

SOCRATES AND THE ERA OF POST-TRUTH

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ABSTRACT

With the grand scheme of events, like the Brexit and the election of Trump to the presidency of the USA unfolding, it also brings into question the interplay of popular beliefs of the masses who had actually participated to ferment the same results and the dwindling "authority" of truth and facts as against the generation of the popular beliefs and convictions. This juncture of doubts and questions assumes immense significance because it forces one to go back in time, across centuries and ponder to visualize the horror expressed by Socrates being materialized in real terms, when he once had warned that, "false words are not only evil in themselves, but also infect the soul." It is this contagiousness which calls for a moment of introspection for evaluating this era of the post-truth in general and politics of post-truth in particular. Where as philosophers like Socrates encountered instances and situations where lies would reign in the garb of pretentious wisdom, he had developed methods to engage with the other to know and through that seek the truth on the precondition of acknowledging his own ignorance. Though Socratic ideas and methods would not suffice to break the psychological impasse imposed by explosion of relative informations and blind data on account of the revolution in the information technology, it can certainly help one to put things in perspective for better understanding which in turn can enable people to restore the lines of sincere engagements and work about their ways in the ocean of the post-truth in which truth is considered irrelevant.

KEYWORDS: Brexit, Critical thinking, Dialectics, Debate, Engagement, Information technology, Post-truth, Social media, Socrates.

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" **Post-truth** - an adjective defined as that relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."

(Oxford University Press, 2016)

INTRODUCTION

With the grand scheme of events, like the Brexit and the election of Trump to the presidency of the USA unfolding, it also brings into question the interplay of popular beliefs of the masses who had actually participated to ferment the same results and the dwindling "authority" of truth and facts as against the generation of the popular beliefs and convictions. This juncture of doubts and questions assumes immense significance because it forces one to go back in time, across centuries and ponder to visualize the horror expressed by Socrates being materialized in real terms, when he once had warned that, "false words are not only evil in themselves, but also infect the soul." It is this contagiousness which calls for a moment of introspection for evaluating this era of the post-truth in general and politics of post-truth in particular, where, in words of Barrett(2016), " We find ourselves living increasingly in a world where in facts are less important than the intensity, volume and ferocity with which one shouts them out."(para 10).

Where as philosophers like Socrates encountered instances and situations where lies would reign in the garb of pretentious wisdom, he had developed methods to engage with the other to know and through that seek the truth on the precondition of acknowledging his own ignorance. Though Socratic ideas and methods would not suffice to break the psychological impasse imposed by explosion of relative informations and blind data on account of the revolution in the information technology, it can certainly help one to put things in perspective for better understanding which in turn can enable people to restore the lines of sincere engagements and work about their ways in the ocean of the post-truth in which truth is considered irrelevant.

THE TRUTH OF THE POST-TRUTH

Interestingly the word "truth" comes from the Greek word "aletheia" which means "factual," "a reality," or "genuine."(Marangos,2017,para 18). The compound word post-truth exemplifies an expansion in the meaning of the prefix post- that has become increasingly prominent in recent

years. Rather than simply referring to the time after a specified situation or event – as in post-war or post-match – the prefix in post-truth has a meaning more like "belonging to a time in which the specified concept has become unimportant or irrelevant". This nuance seems to have originated in the mid-20th century, in formations such as post-national (1945) and post-racial (1971). The concept of post-truth has been simmering for the past decade, but Oxford University press observed a spike in frequency of the usage of the word in the context of the Brexit referendum in the UK and the presidential election in the US, and becoming associated overwhelmingly with a particular noun, in the phrase post-truth politics. (Oxford university press, n.d)

And therefore the suffix 'post' denotes going beyond the facts, reality and genuineness of the things, not contesting the fact to prove the other way, but simply not caring enough for it. Though the term gained currency recently only, however the term Post-truth seems to have been first used in this meaning in a 1992 essay by the late Serbian-American playwright Steve Tesich in *The Nation* magazine. Reflecting on the Iran-Contra scandal and the Persian Gulf War, Tesich lamented that "we, as a free people, have freely decided that we want to live in some post-truth world". What is significant here is the usage of phrases like "free people", "freely decided", as a manner of sensing the tension between the promises around "freedom" and the innate "authority" beheld by truth. Subsequently "the term Post-truth politics" was also used by David Roberts, then a blogger on an environmentalist website, in the context of American climate-change policy.

In his book, *The Liars' Tale: A History of Falsehood* (2002), Jeremy Campbell (as cited in Marangos, 2014, para 8) insists that the new millennium is characterized as "an ethical twilight zone that allows us to dissemble without considering ourselves dishonest." According to Campbell, "even though there have always been liars, lies have usually been told with hesitation, a dash of anxiety, a bit of guilt, a little shame, at least some sheepishness." Now, Campbell asserts, "we have come up with rationales for tampering with truth so we can dissemble guilt-free . . . reconceive our values . . . and devise alternative approaches to morality."

Ralph Keyes describes the post-truth era, as a time when "statements that may not be true" are considered "too benign to be called false." In his book, *The Post-Truth Era* (2004), Keyes laments that in the current age "deceiving others has become a challenge, a game, and a habit." Where once the boundary line between truth and lies was clear and distinct, he asserts that in this

post-truth context, “we are witnessing leaders who display the capacity to craft a reality that is neither meant to be truth or lie, but is mostly meant to be appealing to the emotions and beliefs of some parts of society” (Marangos,2014, para 9), which is in line with the definition provided by the Oxford University Press.

We can thus identify two different types of ‘post-truth’, though both can overlap at times or reinforce each other. On the one hand there is the attitude of a Donald Trump, where what one wants to believe is more important than what can be proved. Second type is the ‘Post-truth by indifference’ should be distinguished from a second attitude, which might be called the deliberate production of false information. One notorious example is the figure of 350 million GDP that, during the Brexit referendum campaign, UKIP claimed that Britain paid to the EU per week(Monod,2017, para 14). Socratic method can be employed to understand both the types.

Therefore in the era of the post-truth , the concern should not mainly be for seeking out the truth, but the quest for coming up with ways of engagement with the other, in order to know the other and the self and thus embark on a constant journey of seeking the truth. Where as the method employed by Socrates never involved the conveying of claims to truth to the other, here we are in a world, where in all are eager to convey their knowledge of the truth to one and all without caring to know what the truth actually is.

SOCRATES' ATHENS AND THE CONTEMPORARY TIMES WE LIVE IN

In Plato’s day, Athens was a successful commercial democracy. It was open to innovations in knowledge, especially those that could be put to commercial use. By extending knowledge into various fields of research, knowledge was eventually compartmentalized. Each discipline was now guided by a set of particular interests. As such, no one needed that vision of a comprehensive knowledge that would provide legitimacy to its claims. This compartmentalization then fueled a sense of doubt and uncertainty that sophists and orators used skillfully to their advantage. something also increasingly visible in the contemporary times we live in, like never before. This fragmenting of knowledge eventually was reflected in the religious and political life of the Greeks. The skill and competence achieved in the sciences weakened the claims of the religious traditions. One no longer saw them as sources of truth. Instead the poets, like Homer, came to be seen as the sources from which one could produce conviction. In the

political realm, with so many people laying claims to power, factional strife intensified. During the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides portrays how such conflicts eventually caused the downfall of Athens. It led to the overthrow of the democracy and the rule of the Thirty Tyrants, who were then thrown out by the democratic partisans. And it was then that Socrates was brought before the Athenian jury and condemned to death (Vaggalis, 2018, p.15). The reputation that accompanied Socrates into the courtroom together with what was perhaps an anti-intellectual stirring in the city of Athens, lent support to the animus that Socrates himself generated in the courtroom on the day of his trial and had also accumulated in the years leading up to it (Rappe, 2009, p.19).

Today our situation is not unique. Interestingly the definition put forth by the Oxford University Press defines post-truth in relation to a certain circumstance or situation but does not necessarily accredit this circumstance to modern times, in particular or to any other era for that matter. It has been a phenomenon that has been with us throughout human history. Across societies, it is increasingly seen that the traditional sources of truth are under attack. Religious authority is no longer able to claim the respect it once had. In the political realm one sees a similar lack of a basis for agreement. Partisanship precludes any attempt at reconciling differences in policy or law. This has spread to the sciences (which once was seen as the source of enlightenment and reason to counter religious claims to power), as questions about objectivity in science arise because of the political consequences of such issues as creationism and climate change (Vaggalis, 2018, p.2). While as Socrates was mindful of the limits of human knowledge, in the era of post-truth, there is an attempt to demolish those limits or assert that there is no limit. Since the pre-Socratic philosophers – notably Parmenides – It reached its apogee in Kant's dualistic model: what we can perceive (phenomena) and underlying 'things in themselves' (noumena) which we can't. In the 19th century, Nietzsche developed this idea to the point where he could write 'there is no such thing as truth, there is only perspective' (as cited in Mackay, 2017, p.2). However, it is not just about the perspective but also about the kinds of perspectives which matter; the origin, sources and the processes involved which lead up to the development or formation of those perspectives, which demands to be assessed in the first place. Arendt supported the notion that 'facts inform opinions' and that, in a democracy, opinions must 'respect factual truth'. This is necessary so that ordinary topics can be debated and that the state can set limits on its power.

Public authority can promote a certain conception of reality through propaganda, public media, school curricula and so on (as cited in Monod, 2017, para 10). And to top it all, technology vis-à-vis social media which provides one roof to shelter multiple but tight compartments of specialized knowledge along with stories devoid of authenticity infused with data overload and information-chaos leading up to virtual anarchy in the garb of open access for all, be it truth or the un-truth via numerous windows. We no longer wait to inform our opinions with facts and we share the ‘news’ we like before checking it – we might talk of ‘fact-sharing’ as opposed to ‘fact-checking’ (Monod, 2017, para 15), thus no longer caring for the process involved in the formation of perspectives. Our debates have the feel of a sudden intensification, hyped by too many lenses which did not exist in Socratic times and in living in the moment it can appear to us as a crisis that we have never seen before. But possibly such crises have been with us from time immemorial, though varying in magnitude and it is hardly as though politics has ever been synonymous with truthfulness. Skepticism about the truth has been the twin of philosophy. However Reagan’s words point to an important aspect of what has changed. Political lies used to imply that there was a truth—one that had to be prevented from coming out. Evidence, consistency and scholarship had political power. As Arendt, when faced with regimes that sought to transform and deny historical fact while claiming to be scientific, realized both the peril of claiming a monopoly on truth and the danger of abandoning the concept of truth altogether, which was at work even before social media entered the stage, going by the definition of post-truth as offered by the Oxford University Press; this includes arguments used by the European Union in defence of severe austerity policies. Throughout the euro crisis, every objection to the neoliberalism of the EU was discredited as irrational, populist, nationalist or otherwise irresponsible, especially by the serious mainstream media. British ministers and prime ministers have lied to the press and to Parliament, as Anthony Eden did during the Suez affair. Lyndon Johnson misinformed the American people about the Gulf of Tonkin incident, thus getting the country into Vietnam. However now there is a strong case that, in America and elsewhere, there is a shift towards a politics in which feelings trump facts more freely and with less resistance than used to be the case (The Economist, 2016, para 8), and thus the situation or circumstance that the Oxford University Press talks about, offer far more fertile, conducive and potent ground for assaulting truth and undermining facts, than ever before. The post-truth world: “Yes, I’d lie to you,” The “Brexit” and Trump campaigns mark such striking assaults on truth. There is no

attempt to even seek out for the different perspectives in Neitzchian sense as the ambit of mutual engagement which emerges central to the Socratic method, is being overwhelmed by the tides of new technology, a deluge of facts and a public much less given to trust than once it was.

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA AS THE PIVOTAL DRIVER

With the rise in the numbers using social media which has paved way for easy access attributed to the revolution in information technology, which apparently should have widened the space for mutual engagements. However technological advances have given us an “information industry” the mechanisms of which are only now beginning to be understood. One crucial process is “homophilous sorting”: like-minded people forming clusters, that makes it possible to broadcast completely false information with no check whatsoever. The rise of cable and satellite television channels in the 1980s and 1990s made it possible to serve news tailored to specific types of consumer; the internet makes it much easier, and more dangerous with recent sponsored unlimited data access projects for all, even in the nations which lack basic survival infrastructure for all its people. The tendency of netizens to form self-contained groups is strengthened by what Eli Pariser, an internet activist, identified five years ago as the “filter bubble”. Back in 2011 he worried that Google’s search algorithms, which offer users personalised results according to what the system knows of their surfing behaviour, would keep people from coming across countervailing views. As a result the people on this side of the line would simply not know how to engage with people on the opposite side of the line. “Information glut is the new censorship,” says Zeynep Tufekci of the University of North Carolina, adding that other governments are now employing similar tactics. The nature of the problem suggests that the post-truth strategy works because it allows people to forgo critical thinking in favour of having their beliefs or convictions reinforced by soundbite truthiness. In such situations it helps to keep in mind that humans do not naturally seek truth. In fact, as plenty of research shows, they tend to avoid it. At the root of all these biases seems to be what Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel-prizewinning psychologist and author of a bestselling book, “Thinking, Fast and Slow”, calls “cognitive ease”: humans have a tendency to steer clear of facts that would force their brains to work harder (The Economist, 2016, para 15); this cognitive ease of course is aided by easy one touch service of technology as already argued above, as it magnifies the filter bubbles via homophilus-sorting that designs our

echo-chambers where in conviction and rhetoric chas our emotions in collusion and, smartly allowing us to forgo the pain of critical thinking.

However, it is this point where Socratic method becomes really crucial. This question of critical thinking was central to Socratic method of critical inquiry (dialectics) that expanded the purpose of philosophy from trying to understand the outside world to trying to tease apart one's inner values, establishing the relation with the other, by seeking out the other (protreptic function), reverting to the inner and the dialectics of which in turn aroused the possibility for knowing the truth hidden in the limits of human knowledge. Employing that method and concluding that there is no agreement ultimately on what the truth is, is beside the point. It is the effort of establishing the basis and terms of agreement that is crucial for establishing the spirit of trust and community and in turn learning to live with questions.

SOCRATIC METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT AND THE RELEVANCE

The Socratic method, includes maieutics, method of elenchus or Socratic debate and dialectics, crucial to the form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking for definitions and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presumptions. It is a dialectical method, involving a discussion in which the defence of one point of view is questioned; one participant may lead another to contradict themselves in some way, thus weakening the defender's point. This method is named after Socrates, is introduced by him in Plato's Theaetetus as midwifery (maieutics) because it is employed to bring out definitions implicit in the interlocutors' beliefs, or to help them further their understanding. (Socratic Method, n.d).

Identifying the key words that are foundational to his method are : cooperative, dialogue, critical thinking, understanding. But in the post truth-era, all these keywords are simply overlooked and therefore the relevance of Socratic method is increasingly felt in order to bring back the keywords in our daily engagements towards the events happening around us in order to make sense of the that and not simply go by convictions, which might or might not be true to the self.

Thus broadly explaining the methods of engagements below-

Maieutic method - Disciplined questioning that can be used to pursue thought in many directions and for many purposes, including: to explore complex ideas, to get to the truth of things, to open

up issues and problems, to uncover assumptions, to analyze concepts, to distinguish what we know from what we do not know, to follow out logical consequences of thought.

Method of the Elanchus-method of questioning someone to test the cogency, consistency, and credibility of a definition provided by the interlocutor and its underlying premise.

The method of Dialectics- A discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to establish the truth through reasoned arguments. Dialectic resembles debate, but shorn of subjective elements such as emotional appeal and the modern pejorative sense of rhetoric (Socratic Method, n.d.).

For Socrates, Politics signified a celebration of coming together for friendship, for seeking the truth without expecting the other to agree, with a serious purpose of healthy engagement, which has now slipped into ugly confrontation, for petty gains and infused impatience to listen, giving into the sway of emotions on account of predetermined convictions and judgements. This has further been exacerbated by the rhetorics and emotionally charged speeches which precisely tap into the periphery of irrationality flowing large. Socrates' engagements essentially start from the basic acknowledgement of "I do not know"; however the starting point for the post-truth politics is "I already know, and only I know and thus I don't care to know what you know".

Paraphrasing the definition put forward by the Oxford University Press as, "appeals to emotions" come to be as more influential in shaping public opinions than objective facts. Naturally the next question to come would be, that what, or who makes those appeals so effective to influence and overpower the thinking abilities to such an extent and how? In the Foreword of his book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (2005), Neil Postman differentiates between the future visions of George Orwell and Aldous Huxley. According to Postman, while Orwell feared those who would "deprive us of information," Huxley was terrified of those who would "give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism." While Orwell feared that "truth would be concealed," Huxley feared that "truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance." The advent of the Post-Truth Era has inaugurated a dystopian culture that fuses the worse aspects of both cautionary visions (Marangos, 2017, para 30). Therefore, a possible answer to the question asked above can be the 'rhetoric', which requires no proof, whatsoever, for validity of the claim.

Plato's Gorgias examines the threat that rhetoric poses to a society to influence the larger audience to oversee the facts or to not see them at all, as well as the cure for it which is found in the philosophical life. The conversation between Socrates and Gorgias focuses on clarifying the nature of rhetoric and how it affects people. Gorgias then explains that even though the orator does not know the subject matter under discussion, she can persuade a large gathering to agree to anything being discussed. Thus, the orator does not know anything substantive. She just is able to get the assent of those who do not know (Vaggalis, 2018, p.6). And extending this position to the post-truth era, here the orators are able to get the assent of those who do not care to know by making this position of not caring to know enough appear as an attempt or a protest for securing individual freedom, autonomy and choice ; relatable to the values promised by the neoliberal waves of institutions against the encroaching authorities that contrary to the expectations failed to materialize fully in real terms in modern societies due to various constraints, as flagged in the beginning.

In fact, no knowledge is necessary to succeed as an orator. It was impossible to acquire knowledge in the short span of a human lifetime. Instead, rhetoric offered the alternative to pursue a different track. This impatience gave rise to feelings of doubt and uncertainty in people. Rhetoric was successful because the orator knew how to exploit these feelings by playing on fears and suggesting a way to connect one's thoughts, which would instill a sense of pleasure that provided all the certainty one could want. As a recent example- in the Brexit, the Leave camp was able to play out and sell the rhetoric of fear and pessimism to people, going round the blame game on issues of national security, borders, and finances, blatantly lying about the statistics. Which, again building up on the provided definition of post-truth, implies that "personal beliefs" too can be constructed by the art of rhetoric, which can even be based on distorted statistics, instilling fear and instability, both appalled instinctively by human nature; and thus shaping or generating the public opinion, as recently found in the case of Cambridge Analytica. Socratic method is mindful even of this aspect and explores it in depth and this again brings in the question of personal belief overruling the facts as put by the OUP in defining post truth. This angle can be crucially handled by the method of elenchus as practiced by Socrates. Rebecca Bensen (2007) observes that the elenctic function occurs as soon as Socrates critically examines the interlocutor's belief for inconsistencies, while engaging the interlocutor in expressing his

beliefs, recognizing his own ignorance, figuring out why he refuted, discovering the concepts he uses and realising what premise he is ultimately committed to in making his moral judgement(p.12). The underlying philosophy of which can be extrapolated by the 'Cave allegory' and 'symbol of The Divided line', which have been described in *The Republic*. Further, in *Gorgias*, Plato has Socrates confront sophistry and rhetoric in order to make clear that this fused threat that rhetoric posed, if it was not challenged by a form of inquiry that could maintain the need for justifying and legitimating our knowledge claims. Socratic philosophy is that inquiry. Through its relentless questioning of all claims to knowing, it demanded that individuals test those claims in order to find those that could sustain agreement between the interlocutors(Vaggalis, 2018,p.14). It is precisely this method which one has to look upto, in order to navigate the way through the ocean of the post-truth with undercurrents of crafted beliefs and appealing lies that do not evoke any evidence.

Having succumbed to the security of being part of the mass of members of a society, the individual readily accepts their standard for resolving all matters of debate—the rise of a feeling of conviction. By relying on conviction, one no longer worries about the truth. And rhetoric in addition to that, further manipulates our fears about the truth of things. One did not need to know anything. All one needed to do was to produce the sense of conviction in one's audience. The orator knew the value of this power because people were willing to pay plenty for this sense of conviction. Thus, conviction replaced learning. To persuade a majority of people of a claim is not proving that it is true. And here again we see what is so important about Socrates' method of question and answer. When it comes to the truth, it is discovered only in a discussion with someone else, where the interlocutors as partners can test the reasons and evidence given for a claim, to see if they are adequate to the subject-matter under discussion, going beyond the rhetoric.

What can be derived from this which holds true for the post-truth era is the terms and ethics of engagement with the other, where in Socrates never attempted to enter into an argument just to demean the opposite side, but cared to view the debate in its own standing, disassociated from the participants in opposition to each other, without bringing in the question of ego or competition. In one of the Socratic dialogues, when Critias complains that Socrates is simply trying to refute him, Socrates defends his motivation and says that his purpose is to examine the

truth at hand for the common good; this when acknowledged by Critias, Socrates further says, "Then take heart...and answer the question put to you...without caring whether it is Critias or Socrates who is being refuted: give the argument your attention and observe what will become of it under the test of refutation"(Cain, 2007,p.35). Socrates would openly claim that his motive for asking questions and constructing arguments is to seek the truth, which further reinforces the purpose of debate: which is not to win or to lose, but to progress. Now this acknowledgement of the purpose of progress for any debate in the era of-post truth is simply brushed aside, instead competition of claims derived from personal beliefs apparently become the starting point.

In the post-truth era, it is this personal belief which is to be deconstructed and questioned, underlying which is the question that why the attitude of not caring for the facts and blindly going with what resonates with personal beliefs. This, as discussed in the beginning, can be further branched into two parts: personal beliefs are not naturally fixed, but can be constructed by an external agency without the person knowing of it; hence the jiggling between covert and overt belief(Cain,2007,p.22). And secondly it is here, Socratic method can be used to unravel that which is not actually the covert belief but just an overt one. This follows from mining out the reasons for indifference towards fact as another kind of overt belief. Thus, the entire question that the personal belief as used in the definition of post-truth by the OUP, are they actually personal or are they a part of something external, entailing a political dimension or other dimensions, appropriated by cognitive ease and thus apparently or overtly personal. And further, can there be any congruence between the facts and the influential appeals to emotions and convictions, and if both are on the same page, but are opted by the masses not because of the influence exerted by mere virtue of them being facts and truth but on account of the strong appeals with which they are spelt, influencing the personal convictions, would that situation still be called as the post-truth? In simpler terms- will that truth, accepted only on the account of some strong appeals to emotions and beliefs, also be counted as post-truth? Thus, Socratic method can actually help in ascertaining or at least reviewing what actually forms the personal belief, which involves separating the interlocutor's stated belief from the endoxical source of that belief.

Further, what needs to be emphasized here, in order to make way through the errors of the post-truth, is the first step employed by Socrates in the process of refutation, which is acceptance of the

thesis or premise put forth by the interlocutor. In a world of only confrontation, as in the post truth era, there is the projection that only few have the monopoly to care for the good of all people, where as rest of the people outside them or the territory are enemies of the good. Bringing back the first step signals out the effort of genuine engagement to learn and takes the interlocutor into confidence for a healthy discourse. Because this step can only emanate from the entrenchment of one belief which Socrates held true regardless of the claim because it belongs to human nature- this is the belief that all people want what is really good.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the post truth- a phenomenon, more visible in the modern times, exacerbated by technological tools like social media enabling magnified rhetoric, emanating from the constructed public opinion which are entrenched as personal beliefs via trading of fear and uncertainty and this is tapped into by appeals to emotions and those convictions which drown out objectivity and relevance of truth, with indifference towards facts. And as such circumstances increasingly surround the consciousness of the subconscious, necessarily point towards the Socratic times, with Socrates being one of the first philosophers to anticipate the arrival of such times and the effects of such dire situations. As Sarah Ahbel Rappe(2009) aptly pointed that if Socrates has been able to do one thing, then it is to show that there are no experts in the science of being human; there is no one to guarantee our happiness and no one, no matter how high his reputation or stature is or how virtuous the claim he makes, who can step in when the chips are down and substitute his own judgment for one's own, as Socrates speaks of a radical responsibility that everyone has vis-à-vis reality itself, or truth (p.74). This only further reaffirms the relevance of Socrates and Socratic philosophy and methods which, if effectively incorporated, appropriated or understood, can create a stage for genuine engagement with the other, bringing back the process of seeking the truth onto the table, with due ethics of discussion and debate and at least in understanding how the rhetorical appeals to emotions which arouse the convictions are preferred over the basic facts and the resultant indifference towards the truth as such and the monopoly of claims that reign in large in the era of the post-truth.

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