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Did the Greeks have a worldview? A comparative study of worldview's genealogy*

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The paper scrutinizes a classic passage from Heidegger, in which he argues that *Weltanschauung* is predominantly a Modern concept and that there was nothing similar in Antiquity. Using a comparative method, I try to demonstrate that it is possible to reconstruct a kind of genealogy of the concept of worldview and to show clues as to its phenomena in Hellenic culture and philosophy and in Early Modern thought. Being not just a linguistic phenomenon, worldview could be analyzed as a metaconcept, articulated in non-Modern contexts and recognized as a “worldview” in terms of Modern philosophy. Considering the ancient Greek notion of αἵρεσις, I show its principle aspects in the sense of “philosophical school”. I hold that it is possible to parallel it with the term *Weltanschauung*, coined in the German philosophical tradition and possessing its own epistemological features. To prove my argument, I refer to the ideas of Ancient Greek and Hellenic thinkers as well as the most eminent supporters and critics of the concept of *Weltanschauung* in Modern (primarily German) philosophies. In Conclusions I summarize the main traits I consider commensurate with those of αἵρεσις, which are: 1. Emergence in “turning points” of pivotal historical periods; 2. Articulation of the idea of wholeness and coherence of the Universe (the World); 3. One's free-will choice to support a concrete doctrine or point of view to the Universe in connection with its comprehension and one's moral principles.

Keywords: αἵρεσις, *Weltanschauung*, genealogy of worldview, Martin Heidegger, Christian Huygens, comparative philosophy, Hellenic philosophy, philosophical anthropology.

Introduction

My research's focus was inspired by a well-known passage in Martin Heidegger's lectures on phenomenology, delivered in 1929. Criticizing any worldview ambitions that philosophy implicitly cherishes, he says: “This word (that is, *Weltanschauung*. — A. L.) is not translated from Greek or, say, Latin. There is no such expression as κοσμοθεωρία. On the contrary, it is a word of specifically German coinage and it was indeed coined in philosophy”¹.

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¹ Cf.: “Dieses Wort ist keine Übersetzung etwa aus dem Griechischen oder Lateinischen. Einen Ausdruck wie κοσμοθεωρία gibt es nicht, sondern das Wort ist eine spezifisch deutsche Prägung, und zwar wurde es inner-halb der Philosophie geprägt” — vide: [1, p. 5].

I would like to focus on this assertion: *there is no such expression as κοσμοθεωρία*. Did Heidegger really mean to say what he said? Frankly, I am not inclined to pursue any forms of spiritism or paranormal investigation into the immortal mind of the Bavarian magus — but it seems blatantly obvious to say that such an artificial construction as κοσμοθεωρία was never in use. I suggest two possible perspectives to interpret his words: on the one hand, I think that Heidegger was struggling not with the ancients but with his contemporaries who really used this term. This might sound strange, but a spiritual descendant of Richard Avenarius's second positivism, Heinrich Gomperz, became famous for publishing two volumes of his *Weltanschauungslehre*, which he also called *Kosmotheorie*, in 1907. However, such a statement deserves an independent paper, so I will not return to it here. On the other hand, the very idea of digging for the roots or remnants of the concept of *Weltanschauung* seems intriguing and provocative. At first glance, this task may appear to have anti-Heideggerian motives; however, it appears even more topical to try to overcome the confines of our Modern lenses to better delineate the alien forms of a concept that may have seemed too static and homely.

Thus, I would like to ponder the possible “genealogy” of the concept of *Weltanschauung* and to show clues as to its phenomena in Hellenic culture and philosophy and in Early Modern thought. My point is: what is meant by “*Weltanschauung*” or world-view in the Modern Age is not simply a single notion within a certain language, thus, not just a linguistic phenomenon. Behind it one may find various discursive practices for constructing one's own attitude as a human being in the world, not only in the theoretical world of contemplation but in the rapidly changing practical world of politics as well. So if it is possible to reveal the structure of *Weltanschauung* as a concept, then it is possible to find various forms of expression of this concept within its relevant cultures. During the Hellenistic period a precise concept was articulated, namely αἵρεσις, which has features comparable to those of the concept of *Weltanschauung*. The purpose of my paper is to use the comparative method to trace these two concepts' genealogical relations through various cultural forms.

αἵρεσις and its interpretations

First of all I would like to consider αἵρεσις as an independent concept. I will discuss its origin, possible translations and spheres of use. As a term, αἵρεσις may be easily defined or translated, but it is much harder to interpret. It is obvious that the word itself is a substantive noun from the verb αἰρέω, which means *to take with the hand, grasp, to catch, win, gain, or, finally, to choose or elect*. From its root arose numerous derivatives with assorted definitions, including technical senses in logic, politics and ethics, which I would like to explore further.

The main ways to comprehend and interpretation of the concept of αἵρεσις are the following. Firstly, it means the choice or preference of one argument to another, as may happen in argumentation, dialectics or ethics. Secondly, it means a philosophical sect in the widest possible sense of this word, as in Stoics or Epicureans. Later I will discuss this aspect more thoroughly. And, finally, it means a medical school, which was commonly named after its leader or founder.

We again find an interesting correlation of terms when studying another derivative from αἰρέω — προαίρεσις. I find it fruitful to scrutinize these concepts in the context of

later interpretations by modern scholars. For instance, the British classicists followed by Alfred Bloch demonstrated that Polybius understood αἵρεσις as a foundational law (*einen Grundsatz*) that regulated the life of the Achaean League, namely: either freedom or struggle to death against tyranny. At the same time, the Achaeans also compare it with a political decision (προαίρεσις) which “the last of the Hellenes,” Philopoemen, makes [2, p. 135].

These convergent yet not at all equivalent notions were considered by Aristotle; in his ethical writings one may find the distinction between the reasonable or, I dare to say, *conscious* choice, that is, προαίρεσις, and the unconscious one. Meanwhile, he mentions αἵρεσις in his “Politics” as a process of elections. Significantly, Aristotle uses αἵρεσις primarily to describe the basis for a free, aware or conscious choice, that is, προαίρεσις. The latter depends on human reflection, personal decision and consequent responsibility for what one has decided. One may also interpret αἵρεσις as the possibility of choice as such on the basis of human reason or of one’s ability to conclude or judge reasonably. Concerning the latter, Aristotle in his *Magna Moralia* says the following (translated into English by St George Stock): “Now in the case of the natural virtues we said that there existed only the impulse to right without reason; but he who has choice has it in reason and the rational part. So that as soon as choice is present, perfect virtue will be there, which we said was accompanied by wisdom, but not without the natural impulse to right. Nor will one virtue run counter to another, for its nature is to obey the dictates of reason, so that it inclines to that to which reason leads. For it is this which chooses the better. For the other virtues do not come into existence without wisdom, nor is wisdom perfect without the other virtues, but they co-operate in a way with one another, attending upon wisdom” [3, 1200a 1–10], — whereas προαίρεσις is an aware choice, or preference of one to another (as indicated by the prefix *pro-*) following reasonable advice or a consideration. Put differently, it is how a mindful person acts, having an opportunity for action. We find the same idea in *Magna Moralia* (200a2). Further important evidence of such a distinction between what a person chooses in being an agent of circumstances, on the one hand, and according to an understanding of the Good, on the other, may be found in Stoic philosophy’s ἐκλογή and αἵρεσις [4, p. 698].

In his commentary *On Aristotle Topics 1* Alexander of Aphrodisias says that the choice or the preference of one to another occurs in accordance with each person’s own nature, whether using or not using their reason. In this case we should understand accordance with nature as delimited by its final cause, that is, the Good (6, 1–10). Let me quote two short passages here from him: “All those things investigated which have reference to choice or avoidance are ethical problems. For the inquiry into good and evil, and what is to be chosen and what is to be avoided, is ethical and has reference to choice and avoidance, not to bare discernment: he who inquires whether pleasure is good or not, or in general about any good that can be acquired, inquires about choosing and avoiding them. <...> And logical problems are all those things which are neither investigated as possible actions nor have as their goal the discernment of the truth contained in them, but are investigated as contributing either to the discernment of what is to be chosen and what is not, or to the finding what is true, and what is false. Within philosophy, the study of logic has the place of an instrument <...>” [5, p. 80].

An important feature of αἵρεσις is also its application to the medical practice, as I have already mentioned. To demonstrate it, let us turn to Sextus Empiricus’s *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (I, 237). From our modern perspective, the concept of medicine in antiquity,

involving the ideal of accuracy and strictness of science (ἀκριβεία) [6, p. 92–93], ranked as probably the only empirical discipline². Doctors were colloquially called empiricists. Moreover, this accuracy was reflected in the method of treatment, that is, how to accurately and precisely aim to treat the wounded or ill. This empirical aspect became the hallmark of medical scholarship (with this empirical-medical analogy exploited by Socrates to contrast himself to the Sophists; this aspect of Socrates's approach is amusingly noted by Werner Jaeger, vide: [8, p. 32ff.]). However, John Glucker notes that “[t]he medical αἵρέσεις are thus clearly not depicted as organized schools or institutions, but as ‘schools of thought’ or ‘persuasion’, differing merely in their approach to the method or essential nature of the practice of medicine. The followers of each of these ‘schools’ are called by the name designating their essential approach to their art” [9, p. 188–189].

Now I am closely coming to the most important meaning of αἵρεσις for my paper, namely αἵρεσις as a sect. There is a standard list of the Greek schools of thought, or sects, going back to Hippobotus, the first to enumerate them. He provided the readers of his *Περὶ αἵρέσεων* with a list of nine sects: (1) Megarian, (2) Eretriat, (3) Cyrenaic, (4) Epicurean, (5) Annicerean, (6) Theodorean, (7) Zenonian or Stoic, (8) Old Academic, (9) Peripatetic. This is precisely the list that Diogenes Laertius mentions, but Diogenes also gives us more information about the Pyrrhonian school, raising the question of whether one should consider it to be an αἵρεσις or not (these passages could, however, also be a compilation from Sextus's writings on Pyrrho's hypothesis) [10, I 20]. The *Suidae Lexicon* follows both Diogenes and Sextus literally, but also provides us with the criteria of what αἵρεσις is. The most common characteristic here is truth as the aim of a sect (the translation is mine): “They say that there are two criteria of truth: firstly, that which is considered, and which prevails; secondly, that by which one receives the most accurate representation. The origins of everything are matter (ὕλην), specification (ποιῶν ποιότητα) and place (τόπον); that is, from what, out of what, how, and in what. All things share a purpose: the purpose of the living consists of accordance with all virtue and necessity — with all the Goods belonging to the body by its nature, as well as with added ones” [11, p. 44].

Thus, one may notice that the *Suidae* here has covered the Hellenistic or Socratic schools only. Also, in the *Suidae* one may discern the following two major characteristics of αἵρεσις: firstly, “that which is considered, and which prevails”, or κρίσις; and, secondly, “that by which one receives the most accurate representation”, or τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην φαντασίαν. I would also like to note that αἵρεσις has a predominantly ethical sense; this was perfectly grasped in Gerhard Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, where it is given as a certain choice of opinion, whose champions deliberately and consciously restrict themselves from any other teachings or schools. I would recall here Seneca's words from his *Moral Epistles*, where he denies being a renegade, and compares himself with a spy who enters the enemy's territory, when mentioning his readings of Epicurus³.

By the term αἵρεσις Hellenistic and later Greek sources meant the philosophical schools, or sects; however, firstly, it was not the only term to denote them, and, secondly, its meaning was not restricted just to philosophical schools. Along with αἵρεσις the sources also use σχολή and διατριβή, and all of them later appeared in Latin as independent terms, such as “sect”, “school” or “diatribe” as a genre of invective. This issue of

² This statement was, however, considerably revised in: [7].

³ Cf.: “Hodiernum hoc est, quod apud Epicurum nactus sum; soleo enim et in aliena castra transire, non tamquam transfuga, sed tamquam explorator” [12, II 5] (italics added. — A. L.).

naming the schools has been comprehensively studied by contemporary classics scholars. I would also like to mention Leonid Ya. Zhmud's brilliant investigation of the character of the Pythagorean community. In his book he discusses how the ancients denoted the Pythagoreans, recalling the terms I have just mentioned [13, p.125–147]. Glucker has thoroughly analyzed the issue of the first mention of αἵρεσις in the sense of “philosophical sect”. He refutes Kittel's idea that it was first mentioned by Chrysippus (Αἵρεσις πρὸς Γοργυπίδην) and demonstrates its wide use as an ethical or logical term until late Hellenism: “Thus it seems that, in the second half of the second century B. C., αἵρεσις already appeared in the titles of books concerned with the views of various philosophers and philosophical sects” [9, p. 176]. In his outstanding investigation of the history of the Late Academy, Glucker distinguishes several terms by which the Greeks denoted the phenomenon of philosophical schools. He says of αἵρεσις that it was not “an established sect or ‘school’ in an institutional sense, but a kind of a peculiar attitude of mind to philosophical problems. The philosophical αἵρεσις is defined as <...> ‘an inclination towards a consistent set of doctrines’, — or at least, as <...> ‘following, or appearing to follow, some *rationale* based on the phenomena’. In both cases, the subject of the definition is an attitude of mind, and nothing is said of a group of people belonging to, or following, the αἵρεσις” [9, p. 180–181].

He also adds that “[i]n the preface to his Commentary to the *Categories*, Elias offers a definition of αἵρεσις, which in all probability derives from Proclus, like the rest of that preface: αἵρεσις ἐστὶ ἀνδρῶν ἀστείων δόξα πρὸς μὲν ἑαυτῶν συμφωνούντων, πρὸς δὲ ἄλλους διαφωνούντων— ‘αἵρεσις is the opinion of educated men, agreeing among themselves and disagreeing among the others’” [ibid.].

I would also like to discuss the curious story Glucker tells us as an illustration of the vast set of meanings of αἵρεσις as compared to only ‘a sect’ or ‘a school’. He quotes the *Herculean Life of Philonides the Epicurean*, written by a probable contemporary of Dionysius of Halicarnassus: “<...> Antiphanes is quoted to the effect that Antiochus Epiphanes, under the influence of a teacher who was a renegade Epicurean, became estranged from the αἵρεσις, and that it was Philonides who brought him back to the Epicurean fold. But this cannot mean that the King left the Epicurean school of Athens, of which we are nowhere told that he was a member. Nor is Philonides depicted as bringing him back into membership of the school: he merely made him αἰρετιστὴς τῶν λόγων — a follower of the Epicurean *ratio*. We do not even know that Philonides ever studied in Athens or was a member of the Epicurean school there. Most of his early studies took place in the East. He later opened his own school at Antioch <...>. In such a context, away from Athens, one could be a follower of this or that philosophical persuasion, but surely not a member of an Athenian school” [9, p. 182].

Generally by αἵρεσις the Greeks meant a system of ideas, ideology or philosophical or religious school of Hebrew, Christians or pagans [14, p. 51]. Hippolytus of Rome in his *Refutations of All Heresies* refers to Indian brahmans, Celtic druids and even Hesiod (whom he considered a natural philosopher) among the other ancient schools of thought [15, p. 182–184]. It is noteworthy that the very title of his book — Φιλοσοφούμενα ἢ κατὰ πασῶν αἰρέσεων ἔλεγχος — includes φιλοσοφούμενα, by which he meant the representatives of the ancient schools of thought, which implied a view of those schools as basically heretical in the Christian sense of the word. Thus, αἵρεσις was here used as not a conceptual term, but as a kind of evaluation of rivalry or hostile views and doctrines.

At this point I would like to finish the “philological” or lexical part of my paper and go back to the beginning. My aim was to consider a term by which the Greeks (or the ancients in general, including philosophers who spoke and wrote in Latin and who inherited many insights from the Greeks) meant something comparable and relevant to what we as representatives of the Modern Age recognize as *Weltanschauung*, or worldview. Let us now examine Modern thinkers.

The features of *Weltanschauung*

The very idea of *Weltanschauung* is cosmopolitan. If it is true that the Greeks did not know such a word as κοσμοθεωρία, it is nevertheless also true that the term *Weltanschauung* appears in the Modern Age as a multidimensional concept. Here I will not discuss the important and splendidly poetic topic of the concept of worldview in the Middle Ages (hoping to deal with it in another paper) and will focus on the context of Modernity.

In the most common sense, when we speak of *Weltanschauung*, we mean the whole world as such, as a unity. This was the original idea of the Germans of the Enlightenment: *ordo plurorum in uno*, as discussed in Alexander Baumgarten’s ontological project [16, p. 34]. However, he was obviously only developing the idea. Perhaps the first who tried to combine the ideas of observation and the concept of the whole world was the Dutch physicist Christian Huygens. He coined the term *Kosmotheoros*, which was the Latin name of his treatise on the planets; one can trace extremely interesting incarnations of the word in subsequent translations. For example, in German his book appeared under the title *Herrn Christian Hügens Weltbeschauer oder vernünftige Muthmassungen, dass die Planeten nicht weniger geschmückt und bewohnt seyn, als unsere Erde* (i. e.: *Mister Christian Huygens’s World observer, or Reasonable conjectures that the planets are no less adorned and inhabited than our Earth*) in 1767; in English it appeared as *The Celestial Worlds Discover’d: or, Conjectures Concerning the Inhabitants, Plants and Productions of the Worlds in the Planets* in 1698; and the Russian edition, printed in 1717 due to the enthusiasm of Peter the Great, was titled “Книга мирозрения, или мнение о небезноземных глобусах и украшениях” (i. e.: *The Book of Worldview, or An opinion on celestial globes and adornments*). I believe I stand on considerably solid ground if I argue that by the Age of Enlightenment the Modern minds saw the world as a certain whole, comparable to the Greek κόσμος, and that this fact found its reflection in the Modern languages, initially in German. Later, in the 20th century philosopher Max Scheler, who introduced the doctrine of *die philosophische Weltanschauung*, or *the philosophical Worldview*, will also discuss human nature in the Renaissance terms of microcosm and macrocosm (cf.: [17]).

The verbal concept of *Weltanschauung* was coined by Immanuel Kant in the first part of his *Critique of Judgement*, §26, where he discusses the mathematical sublime. In some sense he fixed its meaning as the grasping of the world as a whole. He speaks (translated into English by J.H. Bernard with original italics): “And what is most important is that to be able only to think it as a *whole* indicates a faculty of mind which surpasses every standard of Sense. For [to represent it sensibly] would require a comprehension having for unit a standard bearing a definite relation, expressible in numbers, to the infinite; which is impossible. Nevertheless, the bare *capability of thinking* this infinite without contradiction requires in the human mind a faculty itself supersensible. For it is only by means of this faculty and its Idea of a noumenon, — which admits of no intuition, but which yet serves

as the substrate for the intuition of the world (i. e. *Weltanschauung*. — A. L.), as a mere phenomenon, — that the infinite of the world of sense, in the pure intellectual estimation of magnitude, can be *completely* comprehended *under* a concept although in the mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of *concepts of number* it can never be completely thought. The faculty of being able to think the infinite of supersensible intuition as given (in its intelligible substrate), surpasses every standard of sensibility, and is great beyond all comparison even with the faculty of mathematical estimation; not of course in a theoretical point of view and on behalf of the cognitive faculty, but as an extension of the mind which feels itself able in another (practical) point of view to go beyond the limit of sensibility” [18, p. 115–116].

I would like to emphasize the latter sentence, because Kant acknowledges the urge of mind to go beyond the borders of experience, and shows that such an urge could only be fulfilled in a practical tendency. This is a very characteristic feature of *Weltanschauung*, for, as we can readily see in the passage from Kant, it does not exist as an independent human ability perfectly separated from all other abilities, but in a tough discursive connection with logics and cosmology. This parallels the concept of ἀρεσις, or a “sect” as a certain doctrine of a certain philosophical school of the Hellenistic period. Kant develops a comparable scheme, featuring critiques that concern both theoretical and practical ways to grasp the world as a whole (see his well-known table in the *Introduction* to the *Third Critique*, later reconsidered by Neo-Kantians) [18, p. 41].

The representatives of German Idealism gave further development to the issue of *Weltanschauung*. G. W. F. Hegel provided a history of worldviews as aesthetic movements, with mind (*der Geist*) realized in the history of art, a perspective suggesting that we should abandon calling nature beautiful as we really do in common life. Hegel argues that “artistic beauty stands higher than nature” [19, p. 4]; which is, on the one hand, very typical for him, and on the other, demonstrates that he means that only the mind possesses creative ability and, consequently, can reproduce the world with an original worldview. What a romantic perspective indeed! However, it was the group of *Lebensphilosophie* thinkers who really developed the concept. Wilhelm Dilthey made a major contribution in this regard; inspired by the hermeneutics of Friedrich Schleiermacher, he saw his philosophical task as to analyze and interpret the spirit of the age, with the procedure of understanding, or *Verständnis*, playing a key role in this endeavor. Although inaccurate, this method became very popular among thinkers cultural studies and the humanities, and Dilthey did much for the further development of the typology of worldviews.

Dilthey’s followers were not unanimous in receiving their teacher’s ideas: for instance, Max Scheler developed his own typology based upon his anthropological and ethical studies, and Martin Heidegger (insofar one may consider him to have been Dilthey’s student) refused to acknowledge *Weltanschauung* as a subject-matter for philosophy. Among other important voices was that of Edmund Husserl, who devoted his late phenomenological studies to the analysis of *Lebenswelt* and the crisis of the sciences. Thus, although on the threshold of the 20th century the concept (or at least idea) of *Weltanschauung* was in the air, each thinker interpreted it independently.

I would like to return to the philosopher I started with — namely to Martin Heidegger in his criticism of scientific and philosophical scrutiny. According to Heidegger, the purpose of the individual’s philosophical search is *Seyn*, which also lies in the foundation of our *Dasein* [vide: 20, p. 297–301]. All qualities of being that we acquire due to philosophy

or along the way with philosophy tend to the historical exposure of *Seyn*. However, this process does not happen apart from a person; rather, it is what is explicated to a person's philosophical attention. Heidegger's project of *Seynsgeschichte* is a historical study of *Seyn* by *Dasein*, but it is opposed to historical research, or *Geschichte*, or any other "scientific" narrative about the past, or *Historie*. Heidegger considers it to be a true discipline, which deals with the evolution of a core philosophical issue, but not by means of classical ontology, which utilizes the opposition of subject and object [21, p. 56].

Seynsgeschichte is not the same as *Weltanschauung*. The latter represents namely a subject's view of the world, which is explicated before him apart from any reciprocal move from the subject's side. Thus, one might see *Weltanschauung* as a new form of mythology, intended to create an abstract-historical perspective, which might become material for science with its successful measurements and accuracy. Heidegger views the abstract-historical perspective as the worst of the forms of mythology: it is just some story about the past (*Historie*), historiography, and quite different from historical research that accommodates a chain of events (*Ereignisses*), as represented by Heidegger's concept of *Seynsgeschichte*⁴. (*Seynsgeschichte* might remind us of the Greek notion of *ιστορία* as knowledge acquired by investigation — a concept more commodious than found in most Modern definitions of the discipline.) So, *Weltanschauung* appears to be an attempt to cram the whole world into the pre-given frames of the *Weltbild*, and consequently to annihilate any dynamic explication of the world as such. Heidegger very clearly defines this dynamic aspect of the controversy between philosophy and worldview: "Each philosophical epoch has its own necessity. We should simply acknowledge that philosophy is as it is. Nonetheless, we are able to prefer one epoch to another, as it is possible to do in the case of different worldviews"⁵.

In other words, Heidegger stands for the philosophical independency that could make the event of human thought an epoch (in the sense of skeptical or phenomenological *ἐποχή*) meaningful in itself. Neither worldview nor *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* could provide this, as they are more or less occasional and lead their follower to oblivion, not to Being in evidences of either *Seyn* or *Dasein*. At the same time, however, Heidegger's skeptical position turns out to be another and "true" form of Worldview, in that it considers the world as a *Mitsein* of co-Beings and in its wholeness and totality and, consequently, implies moral and even political corollaries. We find almost the same thing in Sextus's chapter 8 "Has the sceptic a worldview" when he enumerates such practical features of *αἰρεσις* as the following: "[W]e follow the line of reasoning which, in accordance with appearances, points us to the life conformable to the *customs of our country and its laws and institutions*, and to *our own instinctive feelings*" [24, I 17] (italics added. — A. L.).

However, the point is that the discussion of *Weltanschauung* initiated at the border of the 19th and 20th centuries marks an attempt to overcome the pessimistic views which dominated in art and culture in general. The situation of decay as well as the collapse of previously strong empires demanded that all traditional ways of living be revisited and interpreted in terms of an axiological approach, which independent thinkers then produced. Moreover, with philosophical attention focused on artificial, poetical forms of grasping

⁴ On the difference between *Historie* and *Geschichte* in Heidegger vide: [22, p. 90–92].

⁵ Cf.: "Jede Epoche der Philosophie hat ihre eigene Notwendigkeit. Daß eine Philosophie ist, wie sie ist, müssen wir einfach anerkennen. Es steht uns jedoch nicht zu, eine gegenüber der anderen vorzuziehen, wie solches hinsichtlich der verschiedenen Weltanschauungen möglich ist" [23, p. 70].

and expressing reality, philosophy quite predictably became predominantly oriented toward life attitudes and their comprehension, as well as toward human psychology and axiological/ethical problems, rather than toward creating splendid systems of thought like those of Leibnitz or Hegel⁶.

Generally speaking, philosophical perspectives became oriented toward action, or *bios praktikos*, rather than contemplation, or *bios theoretikos*. At the same time, at the beginning of the 20th century the importance of institutions and the credibility of universities appeared precarious, shaky and flimsy. Ideas were no longer the inhabitants of departments or faculties of philosophy, but were broadly expressed by poetic and publicistic means. The truth, once only the subject-matter of philosophical discussion, became the private issue of each person — that is, each person should prove that there is truth. We are still anxious to achieve this. Heidegger put it perfectly with his idea of man as “shepherd of being” and his concept of “das Man”. In a nutshell, the philosophical dimension of *Weltanschauung* came onto the agenda when the previous classical theoretical systems had failed and, consequently, the idea of man as a microcosm in a hostile and unsteady macrocosm took its place in the limelight of philosophy.

Conclusions

What characteristics make *Weltanschauung* and ἀρεσις relevant or at least comparable?

Firstly, they both became topics of discussion relatively late in their times — in the 18th and, mainly, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, and in the Hellenistic period, respectively. In both cases the historical periods were critical in terms of the deconstruction of the “old world” and anticipation of the “brave new” one.

Secondly, the idea of the Universe as *die ganze Welt*, which became very fruitful in Modern Age, echoes the concept of *kosmos* of the Greeks. It is true that the representatives of Greek civilization were focused on comprehension — that is, a theoretical approach to the world — but in the Hellenistic period, action was emphasized, and each and every philosophical doctrine was to provide its follower with a clear and non-contradictory ethical paradigm, or instructions for a blessed life. From this perspective, the unity of logics or dialectics, physics and ethics appears to be a complex but still coherent system reflecting the unity of *kosmos* as such, wherein everything took its own place and nothing happened without rationally grasped reason. Here one may trace the conceptual balance between the period of decay of classical polis in the fourth and third centuries B. C., and the period of decay of classical empire, that is, the border of the 19th and 20th centuries, when the concept of *Weltanschauung* obviously implied an axiological approach to the universe measured on the scales of empirical science, articulated with the burning letters of mathematical equations lest found too light.

Thirdly, the meaning of a non-institutional society is also an important conceptual link between these two terms. This position has three aspects bound very closely together. **Number one** is that both ἀρεσις and *Weltanschauung* are a matter of free will or free choice. One chooses this or that worldview (here, in using the common English-language rendering of *Weltanschauung*, I am referring to the essential meaning of both terms, *Wel-*

⁶ An inspiring analysis of this period of domination by pessimistic philosophy is given in: [25].

tanschauung and αἴρεσις, at once) deliberately and consciously, thus it depends only on the premises of one's attitude to life, or their psychology. We saw what Aristotle said about αἴρεσις, and we find almost the same approach in the writings of Wilhelm Dilthey, Carl Mannheim or Max Scheler. This point parallels the inner conditions that determine a human being's precise decision.

Number two is that both αἴρεσις and *Weltanschauung* demand responsibility for one's choice, and consequently defense of one's decision and personal representation of one's chosen worldview. Thus, there appears a system of recognition between very different people who create one community. Here we face the anthropological issue of One's Own, or Self, and the Other, another conceptual path traceable in 20th century philosophy, which gave us outstanding examples of a philosophical understanding of communication.

Number three is that in the Modern history of philosophy αἴρεσις has already been recognized as a worldview; although different words have been used in Modernity, the concept connoted has been more or less comparable to that evoked by the Hellenic epoch's term. I would like to give a single example, namely a well-known book by 17th century philosopher and a member of the French Academy Pierre Huet about sects in modern philosophy (in the 14th chapter of his *Philosophical Treatise Concerning the Weakness of Human Understanding*). His list partly repeats the classical standard, but he also introduces his own peculiar albeit rough classification of all the philosophers into three schools — Empiricists, Dogmatists and Sceptics — and asserts that only the attempts of the latter are on the way to achieving truth [26]. This case perfectly shows that worldview can not only unite but also part very different people on the basis of their specific beliefs.

And, finally, I cannot help mentioning the artificial, poetical or aesthetical aspect of the *Weltanschauungslehre* or αἴρεσις. In both the Hellenistic period and the era of Art Nouveau, an ethical approach to life could be interpreted from the perspective of an art of living and, more broadly, life as a certain genre of art.

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Было ли у греков мировоззрение? Сравнительное исследование генеалогии мировоззрения*

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В статье тщательно анализируется классическое положение М. Хайдеггера, в котором он утверждает, что мировоззрение является преимущественно современным концептом и что в античности не было сформулировано ничего подобного. Используя методологию философской компаративистики, автор показывает, что можно предложить своего рода генеалогию понятия *мировоззрение* и указать привязки к его проявлениям в эллинистической культуре и философии, а также в мысли раннего Нового времени. *Мировоззрение* можно анализировать не просто как лингвистический феномен, но как метаконцепт, артикулированный в неновевропейских контекстах и признанный «мировоззрением» на языке современной философии. Рассматривая древнегреческое понятие *αἰρεσις*, автор имеет в виду его принципиальные аспекты в смысле «фило-

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софской школы». Автор считает, что можно провести семантическую параллель с термином *Weltanschauung*, возникшим в контексте немецкой классической философии и обладающим своими эпистемологическими особенностями и потенциальными. В доказательство своего утверждения автор ссылается на идеи древнегреческих и эллинистических мыслителей, а также наиболее выдающихся сторонников и критиков понятия *мировоззрение* в новоевропейской (преимущественно немецкой) философии. В заключении обобщены основные черты, которые автор считает соизмеримыми с чертами *αἴρεσις*, а именно: 1) появление в «поворотные моменты» ключевых периодов истории; 2) артикуляция идеи целостности и связности Вселенной («мира»); 3) свободный выбор человека поддерживать конкретное учение или точку зрения на Вселенную, или мир в широком смысле слова, в связи с пониманием его устройства и своих моральных принципов.

Ключевые слова: *αἴρεσις*, *Weltanschauung*, генеалогия мировоззрения, Мартин Хайдеггер, Кристиан Гюйгенс, философская компаративистика, эллинистическая философия, философская антропология.

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