

## Editor's Note

Florin Lobont<sup>\*</sup>

The present issue of *Deliberatio* is dedicated to the memory of Guy du Plessis. This tribute is more than a formal gesture. It is a way of allowing his presence—intellectual, practical, and human—to remain at the threshold of a volume devoted to philosophical practice. Guy's work reminds us that philosophy is not truly practical simply because it is applied to life from the outside. It becomes practical when it stays with life where life is most difficult: in suffering, relapse, self-deception, shame, responsibility, loss of meaning, and the slow, fragile labor of recovery. Continuing the conversation opened under the theme “Philosophical Practice: Contemporary Questions and Answers,” this issue asks what philosophy can still do when it refuses both abstraction without life and consolation without rigor. The contributions gathered here approach philosophy as a living form of attention: sometimes accompanying persons in crisis, sometimes unsettling inherited certainties, sometimes reimagining organizations, and sometimes clarifying the very structures through which thought becomes meaningful.

The issue opens, meaningfully, with “In Memoriam: Guy du Plessis (d. 2025),” a text of remembrance dedicated to a South African philosophical practitioner whose work brought together addiction studies, existential thought, Logic-Based Therapy, Nietzschean life-affirmation, and philosophy as a way of life. Its place at the beginning is not only commemorative; it gives the issue its first tone. Guy du Plessis's writings ask philosophical practitioners to remain faithful to the human places where thinking is most needed and least decorative: where suffering meets self-interpretation, where relapse meets responsibility, where shame meets the search for dignity, and where a person needs not only advice, but a horizon. The tribute does not attempt to close his life in a biographical summary. It lets his work continue to speak, quietly but firmly, as an invitation to keep philosophical practice close to human fragility and to remember that thinking may become an act of recovery when it helps persons regain agency, clarity, courage, and a livable future.

---

<sup>\*</sup> Professor, Department of History, Theology and Philosophy, West University of Timisoara, Blvd. V. Pârvan 4, Timisoara. Email: [florin.lobont@e-uvt.ro](mailto:florin.lobont@e-uvt.ro). ORCID: 0000-0003-3197-0950.

Lydia Amir's "The Task of Moral Philosophy: A Case Study for the Christian Interest in Philosophy" brings the issue directly into the question of philosophy's transformative power. The article asks whether philosophy can genuinely change a person's life, and what may prevent it from doing so. Moral philosophy becomes a test case for a larger concern: the autonomy of philosophy in relation to Christianity, not only historically, but also in the present. Amir writes from within the long tension between philosophy as a path of personal transformation and philosophy as a discourse shaped, limited, or absorbed by external commitments. Her contribution is valuable for philosophical practice because it refuses a comfortable assumption: that invoking philosophy is already enough to transform. Transformation requires autonomy, courage, self-knowledge, and a willingness to ask whether moral ideals liberate the person or quietly redirect philosophy toward ends that are not fully its own.

With "Oneness as Dao in business," Alex Fong expands the field of philosophical practice into the world of organizations, leadership, and enterprise. The article proposes Oneness as Dao in Business as a philosophical foundation for the oneness in business framework, drawing on Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism, and contemporary organizational studies. What makes the contribution especially suggestive is its refusal to separate business success from the cultivation of compassion, empathy, responsible leadership, virtuous organizational culture, and long-term sustainability. The article does not treat Eastern wisdom as a decorative supplement to management theory. It asks what would happen if interconnectedness were taken seriously as a practical principle of organizational life. In that sense, business becomes not merely a site of efficiency or competition, but a field in which philosophical practice can challenge hyper-individualism and help reorient institutions toward forms of flourishing shared by individuals, organizations, stakeholders, and wider communities.

A different kind of challenge is offered in "Provocation in Philosophical Practice," by Kathryn Elizabeth Cook, Sara Dorrego Carreira, and Anca-Cornelia Tiurean. Their article resists the contemporary temptation to make philosophical practice too quickly safe, comfortable, therapeutic, or outcome-driven. Its central claim is that the purpose of philosophical practice is the provocation and exercise of thinking, grounded in the primacy of reason. This does not mean indifference to the person who comes into consultation; rather, it means taking that person seriously as capable of thought. The authors recover the Socratic spirit as an aesthetic, performative, and sometimes uncomfortable discipline, one in which cherished ideas and attitudes are not protected from examination simply because their questioning may disturb us. The article therefore reminds the field that care and provocation need not be enemies. There are forms of care that awaken precisely because they do not flatter, soothe, or prematurely close the inquiry.

Daniel-Valentin Mioc's "The Potential of Irony in Philosophical Counselling: An Approach Based on Søren Kierkegaard's Ontology" turns to Kierkegaard in order to recover subjectivity from the anonymizing power of abstract systems. Here, irony is not treated as mere wit, distance, or intellectual play. It becomes a method of existential redirection, a way of interrupting the hold of social certainties and rational systems that can leave the individual flattened into a role, function, or impersonal identity. By distinguishing contemplative irony from executive irony, the article shows how irony can suspend false seriousness without falling into nihilism, and how it can help the counselee move from inertia toward responsibility. Its relevance for philosophical counselling lies in this delicate movement: the practitioner does not hand over ready-made truth, but creates conditions in which the person may be turned back toward the difficult task of becoming a self.

The question of selfhood returns, in another register, in Dragoș-Sorin Păian's "Narrative Flexibility and Meta-stability: Philosophical Counseling as a Practice of Self-reconfiguration." The article begins from a recognizably contemporary difficulty: many people do not simply lack solutions; they lack a coherent and flexible story in which their past, present, values, wounds, choices, and possible futures can be held together. Drawing on philosophical, psychoanalytic, narrative, and neurocognitive perspectives, Păian presents philosophical counseling as a practice of self-reconfiguration. Its task is not to dissolve the self, nor to impose a new narrative from outside, but to help the person loosen rigid narratives and build a more dynamic form of identity stability. The notion of meta-stability is especially fruitful here: the self remains coherent not by becoming fixed, but by becoming able to move, reinterpret, and survive transformation without disintegration.

Closing the sequence of articles, Sorin Crețu's "Symbols' Individuation: The Challenge and A Possible Solution" brings philosophical practice into contact with philosophy of mind, computational theory, and contemporary neuroscience. At first sight, the problem of symbols' individuation may seem distant from the ordinary scenes of consultation and dialogue. Yet the article touches a question that matters deeply for any practice concerned with meaning: how can thoughts, symbols, and mental representations be differentiated, shared, and made causally significant? By engaging role-functionalism, Fodor's language of thought hypothesis, the computational theory of mind, Frege cases, and sparse distributed representations, Crețu proposes sparsity as a possible neurocomputational principle relevant to the individuation of symbolic representations. The article widens the issue's horizon by showing that philosophical practice also depends on broader questions about cognition, intentionality, representation, and the conditions under which meanings can be communicated, misunderstood, stabilized, or transformed.

Taken together, the contributions gathered in this volume show philosophical practice as a plural and demanding field. It can remember a colleague by continuing

the work he cared about; it can test the autonomy of moral philosophy; it can bring oneness into business; it can defend provocation against the softening of inquiry; it can use irony to recover subjectivity; it can help narratives become flexible without becoming empty; and it can ask how symbolic thought is individuated at the level of cognition itself. What unites these texts is not a single doctrine, but a shared confidence that philosophy still has work to do where human beings, institutions, and ideas are most exposed. The issue therefore invites readers to understand philosophical practice not as a finished discipline, but as a living art of clarification, reorientation, and responsible questioning.

If the first issue under this theme asked how philosophical practice might respond to contemporary questions, the present continuation shows that such answers must remain open, situated, and intellectually alive. They emerge in memory, dialogue, disagreement, critique, organizational imagination, existential self-recovery, narrative reconstruction, and conceptual analysis. They also remind us that philosophical practice does not become practical by abandoning rigor, nor does it remain philosophical by withdrawing from life. It becomes most itself when rigor and life meet: when thought becomes capable of accompanying difficulty without simplifying it, and when human difficulty becomes thinkable without being reduced to a problem to be solved too quickly.