

**ПОШУК КРАСИ ТА ЦІННОСТЕЙ ЩОДЕННО:  
ВІРДЖІНІЯ ВУЛФ ТА ПРОЦЕСНА ЕСТЕТИКА**

**Анотація.** У цій статті досліджуються паралелі між естетизованим викладом реальності Вірджинії Вулф у її художній літературі та естетикою процесу Альфреда Норта Уайтхеда, яка підкреслює той факт, що будь-який досвід можна класифікувати як естетичну насолоду яскравими цінностями. Якщо вчені часто асоціюють Вульфа з високою модерністською естетикою і формалізмом, письменника захоплювала повсякденність і привабливість звичайних предметів, які викликають сильний емоційний відгук у суб'єкта, що сприймає. Особливо в її ранніх оповіданнях «Значок на стіні» та «Тверді предмети» головні герої демонструють дитяче бажання досліджувати навколишні об'єкти та потребу проникнути «глибше, подалі від поверхні, з її важкими окремими фактами». Так само у своїй філософській системі Вайтхед хоче вийти за межі того, що ми вже знаємо про зовнішній світ, і дослідити внутрішні органічні відносини, що стоять за зовнішнім виглядом речі, або, за словами Вульфа, «шаблон за ватою» повсякденності. У «Науці і сучасному світі» Уайтхед стверджує, що проблема сучасної цивілізації полягає у відсутності мистецтва, досвіду та цінностей в повсякденному, і що саме митець має виховувати «звички естетичного сприйняття». Вулф також відкидає дихотомію. Між мистецтвом у його вузькому й широкому значенні, що розуміється як естетичне задоволення реальності, і стверджує у своєму відомому есе «Сучасна художня література», що предметом сучасного мистецтва може бути що завгодно і що художня література повинна художньо перекладати враження «звичайних людей».

**Ключові слова:** Вулф, Уайтхед, естетика процесу, звичайний досвід, мистецтво

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**DEEP ASSUMPTIONS**

**Abstract.** The author studies the practices of understanding the world in Western and Buddhist cultures on the basis of comparing the attitude to the reality of the world and the reality of the human person. The author believes that the scientific vision of the universe, which has become dominant in Europe and which has influenced the scientific revolution of modern times, offers great advantages in terms of technological development of mankind, but it ignores the spiritual needs of the individual. Therefore, the author considers the synthesis of both traditions as

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a necessary prerequisite for overcoming the current worldview crisis. The article is devoted to the study of strategies for understanding the world in the European and Indian traditions. The author believes that the great simplification of understanding, which is associated with thinking or material substances in relative motion, has allowed the natural sciences to move forward quickly. But if the world consists of matter in motion, human goals play no role in explaining what is happening, and therefore people are not responsible for what they do. In contrast, in the East, particularly in India, thinkers paid more attention to discovering the essence of man and his attitude to the world. The author argues that human reality is such that people everywhere, even in the Indo-European world, live by stories. They can be pure myth or pure history or a mixture of both. In science, the only object of study is effective reason. Indo-European culture does not value for the purposes of cognition any sensory experience, except sight, because the data of any other sense organ do not fit into the world of matter. It is emphasized that science and philosophy, which are so arbitrary in the choice of empirical data and so committed to ideas for which there is no evidence, should not be considered the last word of those who truly love wisdom. Modern researchers should encourage thinking that is less closed in both science and philosophy.

**Keywords:** *strategy of understanding the world, multiculturalism, human attitude to the world, Whitehead*

**Introduction.** Philosophers, like everyone else, rarely ask truly fundamental questions about their own field. No doubt most of what I write here has been said by others, but even so, I do not find that it is widely considered. I want to emphasize that, and why, the great majority of Indo-European philosophy assumes that things are substantial, and that our experience of the external world is mediated primarily by the eyes. I want more attention given to the understanding of the world of those who speak other languages and more recognition of other dimensions of experience.

The other point I want to make is a narrowing of thought that has supported the failures I have discussed above. This is epistemological. Western scientists and most philosophers want to know about the external world. They have generally supposed that this knowledge depends on our sense organs. That sensory experience is very important cannot be doubted, but that there is no extrasensory experience is refuted by evidence. There are dramatic instances of this some of which operate even under the most controlled situations. Dogs seem to know some things about their masters without the aid of their senses.

More generally, we are affected by the anger and fear of others in ways that do not seem to be exhausted by sensory clues. If the past is viewed as “external” to the present, it is clear that its influence in the present is not mediated by the sense organs and, yet, plays an important role in our knowledge. If we begin with an understanding of the present moment of experience as a highly selective synthesis of past events, then the relative importance of different sources of knowledge can be discussed without the strong bias of most scientists against some of them.

I want also to show how narrow has been the understanding of sense experience. The empiricists, who established so much of modern scientific thinking, were strongly focused on sense experience. But if one examines what they say and how they function, they in fact pay very little attention to any sense experience except sight. So far as I recall they do not assert that they are making his limitation or give reason for doing so.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Indo-European languages typically build their sentences around subjects. The subject may be a house, or a mouse, philosophy, or a human being. The subject may be described in the rest of the sentence, or there maybe a statement of what the subject has done or what has

happened to it. Many different sentences can have the same subject. So, the subject is not exhausted by the characteristics or actions noted in the sentence. The dog is black. The same dog chases rabbits. The same dog obeys its master. The subject may change without ceasing to be the same subject. The dog could be the same dog even if none of these sentences remained true of it. The real dog underlies all these contingent facts. It stands beneath them. It is a substance.

If we ask what the subject essentially is, what it is in itself, we either remove all its changeable characteristics and keep only those characteristics which, if removed, would lead us to say that the subject no longer exists. This is the substance of that subject. The substance can cease to exist, but it cannot change. In a world composed of substances, change is superficial.

In India, the sage sought above all to learn about Atman and Brahman. Atman is the substantial being of oneself. Who am I truly? Brahman is the substance of all things, ultimate reality. For many sages the task was to understand their own substance (Atman) as in fact the substance of the whole "Brahman". The substance is experienced as the deeper reality, even the ultimate reality. The phenomena lose their hold on the one who recognizes them as secondary.

In Europe, the questioning about the substance of things was less connected to spiritual experience. In the Greco-Roman world, however, the orthodox doctrine of the Christian God was deeply affected by the primacy of substances over the phenomena (Halapsis, 2018). The biblical God is obviously person-like, and in interaction with human purposes. But the orthodox God of classical Christianity is nontemporal, immutable, beyond characterization. In Thomas Aquinas (Aquinas, 2021), the understanding of Being Itself is much like Brahman, and the spirituality of the West sometimes moved in the same direction as Hinduism. In the twentieth century, Paul Tillich took up this understanding of Being itself as God. But he did not emphasize the timelessness of human essences of subjects.

In the West, the diversity of substances and how they related to each other was of primary interest. Natural philosophy was also science, and in the late Medieval period it took off and transformed itself into natural science based on the view that the natural world is composed of a multiplicity of physical substances in relative motion. These could be called material objects, and the goal was to explain everything in terms of the motions of these material objects. We know that this has been amazingly successful and has led to incredible technological developments.

In the early part of the modern period, the reduction of nature to matter in motion was not applied to human beings. Humans were also substances, but not, or not only, material ones. Human being had minds and purposes, both lacking in the natural world. Nature, therefore, had no value in itself. Its value lay in its value for human beings.

The doctrine of evolution rendered this metaphysical dualism untenable. For a few people, the inclusion of human minds in nature called for rethinking nature. But the relation of scientific work to the idea of material substances was so entrenched, that the idea of changing it was unacceptable for most. Instead, the task was to explain the mind in terms of matter in motion. In general, scientists think they have done so, but some recognize that consciousness remains as a

problem.

There is also a recognition on the part of many, that the quantum world cannot be understood as material substances in motion. A few believe that since it underlies the nature science has studied, this calls for a deep change in our scientific thinking. More dismiss it as a “queer” and impenetrable mystery irrelevant to mainstream science. However, some of the students of quantum theory and some philosophers of science have developed an alternative metaphysics that deserves a great deal more consideration than it receives. This is largely due to the organization of our universities that encourages fragmentation of thought in academic disciplines and discourages any interest in coherence or inclusiveness.

David Bohm (Bohm, 1951) is widely recognized as a leader, perhaps the leader, if the rethinking required to make sense of the quantum world. He saw that the grammar of the Indo-European languages worked against the effort to understand. He proposed that if we shift from noun to gerunds in our normal speech, or at least in our scientific speech, a unifying breakthrough could occur. In short, the quantum world, and therefore everything that grows out of it, should be understood a world of events and processes rather than substances.

This critique of substance thinking occurred long ago in India. In his case it was not needed for scientific purpose. He meditated deeply on his own existence and the existence of the world and decided that there are no substances. There is no Brahman and there is no Atman. There are only events deriving from antecedent events. He introduced the idea of “*pratitya samutpada*” recovered in remarkably close ways in Whitehead’s understanding of the creativity of each event. In each moment, at each spacio-temporal location, aspects of the whole past are achieving new integration. The “many become one and are increased by one” (Whitehead, 1978, p. 21).

**Formulation of the main material.** The universe is the process of these creative syntheses becoming new creative syntheses. Nothing underlies these events. What we think of as substantial entities are in fact cumulative processes of events. The Buddha was the first to grasp and articulate this different metaphysics that today offers a coherent future for science.

If this well-developed alternative was around, why has it not been considered. The only answer I know is that science developed in places where an Indo-European language is spoken. We think in language. Thinking about how our language shapes our metaphysics is rare, even today. The Buddha remains a true anomaly.

It is worth noting that in the religio-philosophical area in which Buddha’s work has been influential, the people who have picked it up do not speak an Indo-European language. In China, Japan, and Korea, the languages differ, but none are Indo-European. They tend to focus on what happens rather than what is.

I grew up in Japan. The Japanese have a word for “I”. It is “*watakushi*”. When Westerners speak Japanese this four-syllable word appears extensively, and, to the Japanese ear, rather offensively. The culture does not encourage preoccupation with oneself. The grammatical focus is on what happens, not on the actors. The teachings of Buddhism do not counter the worldview implicit in the language.

In the past half-century, I have been involved in the introduction of

modern Western process thinking into China. It has been received much more readily there than in the United States. Here, despite the support it receives from science, it remains extremely marginal in the academy. In China thirty-five universities developed centers for its study. And although I am a Protestant theologian, I am much more appreciated in China than in the United States.

Probably the enormous simplification of understanding that is involved in thinking of material substances in relative motion enabled the natural sciences to advance rapidly. When we think that the full causal explanation of what happens involves the whole of the past, we are not encouraged to look for causes in a fruitful way. But when we find that we pay an increasing price for what the simplification requires us to ignore, it is time to do new thinking, even if that requires thinking against the “common sense” implications of our grammar.

Among the costs has been the necessity of teaching about human beings what no one believes. For example, if the world consists of matter in motion, human purposes play no role in explaining what happens. Human beings have no responsibility for what they do. Scientists who discover new features of the natural world deserve no credit. Perhaps I am wrong, and some people really believe the implications of the scientific worldview. Then we pay a higher price.

In order to save the moral view of life, many have followed Kant in holding that there are two modes of thinking, one the scientific to which we turn for explaining what happens and the other the moral, summed up in the categorical imperative, to which we turn when we think about how we should act. It helped to hold onto a moral universe for some generations. However, it has steadily lost ground. In our universities only the critique of pure theoretical reason is left. For many people, once purpose and value are understood to play no actual role in the world, discussing it loses importance.

Another cost is the loss of historical explanation. Strictly scientific explanation is limited to what is repeatable. Of course, that is a great deal. But historical explanation is also common and important. Currently, a Congressional committee is seeking to decide whether to bring legal charges against President Trump. It is not composed of scientists although scientific knowledge certainly is needed. We want to know what Trump knew when and what were the purposes of this and that act. The committee needs to construct an accurate history of Trump’s actions and intentions. These actions and intentions are not thought of as cases of how everyone acts under a given set of circumstances. Of course, this is relevant. But the greatest interest attaches to the most unique events, which, in principle fall outside of scientific consideration.

In general, although much that happens in history can be viewed as a specific exemplification of a universal principle, and this is important, the focus of authentic historical study is on what is unique. Books are written about the history of science and of specific sciences. Some scientists find them helpful for the advance of science. If scientists understand why they have developed their science in just the way they have, they will be helped in knowing how to deal with what to study now and even with possible

changes in standard policies. The history of a science cannot be studied as a science.

No one opposes informing students about what has happened in the past. But the study of unique events and how they have shaped the world is less and less encouraged in contemporary universities. This is another high price to pay for allowing the convenience and past success of what is thought of as the scientific worldview to give it universal dominance in our teaching.

Perhaps the highest cost of all still flows from the pre-evolutionary version of modernity. Actually, the dualistic thinking, human vs natural, continues. I have argued that no one really believes that she or he is nothing but matter in motion. We have continued to view nature as something to conquer and use. Modern technology has vastly expanded our conquest.

We now know that destroying forests and reefs, using fossil fuels, poisoning the soil, exhausting scarce minerals, and developing nuclear weapons put it in question the habitability of the planet. Precisely the success of the modern worldview is the cause of the greatest danger we face. At such a time to work toward excluding all other forms of thought from higher education and allowing no place for discussing the wisdom of this policy is dogma gone wild.

I hope it is clear that most of what I complain about is almost unavoidable once we are committed to substance thinking. I am pointing out that one does not need to study philosophy to favor this form of thought. If one allows one's ordinary language to shape your thought: "it is a mistake to think of words as primarily the vehicle of thoughts" (Whitehead, 1978, p. 182).

Others have pointed out that unlike Greco-Roman civilization, many have noted that ancient Israel emphasized hearing. The "external" world as known by hearing is very different from the one known by sight. Hearing focuses on verbal communication and music. If one seeks to attend only to what is given in the present moment of hearing what one gets is neither verbal communication nor music. It is meaningless and unmusical sound. But what one actually hears refer back and forth in time. The sound is heard as part of a word that is part of a sentence that may be part of a story. Or it is part of a musical phrase that is part of a song.

In other words, the moment is part of an ongoing process, apart from which it is not what it in fact is given to be. This contrasts with sight for which the given pattern of color seems to be what it is without reference to past or future. The world of sight fits with the world of substances. The world of hearing is always made up of processes. The Bible is a collection of stories and poetry and history. It does not ask or answer what the Indo-European culture understands as philosophical questions.

Yet the reality is that people everywhere, even in the Indo-European world live by stories. They may be pure myth or pure history or, more commonly, a mixture. Excluding story from the university is part of the cost being paid for absorption in the visual world.

There is a philosophical price too. It is especially clear in Hume, but for the philosophical world in general it has not been avoided since then. Hume recognized the importance of efficient causes in science (Hume, 1986, p. 129). One may say that in science they are the only object of study. Hume wanted to

be an empiricist. For him the only sense organ appropriate for philosophy was vision. He found that he could not see any efficient cause.

If Hume had not assumed that vision is the only source of sensory knowledge for science and philosophy, he could have considered the experience of a wrestler being thrown to the ground. The wrestler feels the efficient cause of the action as pressure from his partner. When I am sucking a candy, I can feel the candy as the cause of the sweet taste in my mouth. When one listens to drumbeats, one can feel the alternating pressure in the ears. Even in sight one feels the role of the eyes. In other words, there is sensory experience of efficient causality, but because Hume sought it in the data of vision and nowhere else, he did not find it.

That Hume made this mistake could be just an interesting quirk in the history of philosophy. But that Kant took him to have proved that there is no sensory experience of causality shows that there is more to it than one eccentric philosopher. (Kant, 1961). To this day, most philosophers accept Hume's discovery and philosophical schools assume it. Apparently, Indo-European culture does not value for purposes of knowledge any sense experience other than sight. Perhaps this is because the data of no other sense organ fits into the world of substances.

**Conclusions.** My point in all of this is that a science and a philosophy that are so arbitrary in their selection of empirical data and so committed to ideas for which there is no evidence should not be considered the last word by those who really love wisdom. We should encourage thinking that is less closed both in science and in philosophy.

#### *Conflict of Interest and other Ethics Statements*

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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#### **ГЛИБОКІ ПРИПУЩЕННЯ**

**Анотація.** Автором здійснено дослідження практик осягнення світу в західній та буддійській культурах на основі порівняння ставлення до реальності світу та реальності людської особистості. Автор вважає, що наукове бачення універсуму, яке стало домінувати в Європі, та яке вплинуло на наукову революцію Нового часу, дає величезні переваги в тому, що стосується технологічного розвитку людства, але при

цьому воно залишає поза увагою духовні запити особистості. Тому синтез обох традицій автор розглядає як необхідну передумову для виходу з сучасної світоглядної кризи. Стаття присвячена дослідженню стратегій розуміння світу в європейській та індійській традиціях. Автор вважає, що величезне спрощення розуміння, яке пов'язане з мисленням або матеріальними речовинами у відносному русі, дозволило природничим наукам швидко просунутися вперед. Але якщо світ складається з матерії в русі, людські цілі не грають жодної ролі в поясненні того, що відбувається, і, отже, люди не несуть відповідальності за те, що вони роблять. На протиположному, на Сході, зокрема, в Індії, мислителі більше уваги приділяли виявленню сутності людини та її ставленню до світу. Автор доводить, що людська реальність така, що люди всюди, навіть в індоєвропейському світі живуть історіями. Вони можуть бути чистим міфом або чистою історією або їхньою сумішшю. В науці ж єдиним об'єктом вивчення є дієві причини. Індоєвропейська культура не цінує для цілей пізнання жодного чуттєвого досвіду, крім зору, тому, що дані жодного іншого органу чуття не вписуються у світ речовин. Наголошено, що наука і філософія, які настільки довільні у виборі емпіричних даних і настільки віддані ідеям, для яких немає доказів, не повинні вважатися останнім словом тим, хто справді любить мудрість. Сучасні дослідники повинні заохочувати мислення, менш закрите як у науці, так і у філософії.

**Ключові слова:** стратегія розуміння світу, мультикультуралізм, ставлення людини до світу, Вайтхед

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## THE ROOTS OF APPLIED PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY

**Abstract.** The article is devoted to topical issues of the emergence of applied philosophy and its role in society. The important role of knowledge in modern society is emphasized. The concepts of pure and applied science, as well as applied philosophy are discussed. It is noted that applied knowledge can be considered as a philosophical knowledge of the third order, which inevitably leads to complete "truth", which is applicable always and everywhere.

The development of applied philosophy and its connection with applied ethics is considered, because applied philosophy developed primarily in such areas as ethics, as the concept of applied ethics was approved more than fifty years ago. The modern examples of the development of applied philosophy are discussed, in particular: the Center for Applied