Carnap's *Boundless Ocean of Unlimited Possibilities*: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism

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<u>0. Introduction</u>. Once upon a time, Carnap had a solid reputation as a philosophical dogmatist. He was a leading figure of logical empiricism, and logical empiricism was considered a dogmatic doctrine of the past. In the last twenty years or so, a growing number of scholars has been engaged in the task of undermining this picture. The more one engages with Carnap's real thought, these scholars contend, the more one finds open-mindedness, tolerance, and pragmatism. As the revisionists claim, Carnap was a prodigy of tolerance, always engaged in the business of building bridges and finding ways of reconciling apparently irreconcilable philosophical positions. This novel characterization of Carnap's philosophy culminates in claiming for him the status of a philosopher who essentially was engaged in the promotion of enlightenment. This interpretation is pushed to new heights by Andrew Carus's *Carnap and Twentieth-Century Thought, Explication as Enlightenment* (Carus 2007). Carus proposes to conceive Carnap as the founding father of a new philosophy of enlightenment based on the notion of explication and characterized by an irreducible plurality of conceptualizations, each of which may flourish in its own right. For him, the task of understanding Carnap is not solely a matter of history of philosophy or history of ideas. Much more is at stake: Carnap's new kind of philosophy, encapsulated in the principle of tolerance and unfolded in his novel conceptualization of philosophy as explication should be conceived as the blueprint of an enlightenment philosophy for our times:

> The conceptual framework [Carnap] created is still the most promising instrument ... for the very purpose he invented it to serve ... it is still the best basis for a comprehensive and internally consistent Enlightenment world view. It is still the best hope we have of addressing the fundamental obstacles facing any attempt to formulate a coherent position of Enlightenment today. (Carus 2007, 8)

In the following I'd like to argue that the Enlightenment story is not the whole story that is to be told about Carnap's novel vision of philosophy. There were other ingredients that played an important role and that should be investigated in some more depth when we want to

properly understand the virtues and the deficiencies of Carnap's account and its possible relevance for contemporary thought. As will be explained in the following, there are some reasons to subsume these other ingredients under the label of „romanticism".

In the first decades of the 20th century Germany was not a particularly friendly place for enlightenment-oriented currents of philosophy. Rather, they were under heavy attack from all sorts of irrationalist and anti-enlightenment thought, in particular, romantic *Lebensphilosophie* in a variety of versions. At the dawn of the First World War, a philosopher such as Dewey was deeply skeptical about the prospects of an enlightenment philosophy in Germany. Indeed, in *German Philosophy and Politics* (Dewey 1915) he considered German philosophy as haunted by a „systematic intellectual error" that he diagnosed as too close an adherence to a dualistic interpretation of Kant's philosophical architectonics, according to which there are two strictly separated realms, „one outer, physical and necessary, the other inner, ideal and free" (Dewey 1915, 28). I don't say that Dewey characterized German philosophy in a fully satisfying way, but I think that he hit upon some important feature of Carnap's thought pertinent for understanding his place in the landscape of 20th century philosophy (cf. also Dewey 1944, 444-445).

The outline of this article is as follows: In the next section we briefly recall the main lines of the standard narration, presented in the *Manifesto* of the Vienna Circle (1929) and elsewhere. According to it, the Viennese logical empiricism is an offspring of what has been called as „Viennese Late Enlightenment". This entailed, in particular, that Carnap's *Aufbau* was submitted to an „Austrian interpretation" according to which it should be read as a synthesis of ideas of Mach and Poincaré as Frank put it. The main contention of the following section is that this interpretation ignores what may be called Carnap's German philosophical legacy. It is argued that this current not only comprises Neokantian ingredients but also a strong dose of German *Lebensphilosophie*. This was to play an important role for Carnap's entire philosophical career. In the following section the two concepts of „enlightenment" and „romanticism" are explained in some detail in order to get a more satisfactory description of the two poles between which Carnap's philosophy oscillated. Then we deal with some affinities between Carnap and Nietzsche that show up particularly in Carnap's famous „principle of tolerance" and his call for exploring „the boundless ocean of unlimited possibilities". This evidences, that the principle of tolerance and Carnap's new conceptualization of philosophy exhibit features that can be characterized as romantic. In the final section we compare *Lebensphilosophie* and pragmatism as two related but different versions of romanticism. This

enables us to shed new light on Carnap's problematic relation to American pragmatism that determined his philosophical career in America to a large extent.

1. The Vienna Circle and Enlightenment. The official narrative of the origins and the place of the Vienna Circle in 20th century philosophy, the *Manifesto of the Vienna Circle*, leaves no doubt that the Viennese Logical Empiricism is to be considered as a philosophical movement that has its place in the camp of the Enlightenment. According to the *Manifesto* the philosophy of the Vienna Circle was a direct offspring of what has been called „late Viennese Enlightenment" („Wiener Spätaufklärung") (cf. Stadler 2001). The *Manifesto* contended that Vienna

> was a specially suitable ground for this development is historically under-standable. In the second half of the nineteenth century, liberalism was long the dominant political current. Its world of ideas stems from the enlightenment, from empiricism, utilitarianism and the free trade movement of England. In Vienna's liberal movement, scholars of world renown occupied leading positions. Here an anti-metaphysical spirit was cultivated ... (*The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle*, 323)

Actually, matters are more complicated. The *Manifesto* can hardly be considered as a faithful historical report of „what had really happened". Rather, it was an ideological and partisan programmatic narrative. It presented the logical empiricism of the Vienna circle as an essentially Austrian affair with some ingredients imported from French conventionalism and American Pragmatism. This description quickly runs into difficulties in the cases of Carnap and Schlick, who, after all, obtained their intellectual socialization in Germany. Moreover, one may doubt, whether the scientific, philosophical and cultural climate of Vienna really was so different from that of Germany as Neurath wanted to make believe the readers of the *Manifesto*.

According to the *Manifesto*, the *Aufbau* was to play a key role in the programme of the logical empiricism of the Vienna circle. It should serve as a framework for carrying out the logical analysis through which all concepts should find their place in the all-embracing conceptual system of unified science. Although this programme of a Neurathian Unified Science based on a Carnapian constitutional theory was never realized, the *Aufbau* was continued to be considered as a central piece of the logical empiricism. For instance, still in

the 1950s Frank considered the *Aufbau* as the basic text of the Vienna Circle conceiving it as the long awaited integration of the thoughts of Mach and Poincaré:

> "According to Mach the general principles of science are abbreviated economical descriptions of observed facts; according to Poincaré they are free creations of the human mind which do not tell anything about the observed facts. The attempt to integrate the two concepts into one coherent system was the origin of what was later called Logical Empiricism." (Frank 1955, pp.11-12)

Frank was an outspoken partisan of what has been called the French connection of the Vienna Circle's logical empiricism. According to him, the *Aufbau* was the synthesis of the French and the Austrian currents of scientific philosophy the circle's members had been longing for:

> "Carnap gave the new philosophy [= Logical Empiricism of the Vienna Circle] its "classical shape". He coined many of its terms and phrases and endowed it with subtlety and simplicity. ... In ... *The Logical Structure of the World* (sic) the integration of Mach and Poincaré was actually performed in a coherent system of conspicuous logical simplicity. Our Viennese group saw in Carnap's work the synthesis that we had advocated for many years." (Frank 1955, p.33)

In line with his general dismissal attitude to „school philosophy" Frank debunked Carnap's non-Austrian philosophical heritage as nothing but "some sentimental ties to traditional German philosophy" (Frank 1955, p. 34). Modern scholarship on Carnap's philosophy has not confirmed Frank's proposal, to put it mildly. Pushing this line of research further, in the following I'll be concerned mainly with these „sentimental ties to traditional German philosophy" in order to show that they did have some relevance for Carnap's philosophy.

As said before, the official narrative of the history of the Logical Empiricism of Vienna Circle described it as an integral part of Austrian Enlightenment. Consequently, the *Aufbau* was conceived as belonging to Late Viennese Enlightenment. This flies in the face of the fact that it was essentially written in Jena and Buchenbach, which after all, should not be considered as a contingent merely geographical fact.

One of the achievements of Carus's *Carnap* (and the work of other revisionists on which Carus is building upon) is that it clearly shows the inadequacy of this story. In particular, the

relation of Carnap and Enlightenment philosophy was more complex than the story told in the *Manifesto*.

2. The German Legacy. In the last years, much research has been done to elucidate the various ways in which the logical empiricism of the Vienna Circle influenced other currents of scientific philosophy in Europe, and, vice versa, was influenced by them in one way or other. In this vein one came to study a „French connection", a „Polish connection" and various other „connections" that existed between the Viennese school and other centers of scientific philosophy. What about a „German connection"? In the *Manifesto* Neurath contended that there was no such thing. The Viennese logical empiricism was part of an independent original Austrian philosophy, and remained essentially untouched from any influence of German School philosophy. I don't think that Neurath's thesis is tenable. The German members of the circle, in particular Carnap and Schlick, brought some philosophical baggage to Vienna, even if it may be difficult to describe precisely.

In the last ten or twenty years more and more evidence has been gathered that the German contribution to the logical empiricism of Vienna was some sort of Kantianism or Neokantianism. This response is not incorrect but incomplete. With respect to Carnap, I'd like to put forward the following thesis: the philosophical baggage that Carnap brought from the German scene to Vienna was a thorough-going, deep tension between a thorough-going dualism or split of the world. In the jargon of the 1920s these components were often called *Geist* and *Leben*. In the case of Carnap, this dualism could be identified with the dualism of *Theorie* and *Praxis*. In particular, this meant, that for him science was always theoretical (cf. Carnap (19XX), (19XX)). Carnap never succeeded in the task of resolving the tension between these two ingredients in a fully satisfying way.

This „contribution" of German philosophy, i.e. the attitude of assuming an insuperable tension or dualism between *Geist* and *Leben*, was of a different kind than, say, the one that French philosophy had offered: French conventionalism was a family of more or less well-determined philosophical doctrines whose relative advantages and shortcomings could be discussed in an open and explicit way. In contrast, the opposition between *Geist* and *Leben* was a topic that dropped out of the domain of rational discourse. For Carnap, *Leben* was a realm determined by one's *Lebensgefühl*, not something under the ken of rational deliberations and decisions. *Leben* for him was a matter of living one's life and expressing one's feelings and emotions in terms of literature, music, and other arts. Regrettably, some

poor guys confused the domains of expression and representation and started talking meta-physical nonsense, not realizing that they were not engaged in the representational task of science but were expressing their *Lebensgefühl* as he pointed out in his notorious characteri-zation of metaphysicians as musicians without talent in *Overcoming Metaphysics* (Carnap 1932).

Carnap hardly ever dealt explicitly with the relation between *Geist* and *Leben*. The *Manifesto* closes with the rather cryptic remark according to which „Science serves life, and life receives it". This is a resounding final phrase indeed, but even in German its meaning is far from clear. Similarly, In the preface to the first edition of the *Aufbau* we find the rather wooly remark:

> [W]e feel that there is an inner kinship between the attitude on which our philo-sophical work is founded and artistic movements ... and in movements which strive for meaningful forms of personal and collective life. ... It is an orientation which demands clarity everywhere, but which realizes that the fabric of life can never quite be apprehended. (*Aufbau*, xviii)

Strong respectable feelings indeed, but not much of an argument. By and large, however, Carnap insisted on an unbridgeable gap between science and life. At the very end of the *Aufbau* he approvingly quoted the *Tractatus*:

> ... We feel that even if *all possible* scientific questions are answered, the problems of life have not been touched at all. Of course, there is then no question left, and just this ist he answer. (*Aufbau § 163*)

After 1928, for Carnap the frontiers between *Geist* and *Leben* shifted, and the philosophical march to the „icy slopes of logic" began. Large philosophical territories that the *Aufbau* still had claimed to belong to the ken of scientific philosophy, were left to „Leben" and its irrational preferences, in particular values and value judgments (cf. Mormann 2007). The still existing bridges to traditional philosophy were pulled down systematically. Philosophers as Dingler, Cassirer, Rickert, Vaihinger, Husserl, or Poincaré no longer played a role. The outer philosophical world with its more or less tight connections to *Leben* disappeared from his philosophical horizon. Instead, investigating the richnesses of an infinite universe of formal possibilities began to occupy centre stage on Carnap's philosophical agenda.

In the new universe, philosophers were no longer confined to the narrow boundaries of

traditional logic, no, they were free to invent their own new logical systems and languages, provided they clearly specified the rules of these systems. Rational reconstruction was replaced by logical explications, and the only constraint a proposed logical system had to satisfy was that its rules were stated in a clear and explicit manner.

Carnap took the dualism between *Geist* and *Leben* as something given. In contrast, Neokantian philosophers such as Rickert or Cassirer were not prepared to leave *Leben* and the affairs of social and political practice to an irrationalist „Lebensphilosophie" without discussion. They attempted to come to terms with *Lebensphilosophie* as a kind of discourse that at least partially was susceptible to reasons. One may doubt that they fully succeeded in this task, but this need not concern us.

Cassirer cast his criticism of *Lebensphilosophie* in the same framework as his criticism of metaphysics in general. In 1910, in *Substance and Function*, he had put forward the thesis that a metaphysical philosophical stance was not so much characterized as that it goes „beyond possible experience" but that it sticks to certain absolutized dualistic schemes:

> The characteristic procedure of metaphysics ... consist[s] ... in separating correlative standpoints within the field of knowledge itself, and thus transforming what is logically correlative into an opposition of things (cf. 237f). At no point is this feature so significant as in the old question as to the relation of thought and being, of the subject and object of knowledge. ... If once „things" and the „mind" become conceptually separated, they fall into two separate spatial spheres, into an inner and an outer world, between which there is no intelligible causal connection. (Cassirer 1910(1953), 271)

Twenty years later, around 1930, he criticised *Lebensphilosophie* as the then reigning version of metaphysics as another example of this sort of dualistic thinking:

> The opposition of "life" and "spirit" is in the centre of the metaphysics of the 19th and the beginning 20th century. It turns out to be thus determining and decisive that it swallows more and more all the other metaphysical dualisms that have been coined in the history of metaphysics, thereby making them disappear. The oppositions of "being" and "becoming", "unity" and "plurality", "matter" and "form", "soul" and "body" all appear to be dissolved in that one basic antithesis. (Cassirer 1995, 7-8).

Moreover, Cassirer traced back *Lebensphilosophie* to 19th century's romanticism when he noticed the important influence that romanticism had on the „modern and most modern currents of philosophy" in Germany (cf. Cassirer 1993, 33f). The dualistic tendency of lebensphilosophical metaphysics stood, as Cassirer observed, in stark contrast to the philosophy of symbolic forms that aimed to overcome these fruitless oppositions, in particular that between *Geist* and *Leben*. Carnap, on the other hand, forever remained stuck in the dualism of *Geist* and *Leben*. He never escaped from this metaphysical trap, as the philosophers of Marburg Neokantianism and the American pragmatists such as Dewey characterized this and other dualisms.

3. Enlightenment versus Romanticism. Characterizing Carnap's philosophy as enlightenment philosophy remains unsatisfactory as long as we don't render precise what is to be understood by enlightenment. After all, a variety of philosophical currents can be associated with enlightenment. The situation is even worse in the case of romanticism that is often simply used as counter-concept of enlightenment meaning simply.

In explaining the relation between enlightenment and romanticism as fundamentally different, even opposite ways of conceiving the world I'd like to follow Isaiah Berlin who in *The Roots of Romanticism* (Berlin 2000), *The Power of Ideas* (Berlin 2001) and other works extensively dealt with these issues. Berlin proposed to characterize enlightenment by three principles (cf. *Roots*, Chapter 2):

(1)   All genuine questions can be answered. If a question cannot be answered it is not a question. In Carnapian terms, questions that cannot be answered may be called metaphysical pseudo-questions (*Scheinprobleme*).

(2)   All answers to genuine questions can be discovered by scientific means which can be learnt and taught to other persons. Revelation, tradition, and dogma don't play any role in the process of investigation. The only method is by the correct use of reason, deductively as in the mathematical sciences, and inductively as in the science of nature.

(3)   All answers must be compatible with one another; otherwise, chaos will result.

As Berlin put it, the general pattern of this rationalist world conception is that life or nature is a solvable jigsaw puzzle (Berlin 2000, 23). Romanticism can be characterized as the world conception that denied the validity of these principles:

> ... [T]he common assumption of the romantics ... is that the answers to the great questions are not to be discovered so much as to be invented. They are not something found, they are something literally made. In its extreme idealistic form it is a vision of the entire world. In its more familiar form, it confines itself to the realm of values, ideals, rules of conduct - ... – a realm seen ... as something that man creates, as he creates works of art ... . (Berlin (2001, 203))

Romanticism undermined the notion that in matters of value, politics, morals, aesthetics there were such things as objective criteria which operate betwen human beings, such that anyone who does not use these criteria simply did not understand or refused to understand what was the matter. Romanticists came to make a distinction between those realms where objective truth obtained and correct rule-following was at stake – in mathematics, in physics, in certain regions of common sense – and where objective truth had been compromised – in ethics, in aesthetics and, generally spoken, in all matters of life, as the partisans of *Lebensphilosophie* used to say. Already from this general description transpires that Carnap's *Weltanschauung* exhibited strong romantic features. For instance, when he insisted on a strict separation between *Geist* and *Leben*, this entailed that the realm of *Leben* did not belong to the sphere where objectivity and rationality reigned. Rather, *Leben* was the domain of *Lebensgefühl* and subjective decisions determined by one's „character" (cf. Carnap 1963, 82). Actually Carnap went much further, showing traces of an unbridled romanticism, as Berlin called it. In *Das Prinzip der Einfachstheit* (Carnap 1923) he put forward the thesis that the distinction between „correct" and „false" theories was logically untenable. Strictly speaking one could only distinguish between more complicated and less complicated theories, since any theory could be rendered true by proving appropriate „Zuordnungsbe-ziehungen". In *Syntax* he celebrated enthusiastically his new conception of logic as the one that left behind the restrictions of correctness.

From Berlin's insight that the core of romanticism lies in its constructive attitude it transpires that romanticism is not necessarily oriented toward the past, many versions of romanticisms exhibit strong modernist or utopian features. This is true in particular for Carnap. The clearest expression of his romanticist attitude was the programme formulated in *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt*, namely, to build up a new scientific world from scratch. Although

Carnap was directly concerned only with the lofty task of a <u>logical</u> construction of the world, more was at stake than just a merely logical or epistemological issue (cf. Galison 1996). The concept *Aufbau* encapsulated a romantic leitmotif in Carnap's thought. As Galison pointed out, "*Aufbau*" in German was a heavily loaded concept evidencing a strong Romantic utopianism in Carnap's *Weltanschauung*. *Aufbau* always connotated construction after a break or historical catastrophe of some kind, construction of a new world, or, even more grandiloquent, of a plurarity of new worlds. The worlds that many romantics constructed or invented often were only losely related to the real world. Often, they indulged in exploring the imaginary worlds of philosophy, poetry, arts and ideas. As Berlin rightly remarks, this amounted, particularly among German pietist romanticism[1], to a sort of retreat from the real world motivated largely by an argument of „sour grapes" (cf. Berlin 2000, 37). Thereby a spiritual habit arose that Dewey in his *German Philosophy and Politics* described as a fatal dualism that plagued the German mind since the days of Kant (Dewey 1915). More precisely, Dewey blamed German thought that

> since Kant's times [it] set its intellectual and spiritual clocks by the Kantian standard: the separation of the inner and the outer, with its lesson of freedom and idealism in one realm, and of mechanism, efficiency and organization in the other. ... It does seem true that ... Germans ... can withdraw themselves from the exigencies and contingencies of life into a region of *Innerlichkeit* which at least *seems* boundless. (Dewey 1915, 45)

According to Dewey, "this (inner) region can rarely successfully uttered save through music, and a frail and tender poetry..." (ibidem). Carnap's "boundless ocean of unlimited possibilities" evidences that the region of *Innerlichkeit* can be expressed otherwise – not only by music and poetry, but also by beautiful formal systems that describe fancy idealized worlds that are related to the real world only in a quite tenuous way, if at all.

Among his fellow logical empiricists Carnap showed the most pronounced predilection for beautiful formal systems which could be interpreted as a romantic flight from the messiness and ambiguities of real science. More empiristically minded logical empiricists like Neurath

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[1] Indeed, Carnap was brought up in a pietist context (cf. Gabriel 2004, 19). As Gabriel pointed out this fact might have influenced his negative stance against all kinds of metaphysical and theological doctrines that attempted to regulate the inner spiritual life of the individual. It is remarkable that in a very early unpublished manuscript (Carnap 1918) he blamed his own generation to have contributed to the German catastrophe by succumbing to the temptations of a „pietist" *vita contemplativa* leaving the real world, in particular politics, in the hands of irresponsible reactionary politicians and militarists.

used to criticize this intellectual preference of Carnap as pseudorationalism that introduced metaphysics through the back door. Of course, Carnap would not have characterized it in this way. For him, the distinction between the pure logic of science (*Wissenschaftslogik*) and other disciplines that dealt with the more mundane aspects of scientific knowledge was just a useful division of labour.

Complementarily to his predilection for exploring formal possibilities, throughout his intellectual career Carnap had no sense for the "messyness" of the practical realm. Scientific matters that pointed in this direction he delegated to disciplines such as psychology, sociology, or history – he himself was always really interested only in the pure realm of philosophy of science as logic of science. He never showed any sympathy for matters of approximation, vagueness, and ambiguity and never took seriously Neurath's pet idea that "*Ballungen*" were inevitable even in our best science.

4. Carnap and Nietzsche. Without underestimating the influence of authors such as Bergson, Dilthey, Klages, and Scheler, the romantic thinker who had arguably the greatest influence on Carnap's generation, was Nietzsche.[2] At first, view, the constellation Nietzsche-Carnap may appear a bit paradoxical, since the two subscribe to virtually opposite conceptions of philosophy. Or so it seems, when we apply a metaphilosophical yardstick recently put forward by Gabriel for classifying the variegated writings usually characterized as „philosophy" (cf. Gabriel 2004, 12). Gabriel proposes to order them on a spectrum between the poles of science at one end and poetry on the other. Then, evidently, Carnap's „philosophy" as logic of science is located near the scientific pole. For him, philosophy no longer has any content of its own. What alleged content philosophy had, traditionally, is handed over to poetry, where it finds ist appropriate form of expression. On the other hand, as has been observed by many, Nietzsche's philosophy is clearly located near the poetic end of the philosophical spectrum. According to Gabriel, Carnap pursued a peculiar strategy to combine the two ways of philosophizing: „For Carnap, Frege's *Begriffsschrift* lied on the desk, so to speak, and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* on the bedside table" (cf. Gabriel 2004, 12). This is a nice metaphorical description but it still underestimates the role Nietzsche played for Carnap's philosophical development, or so I want to argue. Nietzsche was more than just a metaphysical poet („Begriffsdichter") who expressed the *Lebensgefühl* of Carnap's

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[2] For a general account of Nietzsche's influence on virtually all aspects of German culture, literature and politics the reader may consult Aschheim (1992).

generation in unequaled rhetorical elegance and intensity. Nietzsche influenced considerably his thought-style and even the content of philosophizing. This paper is not the place to treat the issue Nietzsche-Carnap in an exhaustive manner. We have to be content to mention some salient examples.

Evidence for Nietzsche's early influence can be found in the manuscript *Vom Chaos zur Welt* (Carnap 1921/22) that Carnap himself considered as the "nucleus of the *Aufbau*". In *Chaos* Carnap subscribed to a pseudo-Nietzschean "will to order" (for him apparently more appealing than the original "will to power") that was the "irrational starting point" of the orderly constitution of the world which the philosopher attempted to realize. In *Aufbau*, Carnap quoted several times approvingly a rather apocryphal edition of Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* (edited by Max Brahn) (*Aufbau* §§ 65, 67, 163)). The title „*Overcoming Metaphysics by Logical Analysis of Language*" rehearses a key theme of *Zarathustra*, to wit, „overcoming" and „self-overcoming". In *Theoretische Fragen und praktische Entscheidungen* (Carnap 1934) Carnap raged against theology and metaphysical philosophy as „dangerous narcotics having a detrimental effect on reason" in a way that reminds one not only of Marx but also on Nietzsche (cf. *The Gay Science*, Book 3, 147).

For Carnap the adequate medium for expressing an attitude toward *Leben* was art. Metaphysics was a product of confusion, to wit, the metaphysician confused theory with a expression. To give a blunt example: Instead of expressing his emotional dislike of killing the innocent in some work of art as, say, Picasso did through *Guernica*, the metaphysician invents an ethical theory from which he allegedly can deduce that the proposition „Killing the innocent is evil" by an logically impeccable argument. For Carnap, this was intellectually dishonest or at least misguided. Consequently, the most respectable metaphysician was for him the one who avoided this confusion, namely Nietzsche:

> In the work, ... in which he expresses most strongly that which others express through metaphysics or ethics, in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he does not choose the misleading theoretical form, but openly the form of art, of poetry (Carnap 1932, 30).

Although Carnap abandoned the programme of the *Aufbau* soon after 1928 he never gave up his romantic constructivist attitude, perhaps he pursued it even more radical than ever. From *Logical Syntax* onwards, Carnap no longer was content to rationally reconstruct the world of scientific knowledge in a neat and orderly manner, rather, he aimed at the logical conquest of the entire universe of possible worlds. This "programme" may be conceived as

an analogue to the programme for a new philosophy that Nietzsche had formulated some fifty years before when in *The Gay Science* he launched forward the following emphatic call:

> *Get on the Ships*! – ... [We need] ... new philosophers! The moral earth, too, is round! The moral earth, too, has its antipodes! The antipodes, too, have their right to exist! There is yet another world to be discovered—and more than one! On the ships, you philosophers! (*The Gay Science,* Book IV, § 289)

> ... finally the horizon seems clear again, even if not bright; finally our ships may set out again, set out to face any danger; every daring of the lover of knowledge is allowed again; the sea, *our* sea, lies open again; maybe there has never been such an "open sea." (ibidem, Book V, §343)

Fifty years later in *Syntax*, Carnap shifted Nietzsche's metaphorical description of the task of the new philosophers from the moral realm to the logical sphere:

> In logic there are no morals. Everyone can construct his logic, i.e. his language form, however he wants.
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> ....
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> The first attempts to cast the ship of logic off from the *terra firma* of the classical forms were certainly bold ones, considered from the historical point of view. But they were hampered by the striving after "correctness". Now, however, that impediment has been overcome, and before us lies the boundless ocean of unlimited possibilities.[3] (Carnap 1937, xv)

According to him, the recent achievements of logic and mathematics had opened up a whole new world („the unbounded ocean") that contained an infinity of possible logical systems

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[3] Thomas Uebel pointed out that the direct source of the „ocean metaphor" in *Syntax* might have been a proposal of Neurath's: To render the Foreword more appealing to the general reader Neurath suggested to Carnap to employ some resounding phrases that characterized *Syntax* as an „attempt to leave the coastal waters of classical logic" or „(Ahead of us the wide blue distance), *the boundless ocean of possibilities.*" (Uebel (2009, 69), quoting a letter of Neurath to Carnap, 10 June 1934, ASP, RC 029-10-65). This may well be the case, but does not refute my Nietzschean interpretation. Both Neurath and Carnap had read their Nietzsche. As Neurath explicitly put it: „Nietzsche and his critique of the metaphysicians took an active part in the flourishing of the Vienna School." (Neurath 1981, 652). Moreover, Carnap's comparison of the plurality of logics and the plurality of morals does not occur in Neurath's letter and is a clear allusion to Nietzsche's *Gay Science*.

awaiting their exploration. His proposal of conceiving philosophy (of science) as logic of science put forward in *Von der Erkenntnistheorie zur Wissenschaftslogik* (1936) did not amount to a restriction of the realm of philosophy. Quite the contrary. For Carnap, distilling logic of science as the pure essence of philosophy amounted to ensure for philosophy at last an unbounded sphere of its own – a romantic refuge where philosophers could engage in the infinite task of investigating ever new possible formal systems.

Indeed, Carnap's philosophy may be seen as a sketch for a "science of possibilities" or a *Möglichkeitswissenschaft*, somewhat as an elaboration of Musil's "sense of possibilities" that appeared in *Man Without Qualities*. Another seventy years later Carus whole-heartedly endorses this romanticist possibilism closing *Carnap and Twentieth Century Thought* (Carus 2007) with an emphatical rehearsal of the romantic Nietzsche-Carnap appeal:

> Sixty years after Carnap first set sights on the open sea of free possibilities, it still lies before us, all but unexplored. We have been extremely timid, clinging to the shore line, hardly daring to venture out of sight of land. The warm, familiar, safe habour of habit and tradition appeals to us as much as it ever did to our ancestors. It is time we ventured forth again in the pioneering spirit of the original Enlightenment, emboldened by Carnap's example. (Carus (2007, 309)

Carnap's affinity to "possibilities" was not a matter of personal whim - „possibilism" may be conceived as the defining condition of the modern age as such. In his opus magnum *The Man Without Qualities* Musil clearly sympathized with the „possibility people", i.e. those that possessed a refined „*Möglichkeitssinn*". Nevertheless, he was well aware that a complementary „sense of reality" may be more important to come to terms with the real world: „If one wishes to pass well through open doors, one has to respect the fact that they have a fixed frame: this principle is just a requirement of the sense of reality".

In *The Sense of Reality* (1996) Isaiah Berlin, without reference to Musil, dealt with this sense of reality in a detailed and thorough-going study. In one of the essays of this book he characterized the sense of reality as an essential ingredient for being reasonable in the practical affairs of our social and political life:

> The arts of life – not least of politics – as well as some among the human studies turn out to possess their own special methods and techniques, their own criteria of success and failure. ... Bad judgment here consists not in failing to apply the

methods of natural science, but, on the contrary, in over-applying them. .. To be rational in any sphere, to apply good judgment to it, is to apply those methods which have turned out to work best ... [To demand anything else] is mere irrationalism. (Berlin 1996, 40-41).

Berlin's remark is hardly more than a paraphrase of a classical dictum of Aristotle (cf. *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, 3). People with a sense of reality react nervously to Carnap's unbridled theoretical Romantic constructivism. For them, lacking a good sense of reality means to be trapped in the cage of "pseudorationalism", or, "to be more logical than empiricism allows to be", as Neurath used to say.

The main evidence for Carnap's missing sense of reality was the overstated dichotomy between *Geist* and *Leben* leading him to a strict noncognitivism with respect to values and value judgments. Leaving aside an early flirt with Neokantian value theory (cf. Mormann 2007), from 1928 onwards for him fundamental values belonged to the ken of *Leben* and therefore did not belong to the realm of rational deliberations. Carnap's enlightenment remained constrained to the theoretical realm, leaving out the practical.

5. Romanticism and Pragmatism. The Romanticism of the 19th and early 20th century was anything than a coherent movement. They lacked an identifiable common doctrine beyond the vague conviction that the answers to the great questions were not to be discovered so much as to be invented. Hence it is only to be expected that these "invented answers to the great questions" widely differred. German *Lebensphilosophie* only provided one kind of answers. A different, but nevertheless genuinely romanticist attitude to cope with the important questions in a constructivist and inventive manner was offered by American Pragmatists. In contrast to the pietist romanticism in Germany, the American pragmatists did not succumb to the temptation to retreat from the real world in order to indulge in the exploration of worlds of their imagination. Rather, they put their inventive efforts toward the real world. In the hands of James, Dewey and others romanticism became practical aiming at the inventing answers which might help to improve the life of mankind. Thereby, as Rorty put it, romanticism was *aufgehoben* in pragmatism (cf. Rorty 1982, 2007). For pragmatism, there was no fundamental difference between the inner and the outer world which characterized much of German romanticism. On the contrary, this alleged difference was recognized as a metaphysical hindrance for a thorough-going comprehensive constructive attitude toward the world. Thereby the strict separation between the practical and the theoretical, between *Leben* and *Geist* which was typical for Carnap's incomplete and half-hearted pragmatism, became obsolete.

In the 1940s Dewey launched forward a vigorous attack against that stance. Dewey, as the other pragmatists as well, considered Carnap's non-cognitivism as a fundamental mistake of logical empiricism. He considered it as a symptom of the originally „Kantian" but nowadays outdated dichotomy of the two worlds - criticized already in his *German Philosophy and Philosophy* some 30 years ago. Dewey combated non-cognitivism on the ground that it accepted the modern division between irrational life and scientific rationality, instead of fighting against it:

> The hard-and-fast impassible line which is supposed by some to exist between "emotive" and "scientific" language is a reflex of the gap that exists between the intellectual and the emotional in human relations and activities. ... The *practical* problem that has to be faced is the establishment of cultural conditions that will support the kinds of behavior in which emotion and ideas, desires and appraisals, are integrated. (Dewey 1970(1944), 444 - 445).

Dewey spotted pretty well the crucial weakness of Carnap's position which unduly restricted the domain of rationality to the theoretical strictly separating the logic from the pragmatic of science. Dewey's carried out an intellectual anatomy that identifies the „systematic intellectual error" to which much of post-Kantian German philosophy succumbed, Carnap's included, namely, to strictly separate the two worlds of „Geist" and „Leben", as the young Carnap called them. To be sure, not all of German philosophy of the last century ran into this metaphysical trap. A pertinent case was Cassirer's critical idealism that insisted on the metaphysical character of this separation (cf. Cassirer 1995, 1993).

At the end of the day, Carnap's strict separation of the theoretical and the practical amounted in a romanticist flight from the real world with all its messy details and doubtful conceptualizations to an infinity of neat but fictious worlds, or, has he put it, into the boundless ocean of unlimited possibilities. From this excursion analytical philosophy of science only slowly recovered.

6. Conclusion. Carnap's new kind of philosophy encapsulated in the principle of tolerance and, according to Carus, to be unfolded as pursuing philosophy as explication, was an enlightenment philosophy determined by very special conditions and circumstances. It was marked not only by the progressive context of Red Vienna of the late 1920s and early 1930s, but also by the context of Weimar, or, more precisely by the German intellectual culture of the first decades of the 20th century. It was a version of *Aufklärung* marked by a

special brand of Late German Romanticism that constrained the infinities of the „boundless ocean of unlimited possibilities" to the theoretical realm - as was typical for most of German romanticism. Carnap, as a philosopher whose philosophical education took place in the late Wihelminian Empire and early Weimar republic was a heir not only of the enlightenment tradition but also of late German romanticism, in particular *Lebensphilosophie* and Nietzsche's philosophy. The attempt to reconcile these rather antagonistic ingredients led Carnap to an uneasy compromise between *Geist* und *Leben* that rendered his enlightenment an enlightenment restricted to the formal and the theoretical. Hence it seems doubtful that Carnap's sketch of an enlightenment philosophy can serve as a blueprint for a truly modern enlightenment philosophy for the 21th century as some philosophers seem to believe.

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