Philosophy as Paradigms: An Account of a Contextual Metaphilosophical Perspective

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Abstract: The present paper aims at highlighting some of the main characteristics of a descriptive contextual approach to philosophy. Descriptive, in the sense that it centers not on the (normative) question of what philosophy should be, but on what philosophy is, has been, or may be. And contextual, in the sense that it treats philosophy as human praxis situated in and interacting with certain social and historical settings. In order to develop such an account, we engage closely with Kuhn’s paradigm-centered contextual approach to science and examine, following Rorty, how it could be regarded in connection to philosophy. The paper concludes with a brief discussion of two concrete cases to which such an approach may be applied, the division between analytic and continental philosophy at the level of philosophical traditions, and the case of Wittgenstein’s life and thought at the level of individual philosophers.

Introduction

Discussions over the nature of philosophy, paradigmatically in the form of an attempt to provide answers to the question of what philosophy is, have been accompanying philosophical reflection throughout its historical course. This is hardly surprising, as the aporetic human state that leads to philosophical inquiring in the first place—vividly described by Wittgenstein’s aphorism: ‘A philosophical problem has the form: “I don’t know my way about”’ (Wittgenstein 2001, §123)—could not have evaded turning to itself and placing philosophizing, as a distinctive human endeavor, among its fields of investigation. Despite the long period for which the questions over philosophy and its nature, role, methods, goals, and scope have been occupying scholars, it was not before the 20th century intense disciplinization in academia that the variously related problematics regarding philosophy were grouped to constitute the field of ‘metaphilosophy’. The journal *Metaphilosophy*,

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whose publication in 1970 may be viewed as a significant step for the
establishment of the field as a discrete area of philosophical inquiring,
states on its website as its particular areas of interest:

- the foundation, scope, function, and direction of philosophy
- the interrelations among schools or fields of philosophy (for example, the relation of logic to problems in ethics or epistemology)
- aspects of philosophical systems
- presuppositions of philosophical schools
- the relation of philosophy to other disciplines (for example, artificial intelligence, linguistics, or literature)
- sociology of philosophy
- the relevance of philosophy to social and political action
- issues in the teaching of philosophy

In the introduction to the journal's very first issue, the then editors
eschew providing a sharp definition of the term and rather try to delimit
its scope by referring to the topics to which it is directly or loosely tied
(see Bynum and Reese (1970)). In the same issue, Morris Lazerowitz—a
key figure for the development of metaphilosophy in the second half of
the 20th century—does in fact provide a kind of a definition of
metaphilosophy as 'the investigation of the nature of philosophy, with
the central aim of arriving at a satisfactory explanation of the absence of
uncontested philosophical claims and arguments' (Lazerowitz 1970).

1. See Metaphilosophy (2015).
2. In his brief note, Lazerowitz claims that he was the one to have coined the term
'metaphilosophy' in a book review that was published in Mind in 1942. Indeed, in Lazerowitz
(1942, p. 284) we find him characterizing the question of 'Why are no philosophical disputes
ever settled?' as a metaphilosophical problem. Nevertheless, we should note that Wittgenstein
already uses the term 'metaphilosophy' in MS-114 which dates from 1932
(http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/texts/BTEn/Ms-114.83r[3]). Wittgenstein uses the term in
order to refer to the idea of 'the calculus of all calculi' which he rejects, together with its
foundationalist aspirations (see also Wittgenstein (1974, p. 19 §72)).
Lazerowitz takes the activity with which later Wittgenstein was occupied as an indicative case of such a kind of metaphilosophical investigation and applies Wittgenstein's characterization of his own work—"one of the heirs of philosophy"—to metaphilosophical inquiring itself. While Lazerowitz's definition of metaphilosophy appears quite limited compared to the diversity of issues that the above-cited list raises, we should recognize that it manages to capture and at the same time exemplify the ambiguity and the potential different readings of the term. One the one hand, metaphilosophy is taken to consist in the investigation of the nature of philosophy, while, on the other hand, it is also conceived as the kind of intellectual activity that follows, from a temporal point of view, and, in fact, comes to replace traditional philosophizing.3

The chief goal of this paper is to point out and elucidate the basic characteristics of a metaphilosophical perspective that goes against some of the dominant metaphilosophical approaches. The distinctive feature of this approach is its contextual character, as comprised of the adoption of an anthropological point of view that treats philosophy not as a (theoretical) activity-in-itself, but as a thread in the web of human praxis and as an exemplification of the creative and self-instituting mode of the human form(s) of life. In the next section, we explore some of the dominant metaphilosophical approaches and the ways in which a horizontal, descriptive approach to philosophy stands opposed to them.

3. The prefix 'meta-', stems from the Greek term 'μετά', which may be translated as 'after', 'beyond', or 'post-' and usually denotes a change in a certain position or condition. Some philosophers, like Henri Lefebvre, have used the term 'metaphilosophy' exclusively in that sense of 'meta-', referring to a (new) philosophical approach that comes to succeed the traditional ones—see for example Lefebvre (1991, p. 405). In the standard contemporary uses of the term, 'meta-' is mostly employed to denote a recursive self-reference—X about/of X—and is usually read as signifying a move to a higher level of abstraction or an occupation with problems of the same nature, but of a more fundamental and foundational character. Such an example is the case of metamathematics, which was conceived by Hilbert as a project aiming at providing the foundations of mathematics. The ambiguity regarding the prefix 'meta-' can be traced back to the first edits of Aristotle's works and the birth of the term 'metaphysics'—for more on this issue see van Inwagen and Sullivan (2015).
Then, in order for our perspective to be further specified not just as horizontal and descriptive, but as contextual indeed, we employ in the sections that follow some of the key concepts of Kuhn's cognate approach to science, such as paradigms, paradigm-shifts, and incommensurability, and discuss them, with the help of Rorty, in connection to philosophy as a discipline. On the basis of that discussion, we also examine some of the consequent issues that are raised by such an approach with regard to the nature of philosophical paradigms. Finally, in the last sections of the paper we cast a brief look, from our contextual metaphilosophical perspective, at two specific cases, the distinction between analytic and continental philosophy with regard to philosophical traditions/schools and Wittgenstein's life and thought with regard to individual philosophers.

Conceptions of (Meta)philosophy

The list of the issues with which metphilosophy is occupied provided in the previous section of the paper can be modified according to the specific approach that one adopts not only toward metaphilosophy as a distinct discipline, but to philosophy itself as well. And that is so, for it is a crucial characteristic of metaphilosophy that despite its apparent second-order character—a popular picture that originates in one of its potential definitions as 'the philosophy of philosophy' and demonstrated in certain uses of the term 'meta-' as we have just seen above—it does not cease to be part of philosophizing, since we are still engaged in the same kind of human intellectual activity. Thus, reflection on philosophy (metaphilosophy) does not constitute a philosophical activity of a second-order, nor reflection on metaphilosophy (meta-metaphilosophy) one of a third-order and so on. They just designate certain fields of philosophical interest and practice inside the family of the numerous fields and activities that philosophizing covers. Wittgenstein compares philosophy to orthography in order to make the above point clear: 'One might think: if philosophy speaks of the use of the word "philosophy" there must be a second-order philosophy. But it is not so: it is, rather,
like the case of orthography, which deals with the word "orthography" among others without then being second-order" (Wittgenstein 2001, §121). From such a perspective, we come to an understanding of the metaphilosophical problematics according to which 'philosophical reflection upon the nature of philosophy is just more philosophy' (Baker and Hacker 2005, p. 259).

A most interesting thing is that due to this kind of philosophical self-referentiality, where philosophy is both the object and the means of the investigation, the metaphilosophical stance that one adopts is still part of one's overall philosophical stance. Taking that into account, both the definition of metaphilosophy as the 'philosophy of philosophy' and the assessment of 'What is (the nature of) philosophy?' as the fundamental question to which metaphilosophy is called to provide an answer run certain risks and give rise to specific problems. From the moment that one accepts metaphilosophy as a philosophical task, a paradox comes to the surface, a paradox on which the whole metaphilosophical enterprise is based. Since metaphilosophy is still a form of philosophy, and one that tries to examine philosophy's own nature, then, in order to move on with the metaphilosophical investigation, one needs to put the cart before the horse, so to speak. And that is so, for in examining the nature of philosophy, one already needs to have taken a philosophical stance regarding the question, through the (philosophical) way (i.e., method, perspective, etc.) (s)he is dealing with the issue. The whole enterprise can be viewed then as begging the question. Moving successively to the alleged higher levels of investigation, from philosophy to metaphilosophy, then to meta-metaphilosophy and so on, and examining each time the nature of the lower level does not lead anywhere, or, in fact, leads to a regression ad infinitum, unless one believes in the discovery of a 'God's eye' viewpoint in philosophy that could provide the absolute foundations or essence of the discipline.

There are two possible ways of escaping the paradox caused by the fact that in metaphilosophy philosophy is both the subject and (among) the means of the investigation. First, to go on in a dialectic way, similar
to the one Hegel followed: ‘[...] the examination of knowledge can only be carried out by an act of knowledge. To examine this so-called instrument is the same thing as to know it. But to seek to know before we know is as absurd as the wise resolution of Scholasticus, not to venture into the water until he had learned to swim’ (Hegel 1975, p. 14). A second option is to adopt a wider conception of metaphilosophy where metaphilosophy is not defined anymore as ‘the philosophy of philosophy’, but as a kind of a ‘discourse about philosophy’ (Benado, Bobenrieth, and Verdugo 1998). At any rate, there is no metaphilosophical approach that can claim to be philosophically neutral. It is very natural then that disagreement in metaphilosophy occurs as often, and in fact plays as vital a role, as it does in philosophy as such. For example, our conception above with regard to the non-high-order character of metaphilosophy goes against some of the dominant accounts of metaphilosophy as a higher-order enterprise, accounts which, like our own, are based on certain philosophical presuppositions. Thus, the roots of the disagreement can be traced back to certain differences in the philosophical stance that one adopts, as in the opposition between the descriptive or normative character of philosophy, its cognitive or non-cognitive nature, its conception as an activity or as a set of doctrines, its conception and practice as an art or as a science, etc. Every metaphilosophical stance and dispute is still and foremost a philosophical one or, to put it differently, the distinction between philosophy and metaphilosophy is not a vertical, hierarchical one, but a horizontal one.

There are four points that we shall emphasize regarding the various conceptions of (meta)philosophy. The first has to do with the distinction drawn by Nicholas Rescher, who has devoted a large part of his work to metaphilosophical problematics, between normative metaphilosophy

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4. See for example the definition of metaphilosophy in the *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*: ‘The philosophical study of first-order philosophical inquiry raises philosophical inquiry to a higher order. Such higher-order inquiry is metaphilosophy’ (Moser 1999, p. 561).
(what (proper) philosophy should be) and descriptive metaphilosophy
(what philosophers—actually or potentially—do or have done). Despite
Rescher's claim that only normative metaphilosophy is part of
philosophy, since descriptive metaphilosophy as a matter of factual
inquiry is not (Rescher 2005, pp. 55-56), descriptive metaphilosophy can
still be viewed as an equally legitimate philosophical enterprise. Kuhn's
descriptive and contextual brands of philosophy of science, Foucault's
genealogical endeavors, and Wittgenstein's later philosophizing provide
us with telling examples of how description need not be reduced to the
role it plays in science as factual inquiry, but may have distinctive
philosophical aspects. Second, a descriptive metaphilosophical approach
can be of an essentialist kind, like in the case of naïve historicism with its
often deterministic and teleological aspirations and that of the various
reductionist sociological approaches to philosophy, but it can also be of a
non-essentialist, contextualist kind, where philosophy is approached as
diverse human praxis situated in and connected with (but not reduced
to) various historical, social, and cultural settings. Third, there are
different levels on which our descriptive metaphilosophical inquiries
may focus, from the more abstract level of philosophy-in-general (as a
discipline), to the more concrete ones of philosophical traditions,
philosophical schools, and individual philosophers. And fourth, there is
an important distinction to be drawn between explicit metaphilosophy,
i.e., the explicitly stated views of a philosopher, school, or tradition over
metaphilosophical issues, and implicit metaphilosophy, i.e., how
philosophy is actually practiced by a philosopher, school, or tradition
and the metaphilosophical implications of their various (not explicitly
metaphilosophical) philosophical positions.

In the rest of the paper we shall trace a way in which the horizontal,
descriptive metaphilosophical perspective may take a contextual form.
At the level of philosophy as a discipline that means the treatment of
philosophy as a practice interwoven with the rest of the nexus of human
praxis. At the level of philosophical traditions or schools such an
approach may be shaped as a certain kind of (philosophical) intellectual
history, while at the level of individual philosophers the contextual character of our metaphilosophical approach may result in the investigation of the various facets (e.g., historical, social and political, intellectual, cultural, etc.) of the broader context of a philosopher's life and thought. In the next sections of the paper we shall highlight some of the aspects of a contextual metaphilosophical approach to philosophy-in-general, while we shall also briefly present some of the issues with which such an approach may be engaged with regard to two concrete cases, the one at the level of philosophical traditions (the distinction between analytic and continental philosophy), and the other at the level of individual philosophers (Wittgenstein's life and thought).

The Case of Kuhn
For our contextual approach to philosophy-in-general as a practice, Kuhn's cognate approach to science provides us with a suitable point of departure. Our choice of Kuhn's paradigm-centered approach, over the related approaches of Foucault (epistemes) and Wittgenstein (language games and forms of life), which could arguably serve such a role as well, is based mainly on three considerations. First, Kuhn's work had and still has a deep and wide influence within academia. Second, due to the generality of Kuhn's scheme, his approach may cover, apart from natural science, other fields such as the arts and humanities. And while the

5. For example, Kuhn's *Structure of the Scientific Revolutions* (henceforth, the *Structure*) is first in the list of the fifty 20th century works most cited in the *Arts and Humanities Citation Index* between 1976 and 1983 (Garfield 1986) and Kuhn's name is to be found in the 55th place of the most cited authors of books in humanities in 2007 (Times Higher Education 2009).

6. Kuhn's own stance regarding the plausibility of application of his scheme to fields outside natural science, like the humanities and the social sciences, was ambivalent. On the one hand, Kuhn seems to be skeptical about that option in many different points in his work, maintaining a strong distinction between the natural and the human sciences (Kuhn 1996, pp. x, 162-67, 209; Kuhn 2000, pp. 116-18, 157-59, 216-23). On the other hand, he seems to be equally sensitive to the wide range of potential applications of his approach outside the limits of (philosophy/history of) science. His discussions of the differences between natural and human sciences co-occur with discussions of their common elements as human social practices and developmental processes, and as such, of also those elements that they share with other aspects of human activity, like art (see for example Kuhn (1977,
generality of the Kuhnian scheme has become an object of heavy criticism (see for instance Gutting (1984) and Shapere (1964)), we should still note that this generality should not be considered as a sign of ontological or epistemological indeterminacy, but as freedom of movement between various different cases (Wittgenstein 1974, p. 115 §72) and as a response to the form of scholasticism that results in 'treating what is vague as if it were precise and trying to fit it into an exact logical category' (Ramsey 1990, p. 7). Thus, Kuhnian terms such as 'paradigm', 'paradigm-shift', and 'scientific revolution' should not be conceived as designating some kind of (metaphysical) entities or objects lying out there in the world waiting to be discovered, but as conceptual clarificatory tools the use of which is adjusted and assessed each time according to our specific goals and the corresponding required level of abstraction. And third, as a consequence of the above two points, Kuhn’s scheme may function as a bridge and a common point of reference between different fields and traditions, as well as between academia and the general public.7

While there have been many attempts to apply Kuhn’s scheme to fields outside natural science, such as linguistics and sociology, the case of philosophy has not been as popular. Despite the popularity and extensive use of terms such as 'philosophical paradigm',8 there have hardly been any systematic metaphilosophical approaches employing the Kuhnian conceptual apparatus, with the significant exception of Rorty.

pp. 340-51), Kuhn (2000, pp. 117-18, 221-23), and Kuhn (1996, p. 208)). Note also that Kuhn uses himself the notion of a 'philosophical paradigm' in the Structure (Kuhn 1996, p. 121).

7. Kuhn’s Structure has sold well over a million copies, has been translated in more than 15 different languages, and was named one of the hundred most influential books since the Second World War by the Times Literary Supplement in 1995, while Kuhnian terms such as 'paradigm' and 'paradigm-shift' are widely used nowadays in many non-academic settings and have actually become part of our everyday language.

8. Indicatively, a search in Google for the term(s) 'philosophical paradigm(s)' produces 47500 results in total. Also note that the notion of a philosophical paradigm goes well back before Kuhn, as for example we can see Ramsey referring to Russell’s theory of descriptions as a 'paradigm of philosophy' with regard to the problem (puzzle) of definition (Ramsey 1990, pp. 1-2).
For the largest part of his philosophical career, Rorty employs in his metaphilosophical discussions the Kuhnian terminology (paradigm, disciplinary matrix, crisis, paradigm-shift, etc.), or variants of it, in order to discuss philosophy as a discipline and makes use of certain of Kuhn’s views in order to put forward his own agenda. He discusses how Kuhn’s position and his own meet and where they depart, and thus also how he reads Kuhn in order to treat philosophy as an intellectual social activity that is only sociologically and not epistemologically distinguished from the rest (Rorty 1979, pp. 11-13, 315-56). Rorty extends the Kuhnian notion of ‘normal science’ to cover any kind of discourse (e.g., political, theological, philosophical) and not only scientific ones, coining the term ‘normal discourse’. And that is actually the main point of divergence between Rorty and Kuhn.

Kuhn views the puzzle-solving activity and the rest of the characteristics of normal science not only as distinctive of (natural) science, but also as factors that could account for science’s efficacy and ‘progress’—if not completely, since he still discerns a gap between the various accounts of scientific development and science’s predictive and controlling success, then at least up to a certain extent through the ever-improving (evolutionary) puzzle-solving ability (Kuhn 1996, pp. 162-67, 209; Kuhn 2000, pp. 137-39). He also holds that the evaluative criteria of science such as accuracy, consistency, scope, simplicity, and fruitfulness are determined not ‘epistemologically’ (as algorithmically) but ‘internally’ (as sociologically) via the structure and function of the scientific communities. Rorty’s horizontal approach, following the line of criticism against Kuhn regarding the roles of and the relation between internal and external socio-historical context, does away with that distinction and in fact argues that the normal vs. revolutionary

9. See for example Rorty’s references to philosophical traditions (e.g., analytic, continental, German idealism, etc.) as philosophical paradigms/disciplinary matrices in Rorty (1999), Rorty (2007, pp. 126, 145), and Rorty and Engel (2007, p. 61), to philosophical paradigms/exemplars in Rorty (1982, pp. 216-18), and to philosophical crises and paradigm-shifts in Rorty (1999).
distinction cuts across the distinction between scientific and non-scientific activity. Rorty holds that the shift from normal to revolutionary (abnormal) discourse is of the same character, from a qualitative point of view, in all intellectual human activities, as each field has its own evaluative, sociologically and not epistemologically determined criteria, which are always open to deliberation (Rorty 1979, pp. 339-42).

Following Rorty’s metaphilosophical perspective and, in particular, his attempt to transpose Kuhn’s position regarding science into a metaphilosophical position (through an emphasis on its history-sensitive, descriptive, and contextual sides), we focus in the following section on three of the central components of such an approach, namely, paradigms (in relation to normal science), paradigm-shifts (revolutions), and incommensurability, which call for more clarification, especially with regard to the issue of the differences between philosophy and science. After discussing some of the basic aspects in which paradigms in philosophy and paradigms in science differ we also explore some of the general characteristics of our contextual metaphilosophical approach and some of the ensuing issues that are raised by Kuhn’s work on scientific paradigms with regard to the nature of philosophical paradigms.

A Paradigm-Based Approach to Philosophy

The first point of focus is the monoparadigmatic character of normal science and the essentially polyparadigmatic character of philosophy. As Kuhn observes, although in philosophy we can see certain schools exhibiting some kind of ‘progress’ with regard to the goals set by their own paradigm, we cannot speak of philosophy as a discipline progressing in the same way as science does. And that is so, because there is always a multiplicity of competing philosophical paradigms which are continuously (meta)philosophically divided and competing with each other, never reaching the conditions that characterize normal science, with the dominance of one paradigm that allows for its efficacy and for the accumulation of results (Kuhn 1996, pp. 162-63). This
persistent (meta)philosophical division and the continuous (hermeneutical) questioning of the foundations, aims, and standards of each philosophical school by the other(s) is constitutive of philosophy as a dialectical enterprise. While for natural sciences the simultaneous existence of paradigms is the exception, to be found only in pre-paradigmatic or revolutionary periods, for philosophy it is the canon (Rorty 1982, pp. 214-18). This does not mean that philosophy does not exhibit 'normal' phases in the sense of work being conducted 'within an agreed-upon set of conventions about what counts as a relevant contribution, what counts as answering a question, what counts as having a good argument for that answer or a good criticism of it' (Rorty 1979, p. 320), but only that these normal phases (and the relevant phenomena like paradigm-shifts) are temporally and spatially bounded, or rather are more temporally and spatially bounded than in normal science, as they never reach the (idealized) status of the one and global, dominant paradigm. For example, Rorty takes analytic philosophy in the United States in the 1950s, with the growth and the academic establishment of the paradigm of logical analysis, as exhibiting characteristics of a 'normal' discipline (Rorty 1982, p. 215).

What is important to keep in mind, in any case, is that: a) any philosophical paradigm can be viewed as a 'normal' one, when, after its establishment, even in a limited space and for a limited time, a new ('revolutionary') paradigm challenging some of its fundamental aspects is created as a reaction to it, and b) depending on the aims of our inquiry—and bearing in mind that the terms we are using here (paradigms, normal/revolutionary periods, etc.) function as conceptual tools and do not designate any kind of metaphysical entities or objects—the number and the levels of philosophical paradigms can vary significantly from case to case. We should also note that Kuhn's monoparadigmatic conception of (normal) science has been criticized as an historical/philosophical idealization or even a myth and thus the whole (sharp) distinction between normal science (periods of methodological monism with a single paradigm completely dominating)
and abnormal/revolutionary science (periods of methodological proliferation with various paradigms coexisting) is challenged (see for example Hoyningen-Huene (1995, p. 367) and Feyerabend (1970, pp. 207-08)). In the preface of the *Structure* Kuhn admits that his work is schematic and provisional with respect to many of the issues that it touches—such as the plurality of paradigms during the pre-paradigm and the normal post-paradigm periods (Kuhn 1996, p. xi)—and later discusses in more detail the related issue of the fluidity of the distinction between normal and revolutionary science (Kuhn 1996, pp. 79-83; Kuhn 2000, pp. 143-55). At any rate, we can view the monoparadigmatic vs. polyparadigmatic conception of scientific and philosophical development as the two edges of a spectrum, with scientific development usually being closer to the one edge (monoparadigmatic as a single dominant paradigm) and philosophical development usually being closer to the other (polyparadigmatic as each influential individual figure creating a paradigm).

The second point of focus is tightly connected to the first one and concerns the character of scientific and philosophical revolutions and paradigm-shifts. Here again, philosophy may be regarded as more pluralistic than natural science. We could say that revolutions and paradigm-shifts seem to occur more often in philosophy and a main reason for that is the more polyparadigmatic character of the discipline. This is made quite clear by the vast number of influential philosophical traditions, schools, movements, and individual figures within each philosophical (sub)discipline and the ceaseless antagonistic rise and demise—but scarcely extinction—of the power and scope of their influence. And is also made clear by the fact that in philosophy, as in art, it is often a desideratum for the practitioners to try to break with the tradition and to find a style or viewpoint of their own, since the ones who

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10. Note that, as the polyparadigmatic character of philosophy testifies, a philosophical paradigm-shift, unlike the scientific ones, does not usually lead to the (almost) complete extinction of the paradigm that gets overthrown by the new—always temporally and spatially bounded—dominant one.
fail to do so usually do not have a significant impact on the development of the discipline (Kuhn 2000, pp. 137-38). Thus in philosophy, unlike science, crises, as growing anomalies in the normal puzzle-solving activity, do not constitute the only factor triggering major innovations or shifts. Hermeneutic (re)interpretation and criticism of the tradition is vital for the development of the field, while the tradition should not be construed as just a depository of disembodied ideas on historically unconditioned themes, but as a human product of specific historically situated individuals and communities. Like in the case of the monoparadigmatic conception of normal science, Kuhn's approach in the Structure regarding scientific revolutions (and the absolute distinction between normal and revolutionary science) has been an object of criticism. The kind of conceptual changes that Kuhn categorizes as revolutions, Toulmin argues, occur much more often (and in fact during Kuhnian normal-science periods) than Kuhn seems to acknowledge in the Structure by focusing on the cases of Copernicus, Galileo, and Einstein and thus giving the impression that scientific revolutions are relatively rare. But then, the whole distinction between revolutionary and normal science starts to collapse and so Toulmin proposes a thoroughly evolutionary account of scientific change (in contrast to Kuhn's revolutionary conception of scientific change) in which conceptual modifications of varying degree, which function as the missing link between the different paradigms and are also manifesting the continuous aspects of their relation, come to substitute the discontinuous (in an absolute sense) conceptual revolutions (Toulmin 1970; Toulmin 1972).

11. A very interesting issue that is raised at this point is that there is often a discrepancy between how the practitioners (artists, scientists, philosophers, etc.) see their own work in relation to the tradition and how the external experts in the field see it.

12. Using the rather romanticist term 'genius', Rorty writes: 'The normal form of life in the humanities is the same as that in the arts and in the belles-lettres: a genius does something new and interesting and persuasive, and his or her admirers begin to form a school or movement' (Rorty 1982, pp. 217-18).

13. Note that the position that it is only due to what Kuhn describes as a crisis during
Kuhn does acknowledge that conceptual changes of a revolutionary form take place during scientific development much more often than the examples he uses in the *Structure* may suggest (Kuhn 1996, pp. 180-81; Kuhn 1977, pp. 226-27; Kuhn 2000, pp. 143-44). He also explicitly states that he is not only concerned with the major revolutions à la Newton and Einstein, but also with smaller scale, frequent, micro-revolutions, which are often recognizable only by the members of a particular specialized community. In this way, Kuhn discriminates between two different but interpenetrating types of conceptual change, one that acts gradually and uniformly, as can been seen in normal science, and another that is sudden and catastrophic, as in large scale revolutions. Thus, through the multiplication of the number of micro-scale and large-scale revolutions and their dialectic interaction, he recognizes a kind of continuity though revolutions, but this does not mean that the discontinuities that the notion is supposed to emphasize should be dismissed or that we should abandon the notion of 'revolution' altogether as having limited or no explanatory value, as Toulmin suggests (see Kuhn (2000, p. 145) and Toulmin (1970, p. 41)). The co-existence of both unifying and differentiating elements with regard to (conceptual) change, and the resulting tensions between them, is of course not exclusive to science and can be viewed as a reflection of the 'essential tension' that Kuhn discusses between tradition and innovation (Kuhn 1977, pp. 223-39). What is important to bear in mind is that revolutions, both in science and philosophy, are usually not 'blind', i.e., they are revolutions against something, usually (some parts of) the tradition or the dominant paradigm, and with an eye to something. While the 'destructive' aspects of revolutions are quite clear (as against something concrete), the 'constructive' ones are not, at least not in advance, as we can see in the two meanings of the term 'revolution' itself.

normal science that criticism of the dominant paradigm and proliferation of new theories take place has also been challenged (see for example Watkins (1970, p. 31) and Feyerabend (1970, p. 203)).
as either restoration or novelty (Kindi 2010, pp. 290-94). And we should also note that mastery of that against which revolutions turn plays a crucial role for their success, whether this success is construed as a radical change, an overthrowing, or an overcoming—and this holds not only for science, but also for philosophy, and certainly for the field in which it is most easily recognizable, art (ibid., pp. 286-90).

The question regarding the discontinuities between different paradigms leads us directly to our third focal point, i.e., the issue of incommensurability. Kuhn's conception of incommensurability underwent many changes over the years, with incommensurability initially introduced as a relation of methodological, observational, and conceptual disparity between paradigms and later, through his semantical turn, taking the form of a thesis close to Quine's indeterminacy of translation. With regard to this issue, there are three points that we shall stress. First, incommensurability is not a bivalent phenomenon, but a gradual one, i.e., apart from some extreme cases, incommensurability is usually partial (local) and not complete (Kuhn 2000, pp. 36, 145). Second, incommensurability does not imply incomparability, incommunicability, or uninterpretability (ibid., pp. 33-57, 162-68)—and is identified by (later) Kuhn with untranslatability only with translation defined, rather technically à la Quine, as quasi-mechanical, salva veritate substitution in contrast to our everyday conception of translation which Kuhn construes as interpretation (hermeneutics) (ibid., pp. 45, 60). Third, and most important for our purposes, due to the pluralistic character of philosophy with regard to paradigms and revolutions as discussed above, incommensurability is even more prominent in philosophy than in science, but due to the largely hermeneutical and conversational nature of the field it can also

14. The manner in which the tensions between, first, the constructive and the destructive aspects of revolutions and, second, tradition and novelty are temporarily resolved—according to where we lay emphasis on, our goal of inquiry, and the level (of inquiry or abstraction) we are working at, together with the required historical sensitivity—determines in the end where and how each concrete case under discussion is classified with regard to the Kuhnian scheme and its categories.
be more easily overcome, at least in principle and to a certain extent. This of course does not mean that it is actually overcome, especially in extreme cases such as deep metaphilosophical incommensurability, as we can see for example in the notorious case of Derrida's honorary doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1992 and the fierce reactions from analytic philosophers that it triggered, with the question whether Derrida's work is in fact 'proper' or 'real' philosophy being central in the debate.

The Nature of Philosophical Paradigms
In the previous section we explored some of the basic aspects of a contextual metaphilosophical approach in connection to three of the core notions of Kuhn's contextual approach to science, namely paradigms, paradigm-shifts, and incommensurability. The above discussion, while in no case complete, may well still serve as a starting point for the development of a thoroughly contextual account of philosophy as a discipline and practice. Part of that development would have to be devoted to a number of interesting issues raised by certain aspects of Kuhn's own work and the contemporary Kuhnian scholarship, once such a paradigm-based, contextual metaphilosophical perspective is adopted. While the proper treatment of those issues exceeds the goals and the scope of this paper, it is still worth touching upon some of them, even if in a schematic manner.

The first issue has to do with the vagueness and the diversity of the term 'paradigm'. Margaret Masterman in her critical approach to Kuhn's work discerns 21 different uses of the term 'paradigm' in the Structure, which she then categorizes in three main groups, namely metaphysical paradigms, sociological paradigms, and artifact/construct paradigms (see Masterman (1970)). In response to that sort of criticism, Kuhn added a postscript to the second edition of the Structure, where he distinguishes between two main senses of the term, a broader and a narrower one, namely paradigm as a 'disciplinary matrix' and paradigm as an 'exemplar' (Kuhn 1996, pp. 181-91). Using the notion of the disciplinary
matrix, Kuhn refers to the objects of group commitment, such as (symbolic) generalizations, metaphysical assumptions, values, the domain of inquiry, techniques, and exemplars. Exemplars constitute the second sense of ‘paradigm’ and are the concrete shared examples of problem solutions, such as Galileo’s work on inclined planes, Newton’s second law of motion, and Ptolemy’s computations of planetary positions (ibid., pp. 12, 23, 188-91). According to Kuhn, paradigms as exemplars are the most novel aspect of the Structure (ibid., p. 187) and that is a view also adopted by contemporary works on Kuhnian paradigms and their (sub-)components, where exemplars are put in center stage (see for example Bird (2000, pp. 65-96) and Rowbottom (2011)). But what are the roles of these two different, but interrelated, notions of a paradigm with regard to philosophy as a discipline? The notion of the disciplinary matrix may be viewed as covering the case of philosophical traditions and movements, while the notion of the exemplar the case of exemplary for certain traditions and movements concrete methods or techniques of philosophizing. We could say, for example, that the method of logical analysis (as initially based on Frege’s work on formal logic and then further developed by Russell, the early Wittgenstein, and the Vienna Circle) constitutes one of the basic exemplars for the disciplinary matrix of analytic philosophy, and especially for certain of its movements, such as logical positivism/empiricism. Something similar can be said about the disciplinary matrix of continental philosophy and the exemplar of Husserl’s phenomenological method, the disciplinary matrix of Marxism and the exemplar of Marx and Engels’s historical materialism, the disciplinary matrix of rationalism and the exemplar of Descartes’s and Leibniz’s mathematical methods, and the disciplinary matrix of German idealism and Kant’s category-based analytical methods.

The second issue involves another component of disciplinary matrices, namely the values that a community of experts shares. Kuhn mentions an indicative, but not exhaustive, list of evaluative criteria with regard to (good) scientific theories comprised of accuracy, consistency, scope, simplicity, and fruitfulness (Kuhn 1977, pp. 320-39; Kuhn 1996,
These theoretical virtues are, according to Kuhn, essential attributes of paradigmatic scientific theories, desiderata for any good scientific theory, and shared criteria of choice between competing scientific theories. At the same time, they function not as determining rules for the adoption of a theory, but as influential values, in tandem with factors of a more idiosyncratic (i.e., personal) nature, and are thus, as we have already mentioned, determined not 'epistemologically' (as objectively, algorithmically), but 'internally' (as sociologically) within the scientific communities (Kuhn 1977, pp. 329-31; Kuhn 1996, p. 198-200).

So, a question could be raised with regard to the status and the nature of the values component of the philosophical disciplinary matrices. On the one hand, the list of evaluative criteria that Kuhn mentions seems to cover not just scientific theories in particular, but all theories (as organized abstract systems) in general. That holds especially for the explanatory, quasi-scientific philosophical theories (e.g., Russell's theory of descriptions, Marxist dialectical materialism), but also for this kind of philosophizing that is not after theory/system building and explanation, but humanistic (self-)understanding, through its descriptive aspects. On the other hand, due to the more hermeneutic character of philosophy compared to science, as discussed in the previous section, the role of these evaluative criteria in the adoption of a certain philosophical theory, or more broadly of a certain philosophical stance, could be viewed as more limited than the one exhibited in science, leaving thus much more space for personal or social idiosyncratic factors. At the same time, the composition of the list could also vary, through the addition of new features and the subtraction of existing ones, both between philosophy and science as disciplines and between different philosophical disciplinary matrices. Kuhn remarks that the addition of social utility to the list of shared values he mentions about science could lead closer to engineering, while the subtraction of accuracy (in the sense

15. That holds especially for those that, like Nietzsche, view each philosophical work more as the expression of the personal morality and the innermost drives of its author (Nietzsche 2002, §6 pp. 8-9).
of a fit to nature) may lead closer to philosophy (Kuhn 1977, p. 331). Be that as it may, there are certainly some features that could be added to this list of values with regard to, at least particular, philosophical paradigms, as for example the value of existential transformation, which according to Rorty is as an important phenomenon for the humanities as consensus is for science (Rorty 1999).

The third point of focus regards the crucial and distinctive role that textbooks play in scientific education for the further establishment and development of the prevailing paradigm. According to Kuhn, scientific education relies almost exclusively on textbooks, i.e., works written especially for students. The original sources, the classics of the field, play a very limited role, if any, in scientific education, as the students are rarely encouraged to come into contact with historical works. At the same time, it is essential for the scientific textbooks, as based on the dominant paradigm of the period, to present the history of the field, if and when they do, in a selective, and rather distorted manner, which reinforces the paradigm's dominance over the older ones that have been discarded and replaced (Kuhn 1963, pp. 350-52; Kuhn 1996, pp. 136-43). But how does this situation compare to philosophy? On the one hand, philosophical education, through the continuous academization of the discipline, seems to rely nowadays much more on textbooks than it has in the past. On the other hand, the original sources, the historical works in the field, continue to play a much more significant role in the education of the students in philosophy than in science. Compare, for example, the rates of philosophy students that still engage directly with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* or Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as part of the curriculum with the rates of physics students that have a direct contact with Newton's *Principia* or Einstein's original papers on relativity in their studies.\(^{16}\) Furthermore, philosophical

\(^{16}\) The above point is made even clearer once we consider the substantial role that ancient philosophical texts (e.g., Plato, Aristotle) still play in philosophical education as opposed to the negligible, if any, role of ancient 'scientific' theories (e.g., Democritus's atomic theory) in scientific education.
textbooks are constitutively pluralistic, something that differentiates their character in a substantial way from the one of scientific textbooks. In philosophy, not only different textbooks may exemplify different approaches to a single subject matter, unlike science (Kuhn 1963, pp. 350-51), but often, due to the above discussed polyparadigmatic nature of philosophy, different approaches to a certain problem field may coexist in one and the same textbook.

The fourth, and last, issue concerns two significant aspects of normal science, namely paradigm articulation/extension and the division of labor. With respect to the first aspect, what the scientific community does during normal science, according to Kuhn, is, first, to articulate the paradigm, that is to make the paradigm more precise and concrete with regard to issues about which the original formulation of the paradigm has initially been rather vague and ambiguous, and, second, to attempt to extend the scope of the paradigm by applying it to domains and areas that were not initially investigated in relation to it (Kuhn 1963, pp. 360-61; Kuhn 1996, pp. 23-34). Can we trace similar activities with regard to philosophical paradigms during ‘normal’ philosophical research? It seems that the analogy holds for at least those philosophical paradigms that exhibit a puzzle-solving character and for those that are based on a dogmatic commitment to a set of certain beliefs, methods, and techniques. For example, the work done by the philosophers of the Vienna Circle on the ‘protocol sentences’ may be viewed as an attempt for the articulation of the Russell/Wittgenstein paradigm of logical analysis with regard to particular aspects of that paradigm that were initially left rather vague, such as the notions of ‘elementary propositions’ and ‘objects/simples’. As for the extension of the scope of a philosophical paradigm, the numerous attempts of Marxist philosophers to apply Marx/Engels’s historical materialism to various philosophical domains that were initially not (substantially) discussed by Marx and Engels themselves, such as aesthetics, philosophy of language, and philosophy of law, provides us with a characteristic example. Nevertheless, the analogy has its limits and that is made clearer once we
consider the second aspect of normal science mentioned above, viz., the division of labor. A most significant feature of Kuhn's approach, and actually one that has functioned as a main inspiration for the establishment of a new philosophical subfield (social epistemology), is the emphasis on the social nature of science, that is, the emphasis not on the role and the status of individual scientists, but on the role and the structure of scientific communities. According to Kuhn, the phase of normal science, unlike science-in-general, is a cumulative enterprise. The establishment of a paradigm in a scientific discipline puts an end to the continuous questioning of its foundations, allowing for cumulative epistemological results through the aforementioned extension of the scope and precision of scientific knowledge (Kuhn 1996, pp. 52, 95-97). For this cumulative process, the division of labor within the scientific communities plays a crucial role.17 Can something similar be said for the philosophical communities as well? The answer to this question demonstrates some of the limits of the analogy between normal science and paradigmatic philosophical research. It is the case that certain philosophical paradigms, such as the ones of logical analysis and of (quasi-)scientific, as opposed to humanistic, Marxism, may exhibit, to some extent and for the period of their dominance, characteristics of a cumulative process. But, as the essentially polyparadigmatic nature and hermeneutic character of philosophy suggest, it is also the case that there are many philosophical paradigms that do not exhibit such characteristics, with existential transformation, criticism, and hermeneutic (re)interpretation, and not the construction of a wholesale, cumulative philosophical system/doctrine, being the prime desiderata. Let us put it this way: normal science may be viewed as aiming at the completion of a single shared image in the form of a jigsaw puzzle, with the

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17. See Wray (2011) for a detailed discussion of Kuhn's work in relation to the issue of the structure and role of scientific communities and to themes that pertain to the field of social epistemology in general. Wray supports that for Kuhn the division of labor within scientific communities plays a crucial role not just during normal science, but during scientific revolutions as well.
members of the scientific communities trying to add their own pieces, while certain philosophical paradigms aim at providing not a single shared image, but a series of images produced by the members of the philosophical communities and exhibiting family resemblances, a series of related variations on the—always different, always the same—theme.

Two Specific Cases
Our above discussion of a contextual metaphilosophical perspective has mostly concentrated on philosophy-in-general, on philosophy as a discipline. But the scope of such a perspective is not limited to the disciplinary level, since as a philosophical stance it cuts across the various levels of philosophical activity shaped by our goals of (meta)philosophical inquiry. The questions 'What is (the nature of) philosophy?' or 'What philosophy (proper) should be?', which are usually taken to be paradigmatic of metaphilosophical problematics, are no longer treated as being privileged in comparison to the rest of the (metaphilosophical) questions that the practice of philosophy raises, once the essentialist conception of philosophy as an abstract entity gives place to a conception of philosophy as what historically conditioned (communities of) philosophers do. We could say that from the moment philosophy is construed as consisting of various philosophical paradigms, contextual metaphilosophy does not take anymore the form of merely a philosophy of (philosophical) language-games, but that of a philosophy of (philosophical) forms of life. Thus, once we focus on concrete cases, the abstract metaphilosophical disciplinary level, as our field of inquiry, may break down, first, to the level of specific philosophical schools, traditions, or movements and then, even more concretely, to the level of individual philosophers. And in this metaphilosophical move from the abstract to the more concrete, the broader historical element—neither as hard nor as soft facts, but as

18. This distinction between the different levels of metaphilosophical inquiry does not mean to designate some kind of ontological or epistemological hierarchy or structure, but just to highlight the various levels on which our investigations may focus.
'reminders for a particular purpose' (Wittgenstein 2001, §127)—becomes more prominent in the various forms that it may take.

With regard to the level of philosophical traditions, an interesting case on which a contextual metaphilosophical approach may focus is the division between analytic and continental philosophy that has been attracting a great deal of metaphilosophical attention for many years now. Rorty has often emphasized the metaphilosophical aspects of the differences between the two traditions, and as each tradition matures, the number of self-reflective works (on the history, nature, methods, etc., of each school) is increasing.19 This kind of metaphilosophical consciousness, and especially its historically-oriented variant, is certainly not something rare in the continental tradition, but it is relatively rare in the analytic one, where the historical or contextual perspective is usually absent even in those approaches that are purportedly occupied with some kind of history of analytic philosophy.20 The division between the analytic and the continental tradition may seem passé or too schematic after all these years of related discussions and debates. Be that as it may, we must not forget that this division is not just another abstract construction added to the (meta)philosophical apparatus, but a state that has been experienced by most at some point of their philosophical activity and that has left behind many historical reminders which may be assembled for a specific metaphilosophical purpose. Historical reminders such as the effects of the division on the function of certain journals and departments, and on the policies of certain publishing houses and bookstores, and incidents like Carnap’s attack on Heidegger in the 1930s, the long quarrel between Derrida and Searle in the 1970s and 80s triggered by their debate over Austin’s speech act theory, the

19. An interesting addition to the relevant literature with regard to the analytic tradition is Glock (2008) in which Glock extends and elaborates—from a historicist perspective, albeit a weak one (ibid., pp. 89-114)—on Sluga’s family-resemblance conception of analytic philosophy as presented in Sluga (1998).
20. See for example Soames’s ‘history’ of analytic philosophy (Soames 2003) and the criticisms against it, with regard to the absence of an actual historical perspective, in Rorty (2005) and Hacker (2006).
aforementioned protests from analytic philosophers against Derrida’s honorary degree in Cambridge in 1992, and everything that followed the Sokal hoax in 1996 (see Glock (2008, p. 256)).

With regard to a contextual metaphilosophical approach at the level of individual philosophers, the case of Wittgenstein appears quite compelling, since his wider conception of philosophy and life as one allows for various insightful connections to be drawn between his life and work and their broader historical context. The following are two of the most interesting themes which a contextual metaphilosophical approach to Wittgenstein could be engaged with. First, the radical shift from the logical, sub specie aeternitatis (Wittgenstein 1922, §6.45) point of view of early Wittgenstein’s thought as shaped in the modernist context of turn-of-the-century Vienna21 and the logicist Russell-centered context of early 1910s Cambridge to the anthropological, sub specie humanitatis point of view characteristic of the later phase of his thought, with the emphasis on the social character of our (everyday) practices, as shaped in the largely Marxist context of the later phase of his life.22 And second, the relation between Wittgenstein’s implicit and explicit metaphilosophy with regard to both his early and his later phase and the various tensions between them—for example, whether and to what extent Wittgenstein’s later philosophical perspective may be seen as a response to the sharp tensions between the implicit and explicit metaphilosophical aspects of the Tractatus with concern to issues like scientism, essentialism, and dogmatism. Through such an approach, not only certain aspects of Wittgenstein’s (meta)philosophy, such as the ethical, political, and social

21. For more on (early) Wittgenstein and the modernist context of fin de siècle Vienna see Janik and Toulmin (1973).
22. Consider for example Wittgenstein’s proclamation that his discussions with the Marxist economist (and friend of Gramsci) Piero Sraffa provided the stimulus for the most important ideas of the Philosophical Investigations (Wittgenstein 2001, p. x)—the most significant thing that he got out of these discussions being ‘an anthropological way of looking at philosophical problems’ (Monk 1991, pp. 260-61)—and in general his wider circle of Marxist friends in the 1930s and 1940s (apart from Sraffa, there are also Rush Rhees, Roy and Fania Pascal, George Thomson, Maurice Dobb, and Nikolai Bakhtin, see ibid., pp. 272, 343, 347-48, 412-13).
ones, which usually remain rather marginal compared to the attention that his work on logic, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and epistemology attracts, may be highlighted, but also the radical change in Wittgenstein's thought may be considered as a certain kind of a paradigm-shift. One could say that, upon his return to philosophy at the end of the 1920s, Wittgenstein diagnoses the first 'anomalies' regarding the logicocentric Tractarian paradigm. That is something that leads to a 'crisis' in his philosophy during the first years of the 1930s (i.e., in his middle, transitional phase where elements of the old Tractarian paradigm coexist with elements of his later approach), a crisis that is succeeded by the 'revolution' (from the early/middle 1930s onwards) that occurs with the continuous development of the new anthropocentric paradigm of his later philosophy. As Wittgenstein himself puts it in 1932: 'My main movement of thought is a completely different one today from 15 to 20 years ago. And this is similar to when a painter makes a transition from one school to another' (Wittgenstein 2003, p. 149).

Concluding Remarks
As it should be clear by now, our approach to philosophy as paradigms sketched so far is not intended to exhaustively spell out an analysis of philosophical development, let alone to function as a descriptive or normative metaphilosophical theory based on (or judged according to) some kind of hard data (empirical, historical, etc.). Rather, it should be seen as a positive reply to Rorty's call for increasing metaphilosophical self-consciousness as a precaution and in many cases a therapy against barren scholasticism (Rorty 2007, p. 130); as a description of a wider metaphilosophical perspective and as an extension of the descriptive metaphilosophical viewpoint, which can now be further specified as a contextual metaphilosophical one. What the views of Kuhn and Rorty contribute to the further contextual specification of a general descriptive metaphilosophical perspective is a conception of philosophy as a discipline that is not separated from the rest of the fields of human
activity and is not exclusively defined in itself, but constitutes an open-ended, dynamic, and dialectical (i.e., conversational and transformational) human practice in a constant interaction with the rest of human activity. This holistic view of human activity leads us to a conception of philosophy in which:

[...] 'philosophy' is not a name for a discipline which confronts permanent issues, and unfortunately keeps misstating them, or attacking them with clumsy dialectical instruments. Rather, it is a cultural genre, a 'voice in the conversation of mankind' (to use Michael Oakeshott’s phrase), which centers on one topic rather than another as some given time, not by dialectical necessity but as a result of various things happening elsewhere in the conversation (the New Science, the French Revolution, the modern novel) or of individual men of genius who think of something new (Hegel, Marx, Frege, Freud, Wittgenstein, Heidegger), or perhaps of the resultant of several such forces (Rorty 1979, p. 264).

Philosophy is thus viewed as a non-essentialist, viz. not having a unique, unchanged, or eternal essence, and non-foundationalist, viz. not providing or being in need of foundations, human endeavor that, contrary to Bishop Butler's famous maxim, is not what it is and no other thing, but it is what it is by virtue of its relations to everything else (Rorty 2007, p. 128). Hence, contextual metaphilosophy emerges as the locus where 'philosophical' and 'non-philosophical' language-games and forms of life meet and interact, as a conceptual trading zone (à la Galison).

23. As Wittgenstein remarks: '[...]'we must be on our guard against thinking that there is some totality of conditions corresponding to the nature of each case' (Wittgenstein 2001, §183).

24. The rejection of foundationalism can be viewed as '[...]' a rejection of the idea that some discourses, some parts of the culture, are in closer contact with the world, or fit the world better, than other discourses' (Rorty and Engel 2007, p. 36). As Wittgenstein's discussions in *On Certainty* show, that is not to say that there are no certain beliefs that play a foundational role in human activity (as certainties). Rather, a conception of certainties that horizontally cuts across all aspects of human activity comes to replace a vertical conception of foundations as a monolithic, rigid, unchangeable substratum on which all the other strata of human knowledge and activity are based.

25. For more on Galison's conception of trading zones as intermediate domains (creole fields or languages) where incommensurability between different paradigms, fields, etc. is
Concluding this paper, the important thing to keep in mind is that what a contextual metaphilosophical perspective stresses, no matter whether occupied with philosophy-in-general, with philosophical traditions or schools, or with the case of a specific philosopher, is that philosophy never ceases to be the product of human praxis and as such is spatially and temporally conditioned being situated in concrete historical, social, and cultural settings. It is thus nothing more, but also nothing less, than 'a form of social practice embedded in and reflective upon other forms of social practice' (MacIntyre 1998, p. 258), a fiber connected to the rest that all together constitute the multifarious and complex thread of the distinctively self-instituting human form(s) of life.26

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overcome, see Galison (1997).

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