. Rejecting the possibility of a language the meaning of which is independent of any theory, Feyerabend has to agree with further relativization of pragmatic conditions to certain theory. It means that the author consents to further determination of pragmatic properties by interpretation.

Meanwhile - as it seems - Feyerabend tends to the separation of an appropriate situation of an atomic sentence by comparing acceptance or rejection reactions of chosen observers. By the way, we must remember that an observational situation isn't a fragment of a perceived world which has a certain "structure" but it consists of appearances which are uninterpreted reactions of an observer. These appearances form a perceived world only in the light of a certain theory.

In accordance with this idea Feyerabend defines the class of an observational situation as follows: "Whether or not a situation s is observable for an organism Q can be ascertained by investigating the behaviour of Q, mental (sensations) or otherwise; more especially, it can be ascertained by investigation Q's ability to distinguish between s and other situations. And we shall say that Q is able to distinguish between s and situations different from s if it can be conditional so that it (conditionally or unconditionally) produces a specific reaction r whenever s is present, and does not produce r when s is absent. Exactly the same considerations apply if Q happens to be a human observer and r one of the atomic sentences of his observation-language"¹¹.

Let's turn our attention to the fact that in the pre-cited opinion Feyerabend separates a class of observational situations with the help of an observational sentence while in his definition of the term "observational sentence" he explains it with the help of an observational situation. This

¹¹ Ibid., p. 146.

kind of procedure is called in logic a classical vitious circle.

3. The next terms by means of which Feyerabend defines an observational sentence are: "acceptance of an atomic sentence" and "rejection of an atomic sentence". The terms - as Feyerabend states - "are pragmatic terms and they refer to two specific and clearly distinguishable types of reaction"¹². Basing on the statement quoted above one could conclude that both the terms describe observer's reactions independently of any theory but that supposition is in evident contradiction to the guiding idea of the pragmatic theory of observation. In this situation we have to admit that the meaning of the terms is relativized to a psychological theory, not mentioned by the author.

4. The same problem for the pragmatic theory of observation makes the characteristics of the class of observers. Also in this case Feyerabend may define the set of observers in two manners - neither of them is fully satisfactory.

For the first one the starting-point would be the comparison of verbal reactions of observers in identical observational situations. According to this criterion two observers belong to the common set of observers, if in identical observational situations their verbal behaviours are identical. But - as we have tried to prove - the characterization of identical observational situations and verbal behaviours is impossible independently of any theory. In consequence the set of observers to which an observational language is relativized, depends on a previous theory.

In this situation the only possible way of characterization of a set of observers is the appealing to the knowledge they accept. Thus, two observers will belong to the very same set, if they accept the very same theory. Of course, the proposed criterion of characterizing a set of observers will be useful on condition we know what Feyerabend means by theory and if there would be the possibility to compare theories which are accepted by different observers.

Putting off the examination of this problem of a moment let's notice that the next pragmatic property is relativized to

¹² Ibid., p. 144.

a previously accepted theory. In this situation we can state that all pragmatic properties of an observational language are determined by interpretation. This statement has a very important significance for the criticism of Feyerabend's philosophy for all pragmatic properties turn out to be formed by an accepted theory in the same way as semantic properties of a language or ontology of nature.

Feyerabend's division into pragmatic properties of an event and its interpretation is - as it seems - another way of well known from history of philosophy, discrimination between essence and existence. In the case of Feyerabend's philosophy existence is represented by the pragmatic aspects of an event which is an appearance causally determined by the existing real world. Demanding independence of these properties from interpretation, Feyerabend is anxious to separate from our knowledge this element which is independent of a knowing subject. He wants to isolate what originates from the Being, what is a base and substance in construction of the perceived world. Of course, this world changes in accordance with an accepted theoretical point of view. The fact that pragmatic properties turn out to be dependent on an interpretation brings about that the element independent of a theory can't be separated. Otherwise, autonomy of existence postulated by pragmatic conditions is questioned. Interpretation, on the other hand, achieves a dominant position because not only essence of a perceived world but its description are conditioned by a theory including existence as well. Naturally, the element protecting this philosophy against indicated idealistic consequences is the real world postulated by Feyerabend real world. However, this real world doesn't seem to fulfill another role than "thing in itself" in Kant's philosophy.

Having ascertained the major role of an interpretation in Feyerabend's philosophy, it is worthy of thinking over the nature of interpretation. Unfortunately, a trial of qualifying the nature of interpretation encounters difficulties and we are going to examine reasons of this situation.

Introducing the notion of interpretation in his paper "An

Attempt at a Realistic Interpretation of Experience", Feyerabend¹³ states that interpretation is a class of further conditions which together with the characteristic of the language contribute to the fact that we obtain a fully-fledged language. Unfortunately, he doesn't mention these conditions in any shape or form.

On the further page, in the mentioned paper, Feyerabend writes about interpretation as follows: "In so far as this causal chain involves our own organism we are on a par with physical instruments. But we also interpret the indications of these instruments (i.e. either the sensations which occur during observation, or the observational sentence uttered) and this interpretation is an additional act, whether now the instrument used is some apparatus or our own sensory organization (our own body)"¹⁴.

Interpretation in this meaning is an "additional act" realized to give sense to human utterances and sensations.

In another place of this article Feyerabend finds it impossible to qualify the interpretation of an observational language by its characteristic "because no set of observations is ever sufficient for us to infer (logically) any one of those interpretations (problem of induction)"¹⁵.

We may conclude from this statement that the author identifies the interpretation with some set of theoretical statements which we cannot logically deduce from observational sentences. The trouble is that these theoretical statements are not qualified anywhere.

Eventually, investigating the relation of interpretation to a theory the author comes to the following conclusion: "The interpretation of an observational language is determined by the theories which we use to explain what we observe, and it changes as soon as those theories change"¹⁶. This implies that the interpretation is something determined by the theory.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 146-147.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 163.

In this context it is worth considering what kind of being a theory is according to Feyerabend's philosophy, and whether there is any useful criterion to decide if two observers accept or reject the same or different theories. Having got this sort of criterion we would be able to assert that observers accept respectively the same or different interpretations.

In one of the glosses to his paper "Problems of Empiricism" Feyerabend¹⁷ claims what follows: "the term »theory« will be used in a wide sense, including ordinary beliefs (e.g., the belief in the existence of material object), myth (e.g., the myth of eternal recurrence), religious beliefs, etc. In short, any sufficiently general point of view concerning matter of fact will be termed a »theory« "¹⁸.

In this quotation Feyerabend identifies a theory with a psychic event. As to me, this fact has an important significance for Feyerabend's philosophy. Let's try to present it shortly by two remarks.

The first of them concerns the possibility of the cognition of a theory understood as a psychic event. According to the pragmatic theory of observation, every fact, thereby a psychic event, is constituted by a certain theory. It means, that a "sufficiently general belief" or a "sufficiently general religious belief" can't be known without the mediation of another theory. This theory determines an ontology of a psychic event and the meaning of a statement which describes the events. Thus the structure and the meaning of any theory, for example Aristotel's or Newton's physics, depends on a previously accepted theoretical point of view. In the special case, when the previously accepted theories are incommensurable, also the determined by them "images" of the same theory (that is psychic events) are incommensurable. This remark tends towards drawing our attention to agnostic consequences of Feyerabend's philosophy. One of them concerns our comprehension of any theory. If a theory is a psychic event, that we can grasp it only in the light of another

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Feyerabend, Problems..., p. 219.

theory. In this way our cognition of contents of any theory depends on another theoretical point of view and it changes as soon as the point changes.

My second remark concerns the notion of incommensurability. Following the above consideration two sufficiently general psychic events, that is theories, can be commensurable or incommensurable according to the theoretical point of view in light of which we consider these events. On the other hand, commensurability or incommensurability of two theories aren't a relation of two arguments but three ones, namely the relation between two considered theories and a point of view in the light of we "perceive" them. Apart from that we must remember, that the point of view from which the theories are examined, is also a "sufficiently general belief" which can not be known directly that is without mediation of a certain theory. Of course, this argument may be continued ad infinitum. As a result of this we aren't able to decide whether two observers accept the same or different theories. Otherwise, Feyerabend's philosophy doesn't provide us with a criterion which would allow us to solve this problem. In consequence the notion of a theory as well as the notion of incommensurability are completely vague. In this situation, all discussions about incommensurability are inconclusive.

Feyerabend's philosophy is an attempt to formulate a metaphysics in which a leading idea arises from a conviction that Being isn't directly attainable to any of our cognitive faculties. Thus we are determined to guess its nature by interpretation of our verbal behaviours and sensations. In other words, we are fated to theoretical pluralism of conjectures. Every of them is cognitively equal and worth worth developing.

Formulation of this idea - as I have tried to present - is defective. The author, postulating relativization of every language to a certain theory, unconsciously articulates this thought in a theoretically independent language. If we want, on the other hand, to escape these inconsequences then we are not able to grasp the meaning of his leading thesis.

But let's ignore the indicated inconsequences of Feyerabend's philosophy for a moment and agree that we are able to identify a theory in some unknown to us way. Then in ac-

cordance with his theoretical pluralism we must treat his point of view as the one among many others. What is more, these alternatives are necessary to examine his theoretical point. In this situation Feyerabend has got to prove that his philosophy has an advantage over other alternatives. I think Feyerabend would argue that only his epistemological anarchism justifies the development of every theoretical point of view. Only the epistemological anarchism permits the idea, which may appear nobody knows how absurd, to be able to develop as soon as its adherent occurs. However, from his pluralistic point of view every effort to justify an exceptional position of his epistemological anarchism is a form of an indoctrination, persuading us that the freedom of the thought and the variety of human culture are the universal and transcendental values de facto independent of any theory. In other words, it is an effort to establish a culture in which epistemological anarchism would retain its leading, a unique position.

Similarly as in the case of formulating his own philosophy so in the case of justifying its exceptional position among other alternatives he has to appeal to transcendental ideas independent of any theory.

In the literature dedicated to the philosophy of science Feyerabend is often treated as an unattractive or even an odd thinker. But this kind of opinion seems to be unjust. Feyerabend's views are simply bold consequences of his pragmatic theory of observation to an end. Without doubt, they are provoking. But if anyone wants to insist on his theory of observation for any other reason then he should accept theoretical pluralism, epistemological anarchism and Feyerabend's proposals of reorganization of our culture.

Observing the history of philosophy one should separate two kinds of thinkers who change its trend, those who propose new philosophical ideas and those who withdraw from them all paradoxical consequences not taking into consideration a common opinion or even so-called commonsense. The latter ones are seemed to contribute much more to the cognition of the initial idea. They indicate indirectly at the same time that without a change of an initial metaphysical intuition we are not

able to resolve the problem emerging on its ground. For this reason we can say they fulfill a grave-digger role of some ideas or even the whole philosophical trends. Feyerabend seems to be one of them.

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O FEYERABENDA PRAGMATYCZNEJ TEORII OBSERWACJI

Artykuł niniejszy poświęcony jest Feyerabenda filozofii nauki. W szczególności jest on próbą rekonstrukcji metafizyki przez tę filozofię założonej. Przewodnią ideą tej metafizyki jest przekonanie, że wszelki kontakt z obiektywnie istniejącym światem za pośrednictwem jest przez jakąś teorię. Idea ta najjaśniej przedstawiona została przez Feyerabenda w pragmatycznej teorii obserwacji. W części pierwszej niniejszego artykułu teoria ta jest szczegółowo przedstawiona, natomiast w części drugiej podjęta została próba jej krytycznej analizy. Jednocześnie wyrażony zostaje pogląd, że zarówno pluralizm teoretyczny, jak i epistemologiczny anarchizm Feyerabenda są konsekwencjami centralnej idei pragmatycznej teorii obserwacji.