

II.

The first philosophers considered the difference between the flow of the past and the flow of the future to be irrelevant. Only when they began to take time seriously did their hopes for the future of this world gradually take the place of their quest for knowledge from another world.

Time. It flows, it stops, it runs. We all know the feeling of having no time or not enough time. It may be to meet up with friends, to go dancing, to watch your favourite movie, to cook a dinner. That is the present, can be the present.

But what about past and future? How often did you hear the saying of the past being so much better than the present? The past, an age that we already lived through with all its memories. They might be good or bad. They might be the happy memory of having your first kiss or having a wonderful holiday. On the other side, there might be memories you really don't want to think of again. Ever. Because they were embarrassing, insulting or humiliating. Future? We don't know. For the future we can just do suppose what it could look like. We can hope. We can dream. But its unknown. Both future and past we can't touch, its either gone or it has to come yet. So, it isn't surprising to read that *the first philosophers considered the difference between the flow of the past and the flow of the future to be irrelevant. Only when they began to take time seriously did their hopes for the future of this world gradually take the place of their quest for knowledge from another world.* But what does that mean? Is the past and the future the same? And what does it taking the time seriously mean? Am I not taking time seriously when I put an alarm to get me out of bed? If that isn't seriously but a joke, I am very, very unhappy.... Well, lets start to find, dear reader.

*The first philosophers considered the difference between the flow of the past and the flow of the future to be irrelevant.* Why the hell do we even speak of two flows? The idea of using the metaphor flow for time (both past and future) is very old. Even ancient. A flow or a river is always moving. It doesn't stop, it doesn't change whatever you do, it just flows continually and so is time. If you look at the quote it says the difference between past and future is irrelevant. Which means that it doesn't matter if I think about the future of the past, that both are worthy in the same way, both have the same right to exit. And the present? Has the present the same value to exit like past and future have or are past and future the condition of the existence of the present? What is time even? Okay, stop, slow down. The quote says the difference between past and future is irrelevant. That means past and future exist at the same time. The present isn't mentioned because it's written out of the perspective of the present. I would say that time is a construct of past, presence and future. They all are conditional for each other. No one can exit alone. Time means change. Change from one state of a thing, one being, to another. The change isn't so big that you can't recognize the object but big enough to note a difference might it be so little. An atomic clock is based on the principle. That atoms change and that change is measured. Also in a non-scientific way, you see it. A woman that was once a baby is now a woman and might be a grandmother one day (past, present and future). Time is the condition for change and it is the change.

*Only when they began to take time seriously did their hopes for the future of this world gradually take the place of their quest for knowledge from another world.* What, please? So, we come to a point I mentioned earlier, what does taking time, taking change, seriously mean? I think that its means firstly to be conscious of it. To notice difference and to accept it. To accept a construct (time) that is not made up by us but the assignment of it is. The assignment of saying that this and that change of atoms are one minute, one hour, one month. We as humans, as societies innovated it and accepted it. We all do because it brings some structure in our world. But its human made, a construct. An animal doesn't care if its

July or August. It just wants to survive, I suppose. Well, if you can say, it wants. So, taking time means taking our common assignment of time seriously, which means to accept and live with it.

Next words: [...] *their hopes for the future of this world gradually take the place of their quest for knowledge from another world.* I suppose everybody has hopes for the future and I hope that that are good ones. I think everyone wants either a future that is as good as the present or a better one. If something takes the place of something else, it replaces it. And the quest of knowledge from another world is what? It is the questioning of knowledge, the want for new knowledge, it is the quest for studying. For knowing things. But for another world? Another world that is better, I suppose. It is the hope for a better world that is not existing right now but it is also the disbelief in the existing world. If I am seeking for knowledge from another world, I dream of a better one being desperate with the actual one. If I now replace that with hopes for the future it means that I start to believe in my world, in the actual one, in reality, whatever reality is. I say reality is the reality you construct for yourself. But that just works when I take the time seriously. Why? Because if I take time seriously as I wrote above, I believe in the construct of time. I am aware of it, I am conscious of it, I am accepting it. When I do that, I have a picture of the future, I can make me one. And I differentiate future to past by seeing it as two different forms of time. Two that are conditional for each other but two independent forms. If I make me a picture of the future, I can dream of it, I can hope for it. So, if I begin to take time seriously and my hopes for the future of this world gradually take the place of their quest for knowledge from another world, I do nothing else but seeing the different forms of time, using them to live in all three ones. I am living in a present that is the consequence of my past hoping for a future.

Until now I just explained how I understand and interpret the quote written by Richard Rorty. Now I am at the point to question it, to prove or disprove it, to ask for its sense.

So, firstly do I have to take time seriously in order to see a relevant difference between past and future? Because the only thing I might be sure of is the present because we are living in it. I say might because I think that everybody has a different present. Everybody creates being conscious or unconscious of it an own present. Now you can think I am mad, but I assure you, I am trying to be not. The thing is if Rorty says that we have to take time seriously in order to replace a quest for knowledge from another world and for that I have to differentiate between past and future, I say how is that possible. How can I take something (time) seriously when everybody has a different view of it. I explain. Time is a construct of assignments. Because we decided how a minutes has to look like in order to be considered as a minute. I say that even if we all say a minute are 60 seconds, these 60 seconds are used, felt and lived in a different way by everybody. My minute can be thinking about how cute a puppy is, you minute can be why is she going crazy by saying that every minute is an individual minute. However, we both lived through a minute thinking some completely different. We both, we all live through a minute in our way because we feel different (oh, I feel so happy ; oh, I feel so sad; oh, I am so hungry etc.) , we think different and we all have a different assumption of a minute. For one it can be gone so fast and he couldn't finish his test, the other one has been bored for 5 minutes and this minute feels so long. My point is that we might have to take time seriously in order to see a difference between past and future but the past and future is

different for everyone. So, if I have to accept the construct time, I have to fulfil this concept with my time. I have to adapt to construct that was made in general in order to live in that construct.

If I replace my quest for knowing from another world with hopes for the future of my world, there are a few things to add. Firstly, as I wrote earlier that hopes for the future means believing in that world sounds not as hard. Rorty writes that that process happens gradually, so it is not simple but I think, that that is a process that is happening to a very few people. Being conscious of my past, seeing the present as a consequence might be possible for most people. But the last part? Hoping for the future, yes! But hoping for the future of this world, the present that I created, instead of the quest of knowledge from another world might be possible for a philosopher but others? I am not sure. Rorty says the quest of knowledge means wanting to know things for another world. A world that is better and that, my dear reader, is the point I want to criticise. I don't think that we as humans can differentiate between this world and the other world. Because as I said, I believe that everybody is living in their own time. Then it is impossible to see two different worlds when in the end there is just your one. Of course, I can believe in the one and have hopes for that but the quest for knowledge from another world can not be replaced because I am not believing in it. I say, the difference is not in two worlds but if you believe in in your time. In you. Time is change and is not just change of for example your physical state but also change you can make. If I have the quest for another world's knowledge, I am not replacing them with my hopes for the future in another world but I change my mindset, my beliefs and disbeliefs I have for my own world.

Everybody lives in a different world because we all create another reality, we live in. The question is of course what remains the same so that we somehow manage to live, to see other people, to speak about one world. What is that world even? It must be the place we live on and I am not saying that we might not see the same things, I just say we receive and work with it different. So, the difference lays in between everybody who is seeing it not in the world that is existing.

All in all, there is to say that I think that Rortys quote makes sense by saying that past and future are not the same but they are forms of the same construct, I say. Everybody creates their own reality, so yes, the present is logical consequence of my past hoping for the future but its always my past, my present, my future. Of course we are influenced by others, we all see the same things but we receive them differently. Time is a constructed where there assignment we made up in order to live a life that in not a complete chaos. But this construct is just a construct and we could easily make up a new one. The sense of time, the use of time, the judge of time is just possible for our own time. Time equals change and that change is made by you. Rortys quote is useful in the sense of a general time but that general time doesn't exit.

Mona Diaz Philipp

Kant Gymnasium, Berlin Spandau