

ПИТАННЯ МЕТОДОЛОГІЇ

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REBIRTH OF SOCRATIC ORIGINS OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

N.R.¹: *Before we start the interview, we would like to thank you for finding the time in your tight schedule and meeting us today. We believe that your experience can be highly beneficial for our projects and Ukrainian philosophical community. We genuinely hope as well that it will be a meaningful and exciting talk for you, too!*

The first question we would like to ask will be about your biggest brainchild so far: The Panpsycast. There are many podcasts all over the Internet, but not all of them as successful and known worldwide as yours. Can you tell us first about how it all started, and then uncover the secret of methodology, like what the main areas of interest of The Panpsycast are? How do you prepare for the interview, and how long does it take to complete one episode?

J. S.: Thank you for having me. *The Panpsycast* means a great deal to me, and I'm always happy to speak about the project. I produce the podcast, and we have an excellent team of people working on the microphone and behind the scenes: Andrew Horton, Oliver Marley, Lucy James, Jonathon Hawkins, and Rose de Castellane. They're an exceptional group of people to be working with; it's very much of a team effort.

When we started the project, there was a clear gap in the space of philosophy podcasts for something that bridged good teaching, accessibility and engagement – something that people would want to listen to. We aimed that at a particular course for A-level students (aged typically sixteen to eighteen) and teachers in the UK. In 2016, the specification for students of religious studies doing their A-levels, changed the curriculum drastically, and we thought, “Here's an excellent opportunity to run this project and provide a resource for the course that hasn't been done before.”

What we found after we'd moved through that A-level course was that we'd picked up a general audience of people who weren't officially studying philosophy but wanted to. We just carried on making episodes for undergraduates – and for the general public – and that snowballed our audience. I suppose another aspect of your question is this guiding force of using the podcast as a medium, which brings us right back to that Socratic beginning of

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¹ Abbreviations.: **J. S.** – Jack Symes, **N. R.** – Nataliia Reva, **N. S.** – Nataliia Shcherbyna-Supruniuk, **V. K.** – Vsevolod Khoma.

philosophy in the West. We're living in an exceptional time for public philosophy. We've probably got more people now engaging with the discipline than we ever have, and that's because of podcasts, video lectures, and the like. That's a great thing to see.

In terms of how long it takes to produce an episode? It takes an awful amount of time! I mean, it depends on what we're doing because we offer guides to the big thinkers and questions, which are roundtable discussions between the co-hosts and me, and then we do more traditional interview-style episodes as well. If we were doing an episode on a particular thinker or text, we're talking four days' worth of preparation per person – you need to read the book, read the secondary literature, write up your notes, and fill in the gaps. We do a full day's recording for an episode of a roundtable discussion, usually beginning at nine and ending at five or six in the afternoon. We're constantly stopping and starting the recording to think about how we can keep the listener engaged – the episode we hope to create is a conversation, which is – in essence – a lesson. Then, it takes a day or two to edit. So, we're probably talking about six and a half days for a roundtable. For the interviews, just two days, but it very much depends on the interview.

Not to break the illusion, but it's a bit of an act. Think about Socratic dialogues in Plato's work: those conversations didn't happen as Plato wrote them down. He needed to tailor the conversation in such a way that allowed the reader to follow – often challenging – ideas, and kept them informed of all the key themes. When we're speaking casually to each other – friends, family, and students – we often make mistakes in our speech and miss out on the details when they need to be there. The great thing about the edited podcast is that you can tailor that conversation in a way that benefits the listeners. That is emphasised even more when you're turning podcasts into books or writing books more generally; you have all the time you need to tailor that conversation.

N. R.: *Can you say a bit more about how you choose whom to interview? Do you ask your listeners who they want to have in a new podcast? Or do you have a list of the most highly rated philosophers worthy of attention?*

J. S.: It's a blend. Sometimes, we pick up a book ourselves, and we're really enjoying that work, and we think it would be great to turn our independent research and interest into an episode. Other times, particular ideas and thinkers are mentioned or linked heavily to university or A-level specifications. We often get asked things like, "You do a lot of philosophy of religion! Why are you inviting Richard Dawkins, for example, to do a live event, contribute to a book, and do a podcast?" As a provider of public philosophy, we have to cater to that audience, and it wouldn't do us any good to ignore what students have to study. Over time, we've had more and more people submitting their own books or writing to us, or more often than not, philosophers' agents getting in touch with us and asking, "Will you interview this person?" There's a sorting process in these cases, where we reflect on what would be interesting to our audience. We have an excellent community of listeners over on Patreon who send us direct messages, and sometimes, we ask for them to vote on episode topics. Moreover, every month, we meet a group representing our audience on Patreon, and we speak about philosophical ideas; we chat about anything they're interested in and get their thoughts on what they'd like to see us cover. In short, there's a whole bunch of reasons that go into picking the philosophers that we do!

N. R.: *I visited the event you organised on *The Mystery of Existence in the Royal Institution Theatre in London last summer and had a pleasant conversation with Richard Dawkins. When I told him we studied his works at philosophy departments in Ukraine, he was**

sincerely surprised and defensively asked me: "I'm not a philosopher. What are you doing with my books?"

N. S.: *Moreover, we actually studied his works during the course of philosophy of science, namely, from the perspective of physics, anthropology, and other STEM community sciences. So I think it would be very surprising to many researchers. Well, I see that you mostly touched on other questions within your answer to the first question. Still, we want to dive deeper into how the podcast's interviews transform into the book series. Comparing the audio and written versions of interviews from *The Panpsycast* and *Philosophers on Consciousness: Talking About the Mind*, one can see that some parts correspond to what was said on the podcast; some are completely missing, and others are added. So, once again, we'd like to clarify the methodology of the process. What are the methods of processing the interview into text you use before publishing it? Do you or your colleagues make the audio transcript and then edit it with the interviewed scholars, or do you ask the interviewee to send the written answers for editing?*

J. S.: That's fascinating, I didn't know that! It would be a great shame as well, wouldn't it, if we restricted ourselves to what was strictly philosophy.

I'm honoured that you've listened to the podcast and read the book so closely to pick up on the key differences between them. But as you say, there are quite big and radical differences between the book and the podcast, so maybe you don't need such a keen eye – if you don't mind me retracting my compliment almost immediately! The books are a mixture of original essays and remastered interviews. As part of the *Talking about Philosophy* series with Bloomsbury, we have two books so far, *Philosophers on Consciousness* and *Philosophers on God*, and the method was the same in compiling both books. First, I'll say something about the selection of the people included in the book. I think that's one of the most important openings and first stages in putting the book together. The book series was initially marketed as offering essays and interviews with the world's leading thinkers. But we soon realised that what we'll end up doing there is having a particular kind of thinker – often someone who's "male, pale and stale" – and ignoring a fascinating up-and-coming group of philosophers that are equally, if not more, deserving of public engagement. We're trying to strike that balance a bit more. There's obviously interest in reflecting world philosophy and representing underrepresented groups. Although those things motivate the project, the main motivation still is getting the people who are doing the best research in the field into each book in the series, limited, of course, by only being able to select twelve of them. There's always somebody's favourite philosopher who is missing from each of the collections. The second thing that we do once we've invited some essays and picked from our collection of interviews on *The Panpsycast* is to turn the podcast interviews into remastered interviews on the written page. What we end up with, through our assistant editor – who for the first two books was Casey Logue and for the third book is Ellie Palmer – is somewhere between a 20,000–30,000-word transcript, which is an enormous text file in and of itself. I always have to take my hat off for the amount of work that goes into producing outstanding, high-quality transcripts for them, which can't be done by AI or someone who's not a specialist. My job is to turn those 20,000–30,000 words into 4,000 very good words, and that's where the bulk of that cutting comes in.

What you're left with is a text that is quite disjointed, and the prose need editing significantly. Even our everyday speech doesn't lend itself well to the written page. We often speak for longer than a sentence typically allows us to on the page. It's an awfully long

project in just getting the words to flow. You're filling in the gaps, trying to make the sentences flow, and rewriting sentences...

Once we have a first draft, I reach out to two or three members of our primary target audience (general public, undergraduate students, or A-level students) to get their thoughts. Which ideas were a little bit difficult to track? When did their attention shift to something else? I don't want the momentum of their reading to be hindered for a moment. They come back to me with their feedback, and we act on their suggestions. After that, it's a matter of adding the treatment: an introduction, concluding remarks, and info-boxes explaining some specific jargon used in the chapter. (If you know the concepts, and you don't want to get stopped and bogged down by a boring definition, these info-boxes can be skipped. If you don't, these info-boxes are there to help the reader.) Once all that treatment is added, including recommended readings and questions to consider, it goes back to the assistant editor, and once checked, it comes back to me. I make the changes, maybe send it back to them again, and then – finally – it ends up on the interviewee's desk. At this point, they have the opportunity to request all of their changes: commenting on something completely new, changing their mind on something, correcting some of the prose. Then, there is usually a long back-and-forth with the contributor to ensure the chapter is right and that they're completely happy with it. Once all those changes are made, it goes to two new reviewers – who, again, do the same process in terms of checking, understanding, flow, and the like – and then that chapter comes back to me so I can suggest the changes again and highlight those changes to the interviewee, who decides whether or not to implement them.

I realise that I've literally broken down each step there, but hopefully, it gives you an insight into what actually happens and the legwork that goes into producing the interviews. One of the greatest challenges is to make sure the book flows, that you have a story and a narrative between them, to compare and contrast ideas, and for the reader to learn more as they go. So many books that we see in philosophy, whether it's edited collections in academia or even other podcast-based books – which rely on manuscripts from their interviews – can often feel disjointed. With our books, we hope to take our readers on a journey, and that's a challenge; my hope is that the first two books accomplish that.

V. K.: *It was very interesting to hear about your personal approach to your activity, and it's very cool that you spread the word about public philosophy. I guess your podcast can be used among Ukrainian philosophers. Besides the interview, you're also doing this debate, right? How would you distinguish these two modes of your activity? What are the differences, if there are any? And also, in the result of the debates, do you have the idea that you should publish that material into the particular book after? What came into my mind during the preparation of this interview was the Munk debates format and their book series. After they conducted a series of debates, they also started their book series based on the debates. And I guess now they have published almost 20 books. Maybe you have something similar in your mind and planning to do in your project?*

J. S.: I'll start with your last question: to date, we only plan to use one debate on the podcast as a chapter in our third book in this series, *Philosophers on How to Live: Talking about Morality*. The second chapter of that book will be a debate between Steven Pinker and Rutger Bregman, who personify a modern-day clash between Rousseau and Hobbes – Bregman being Rousseau and Pinker being Hobbes. That debate is an excellent opportunity to show two very different perspectives from two thinkers side-by-side and in direct competition.

Typically, however, the debates we host for the public have more than two speakers, which can be difficult to follow if you're reading them on the page. Five people on a page is a bit much; it would also end up being quite a lengthy chapter if you were going to do justice to each person's ideas. There are no plans to include any chapters in any future books or publications that have more than two interviewees. We've also done a few podcast interviews in the past, like with Lisa Whiting and Rebecca Buxton, for example – of Philosopher Queen's fame – and that makes for a really interesting dynamic audio-wise. Often, the worry for interviewees is that they have to speak at length and maintain their audience's engagement. The tag-team dynamic can be quite helpful for listener engagement and for the interviewee to feel comfortable: it gives them a chance to think about their ideas while the other is talking.

The first part of your question concerned how I approach debates in comparison to other aspects of my work. They're very different, I think. One thing I realised when I began engaging in public philosophy is that – in debates – speakers simply don't have enough time to prepare for their debates, which restricts them from engaging fully with the work of the people on the panel. That's a great shame, and I don't blame the people who are taking part in these things, but I think the secret to great debate is great preparation, particularly on the host's part. It's the host's job to ensure that the discussion goes well, and that involves working with the producer, if possible, when selecting the panellists, but also, once the panellists have been chosen, communicating with them and making sure you're identifying the interesting points of tension. My preparation for the panels is always to read as much as possible for each panellist on there. I think this allows you to be a better facilitator once you're on the stage. If you know something that one of the speakers has written about and that contrasts with something that another speaker has just said, then it's the host's job to connect the dots and bring them into conversation with each other. If you haven't got the time to do the research beforehand, you'll miss that opportunity and run the risk of hosting three simultaneous lectures!

N. R.: *What is more challenging, to connect people or to stop the fighting between the opponents?*

J. S.: Well, it depends on the purpose of hosting the debate to begin with. I don't think, and I'm sorry to say this, that a public debate is going to be the place where you're going to change the minds of the people who are actually participating in debates. I think the main purpose of debate is to inspire audiences to take an interest in these ideas, the panellists' work, and philosophy more generally. People like to listen to and attend debates, and they like the combativeness of it because it provides a bit of theatre in a way that lectures don't provide. I don't think that, as long as we're doing that in the right way and the right spirit, that's necessarily a bad thing. You want a bit of drama or excitement in the debate because it wakes people up. You don't want to see people yawning. Having that little nervous moment where the audience is thinking, "I wonder what she's going to say back to that", keeps people interested! If anything, I try to encourage them to fight, but not to the extent that it detracts from the philosophy.

N. R.: *Thank you for sharing with us the process of compelling the book series in such detail. Since what we mostly see is that lots of special issues in scientific journals are made without actual personal connection with the authors, your experience is quite unique. The standard practice is that either the editors themselves find the scholars and ask them to write the articles on such-and-such topics, or they publish the subject and the deadline on PhilEvents and wait for ready-made works. No personal communication takes place, just a*

letter sent – paper received. From your point of view, does this oral dialogue during the interview sessions for your podcast episodes add something essential to your Talking About Philosophy book series? And is it worth borrowing this oral component to prepare a periodical?

J. S.: That's a beautiful question, and one which taps into working relationships and wider social lives. First of all, there's a time and a place for both of them. I don't think it's needed in some areas of philosophy, for example, for the editor to know, regularly communicate, and have a relationship with the people contributing to their edited collection. What they want is a collection of excellently written and well-researched pieces that don't necessarily have to connect together, don't need to be motivated by pedagogical concerns (such as maintaining engagement and translating ideas to non-specialists), and that's very different when you're doing public philosophy. In the realm of public philosophy, it's not just about getting the contributors to explain their ideas but encouraging them to rephrase their ideas and explain them in a different way – to add a joke or a colourful example in place of a section which is quite important to them. You can imagine it would be quite hard if you didn't have a working relationship with someone to say, "Perhaps, you can remove that excellently put philosophical point and insert this joke about Adam Sandler's movies being bad?" They'd be like, "What is this?" You need to know the person you're dealing with to make that sort of request. There's a sense in which people are more relaxed when they're speaking to people that they cultivate these relationships with. That's really important for interviews and discussions to have the right tone. I think all of us here, and, perhaps, anyone reading this article, would much rather listen to a radio discussion, a podcast discussion, or a debate than they would listen to a programme which just involved a single, serious, formal, monotone voice. There's something that appeals to us about the informality of speech. Imagine again, if I were to answer all of your questions by reading directly from a script. You'd switch off pretty quickly, and I wouldn't blame you. There's a way of speaking which makes us want to listen to the next thing they're going to say because you're there with them: getting their live thoughts in the moment!

To answer your question about whether other publications should borrow from the personal process, I suppose it depends on your aims. I don't want to recommend it to everybody doing it, but if it's a part of your project to have a certain style and pedagogy, then I think it can help.

N. R.: *Do you think this informal feature of the podcast and oral dialogue implemented into a philosophical textbook can add a layer of simplification to the text? You've said that in the editing process, you consult the students whether they go with the flow of the text, and if something doesn't make sense to them or block their understanding, you make additional changes. Don't you think that in some way by trying to make it easier for the students, you simplify the language and somehow neglect this philosophical formality?*

J. S.: If you understand the ideas, then you can communicate them – that is, at the forefront of research and philosophy – to non-specialists in an engaging manner whilst doing justice to them. I think that's achievable, and the books are a testament to that. They don't include logical symbols and all the operators in the dense footnotes; there's a time and a place for that. The primary goal of each chapter is to communicate the contributor's ideas accurately and in an engaging format.

There is a question of priority, though, in that you can always go into more detail, and anyone who's been fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to put together a PhD thesis understand this: what was once your big, grand idea turns into a very long piece about a

very small idea because there are so many clarification points and questions to address along the way. There's a sense in which academic philosophy has to do that more – that is, make lots of minor clarification points – which you don't need to do in public philosophy because it breaks the style. Your priority when writing academic philosophy isn't engaging prose, eliciting a smile, or making sure somebody doesn't pick up their phone and interrupt their reading. When you're writing public philosophy, if your reader picks up their phone or the text isn't flowing, then you risk losing them. You need to make a judgment call as to how much detail you're willing to put in to risk losing that person's attention. Once you've inspired them, they might go and read the details, and many do. When it comes to academics – if they've spent about seven or eight years thinking about these questions – they're less likely to throw in the towel. In those early days, however, you don't want potential philosophers to give up, so you need to prioritise engagement over detail.

N. S.: *I can see your point. Before we switch to another question, I want to say that I admire your work even more, knowing all your efforts to equalise recognition of all the great people with different backgrounds. Let's talk now about the nature of your podcast. Is it more like a guide in philosophy for the non-philosophers, or do you incorporate your podcast into your students' learning process? If so, have you encountered biases about the academic sufficiency of such sources of information?*

J. S.: It's important to publicise and disseminate the research of people of all backgrounds; however, there is still a disparity, I would say, in terms of the number of the contributors we have to each of these projects. Behind the scenes, there is a lot that goes into trying to address this – we try to bring in certain voices from world philosophy, and sometimes they're not able to contribute. We are measured by our outputs, and we could certainly do significantly better on that front, particularly with podcast guests in the future.

In regard to using the podcast as a tool for learning within academic institutions, as I mentioned at the beginning of our conversation, the podcast originally started for that very reason: supporting students and teachers at the new A-level. There's a huge list of appraisals on *The Panpsychast* website where you can read accounts from people who explain how the podcast has helped them. There ended up being so many of these that, a while ago, we gave up adding them to the page. Some always come to mind; for example, this one guy in Chicago who wrote to us and said that he was suffering from depression, working as an accountant, and then said that – through our lessons – he was able to learn some philosophy, went part-time at work, and enrolled in an undergraduate course in philosophy. Another great comment from a teacher explained that one of her students had to work as a cleaner alongside her A-level studies. When she's cleaning, the student listens to the podcast and makes the best use of that time. You'd have to have a tin heart not to read that off the back of your work and not be proud. There are a lot of teachers and students that use the podcast. We know this from attending UK teaching conferences, meetings, local teach meets, the exam board, and yearly meetings of teachers and policymakers, such as the OCR curriculum board. Many teachers say, "Hey, I've made these worksheets for my students. I've made this work booklet where they listen to it, and answer the questions as they go." Likewise, for university courses, I know it's used in a couple of places in London, in Liverpool, and at the University of Texas at Austin. If you run a search, you find it popping up on all these university pages. If they think it's good enough for their course, then I take them to be in sound judgment!

I was actually listening to our episode on Machiavelli's *The Prince* this morning because I was asked to cover someone's class on Machiavelli. I only had thirty minutes to prepare for the tutorial; so, I used the podcast and it gave me all the information that I needed to know for that tutorial. At the time of making the podcast, I'd spent four days, and the co-hosts had spent four days, all researching as much Machiavelli as possible. You reach this peak in your knowledge, and you hit record, and you manage the conversation. I won't reach that peak with Machiavelli again in the future, but that podcast captures it. Given all these pressures you have on your time – to be teaching political philosophy, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, ethics, and all the other responsibilities that come with working at the university – I was as much of a specialist then, when we recorded the episode, than I am today. Comparing my own teaching to *The Panpsycast*; if anything, *The Panpsycast* episodes are often better. I want to put that down to time commitments, as well as the co-hosts at *The Panpsycast* being exceptional teachers and researchers.

N. S.: *Thanks a lot for this great answer. I hope more philosophers will incorporate such an approach into their teaching practices.*

V. K.: *Moving forward, our next question will be about the very shadowy part of Ukrainian philosophy, which we call the oral history of philosophy. It's better to see the history of oral philosophy more like the methodology conducted in a particular project, which originated in 2017. It all started from the realisation that we have a lot of philosophers who lived during the USSR, and we don't know almost anything about their experience. The USSR was not a good period for Ukraine and Ukrainian philosophical thought in particular. But all these people remember how philosophy in Ukraine developed. So, with this project, we tend to get a clear understanding of what was happening in philosophy in our country a long way before we were even born. It was very interesting to ask questions to all these people who had experience in writing and publishing during the USSR. But at the same time, it was also very important to hear their personal experience of that time. This reminded me of this analogy with Germany after it was liberated from the Nazi regime. It was a time of uncertainty when Germans talked about responsibility and who should take this responsibility. In Ukraine, some people never had a chance to reflect on their experience during the Soviet occupation, and the topic of responsibility for being an active member of Soviet totalitarian society never arose as something serious. It's a crucial social discussion, which is still absent, invisible. During our talks, we discussed their biographical facts and their ideas, and usually, during the interviews, we had a chance to go deeper by creating that space where these philosophers had a chance to re-evaluate what they'd done and reflect on something new, what they will do in the following years, how they will change their old texts if they have some hidden in a wardrobe far away. Also, these interviews were quite interesting because: 1) they are a good way to spot some cognitive biases. For example, when people talk about their past, they usually present it in a better light, which might be quite different from the actual state of affairs; 2) with these interviews, we did an ideological analysis because there are these historical facts, which should be neutral when we talk in history, but here we have the people who had a chance to give their interpretation of the Soviet period, which was very, very ideological. So, when we're talking about your activity with interviews and podcasts, do you think you need to create this space for this kind of activity? Where are some new ideas emerging? Do you think this idea, which I mentioned before, is useful at all?*

J. S.: I certainly think there's a role for it to play. Especially the point you made about the lives of these people and the wider historical context in which they lived. On *The Panpsychist*, we're typically doing this in, let's say, a 90/10 split. We want to know about the history of the person we are interviewing, and we always begin an interview by asking what they think the purpose of philosophy is more generally and how they became interested in their topic. You glean a lot from their answers to these background questions: why they study these questions and how they approach them. Again, however, 90% of our focus is the ideas of their paper, or book: philosophy in the 'purer sense'.

I think it's important to contextualise a person's ideas within the lives and communities of these people, and often listeners think the same. An interview with my former head of department, Michael Hauskeller, comes to mind – he's an excellent speaker, who came on the show to speak about transhumanism and non-human animals. It's a fascinating interview, and I think he's a tremendous philosopher. Still, one thing that really stood out to listeners was when Michael was talking about his own views. He told us that although he appreciates that it's morally wrong to consume non-human animals, he has recanted his vegetarianism because he got tired of having those difficult conversations with people. I think he said he got tired of being good! A lot of people were fascinated by this. There's an interesting philosophical lesson to be learnt about the distinction between one's philosophy and the philosophy one lives in accordance with. Understanding how these ideas play a role in people's lives is really important in cashing out the instrumental value of philosophy. Also, it can help us understand the biases or intellectual black holes that people fall into with their thinking.

N. R.: *Returning to the Oral History of Philosophy, I'd like to add that one of its main goals is not only to illuminate what was hidden during the Soviet period because of censorship but also to provoke the new development of the ideas of those philosophers and create new research topics and possibilities for younger scholars as well. So, do you think that in your podcast, you also aim to spark the production of new ideas in the minds of your interviewees?*

J. S.: I think so. When we're speaking to interviewees, we encourage them to engage with the ideas we've spoken about with other people on the podcast: to create this cross-episode conversation and get the interviewee to speak about questions they're not used to speaking about. Sometimes, that comes in the form of an audience question, which can come from all kinds of directions. Maybe you've got someone who's working on the philosophy of AI, and then you get this random question about the philosophy of religion, and you've got this person answering the question for the first time. I think it comes down to recognising that the podcast format and public philosophy aren't the places to give all the details and get things exactly right. That's too high of an expectation to put on our public intellectuals. We all say things we don't mean in the strictest sense of the words when we're conversing with people out of print. As long as we're not saying something that's outright misleading or obviously wrong – and there are certain reasonable expectations we have of people – that's okay. We do try and ask people those questions, but always encourage our listeners and the interviewee to recognise that podcasts aren't replacements for academic papers.

N. S.: *Philosophical podcasts sound like a new, unique form of producing philosophical knowledge today. Still, at the same time, they bring us to Socratic dialogues but in a digital form. Can you say that your podcast marks the successful formation of a new di-*

mention of philosophy that, in its social (non-academic) aspect, can exist in a purely digital form in the next 10/15/20 years?

J. S.: It definitely brings us into a new age of philosophy. Like I said earlier, we're living in a really exciting period of philosophical history, and audio is the perfect medium for philosophy. As you say, it goes right back to those Socratic roots. I think with a combination of good teaching, sound research, and good audio production, what we're managing to do as public philosophers – talking of all philosophy podcasts and media outlets that combine those things – is bringing philosophy to a significant number of people in a way that's never been done before. This is something we should be celebrating!

There's still an essential place for non-multimedia philosophy in research, teaching, and public engagement. There's much to say on these; I'll restrict myself to public philosophy events. There are a lot of people engaging with philosophical ideas through YouTube and podcasts, but what we find is that events in public philosophy are still for a particular group of people: people with large disposable incomes in particular parts of the world – in America, Europe, and the like. I looked earlier today at HowTheLightGetsIn festival, who do an outstanding job in the UK of bringing philosophy to the wider public, and they don't do it for their own profit. They're limited systemically by the price that they can charge for tickets and the speakers they can offer at the festival, and – if they had unlimited resources – they could put those festivals on all over the world, and have people from all over the world come to speak at them. Without that funding, the current price of tickets is 180 pounds for a tier-two weekend pass, which is a lot of money for people who want to go to festivals such as this. Moreover, in 2023, they listed 150 speakers, but only two of those speakers represented countries or traditions outside of Australia, America, or Europe. We're missing a big part of world philosophy there in our public events.

Thinking about teaching, it's great to have resources such as *The Panpsycast* or a book like we're producing, and the many other great resources produced by groups such as *the Partially Examined Life*, but you still need that person to read your work, offer you that feedback, and provide that mentorship. Those things are so important. There's a reason why they're embedded into the fabric of our educational system: it really helps students. There's so much to be said about the positives of multimedia education, but it won't replace traditional face-to-face teaching anytime soon. The same is true of our research communities. There are good reasons why, after the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers in philosophy didn't stay in their homes: their research communities are important for motivation, inspiration, and the development of their ideas. In all aspects of life, such as university research, teaching, and public philosophy in general, these resources bring us into a new age of digital learning, but this isn't enough to replace in-person engagement.

N. S.: *I'm glad you brought up the financial aspect of your project. I heard you mentioning Patreon, so I wanted to ask if you saw your podcast as a way to monetise philosophy. If not now or in your personal case, but maybe in the future for other philosophers who want to make it more popular and financially profitable.*

J. S.: I don't see our podcast as a way of monetising philosophy. There are a lot of free resources out there and, therefore, people aren't inclined to pay for resources in philosophy; it's a hard thing to monetise. We rely on the generous donations of our listeners. There are too many costs – equipment, travel costs, buying the books, the resources for hosting live events, paying for our audio editor – and our patrons make the project possible. If we didn't have our audio editor, Tyler Hislop, for example, it would be difficult to see the project

continuing into the long term. There aren't enough hours in the day to take this on ourselves. We have around 130 monthly donors; I think that's amazing, as it speaks to the fact that the general public has such an appetite for our brand of philosophy. But we don't see the project as a monetising philosophy; it's a passion project that we want to make sustainable.

N. S.: *Still, maybe I'm very optimistic, but I want to say that if you have people who are ready to pay, to donate, in terms of return of investment, a podcast can be a tool of popularisation of philosophy so that in the future business would be interested in the incorporation of philosophers and their ideas to business processes. I see that many businesses don't know that philosophers can work with real, practical, applied stuff, not just some theoretical ideas. I believe your podcast makes philosophy more understandable and maybe more human for non-philosophers.*

J. S.: That's good. To say one final thing on that, there are obviously other sources of monetisation for projects such as ours – whether it comes from adding advertisements into an episode or making department-sponsored episode series. That type of income is really important in terms of sustaining projects such as *The Panpsycast*, and – at the same time – disseminating the research of departments. The worry about the university financed model is that you can imagine a future in which all you produce are the ones that are funded, and then you end up too restricted in the type of philosophy that you do. You have to be selective.

N. R.: *Returning to your response to the previous question, you've said that most philosophers you talked with are either native English speakers or primarily write in English in their academic lives, which leaves behind thinkers of other cultures and linguistic origins. Do you see yourself in the nearest future making any episodes or even a series of episodes with philosophers who develop new, exciting philosophical studies but whose primary working language is not English, but Spanish, for example, or Ukrainian, or any other? Inasmuch they can share their ideas in English, of course.*

V. K.: *I would like to add my lot. Natalia's question reminded me of this article from *The Economist* about higher education in the United Kingdom. So, there were a lot of problems with contracts, especially for those who teach in humanities. I guess, this way of dealing with and balancing academic and public philosophy can give a person who wants to work in the realm of philosophy a decent standard of living. Talking about one of the sustainable models we have in Ukraine, I'm a member of one project that is not commercial at its core, not-profitable. Still, our model is commercial. It is working because it's not about profit but about sustaining the project, like renting the space for the lecture or paying the lecturer. Moreover, due to the War, we have the issue with veterans and with soldiers who unfortunately cannot continue their education right now. Our project encourages soldiers and veterans to participate in all our educational events for free. They can join an online event from home or even the frontline. So, that's how our financial model can help society with this issue.*

J. S.: The first thing to say is that we've had people on the podcast before for whom English isn't their first language. Still, these guests are incredibly fluent and well-spoken in English. Whether we do more of that in the future, in terms of branching out and embracing and embodying this message of world philosophy, is challenging for us, as you can imagine. Your question alludes to the fact that you must ensure you've got the time to research this new field of philosophy and feel competent to be an interlocutor with somebody on their subject, specifically. We recently did an episode on Japanese philosophy, where

we spoke about how that philosophy emerged and how Kyoto School translated and criticised texts of German idealists and phenomenologists. I had yet to learn about Japanese philosophy, and I knew very little about the German philosophical tradition and how they engage with it. It took a lot of work, and we couldn't do that regularly.

To answer the question directly, we want to do more of those things. We also have plans and hope to return to our roots and support more A-level students with the new courses. For example, we produced a 24-chapter long audiobook, which consists of two–three hour chapters of roundtable discussions on the development of Christian thought. Then, we interviewed a subject specialist on each topic and put them back-to-back. That's something we'd like to do for the other versions of that course, including Hindu thought, Buddhism, and Sikhism. Those are things that we get asked to do a fair bit, but we need more time, which ultimately cashes out our resources and what we can dedicate to these projects. We are committed to doing more world philosophy and representing more groups, not just for moral reasons – not just because it would be racist or ethnocentric to focus on our cultural traditions – but because we're limiting ourselves intellectually when we only focus on our own cultures. We don't have all of the answers and insights. When fortune allows us to, we'll do more of the world philosophy; that's something I'm really excited about.

N. R.: *You know, I've just got the idea of how to try to eliminate the issue with the search and reduce (at least a bit) the preparation time. Since there are many international students in the United Kingdom, you can have some competition between them, asking them to share with you those philosophers of their native culture / language that they find important to study. Thus, the students can do the preliminary research for you by writing short essays describing their favourite philosophers and their main ideas and achievements.*

J. S.: We cover a range of ideas from other cultures, such as our extended series on Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism and our interviews with researchers representing these various traditions. One thing we put in a proposal for funding last year was the idea of hosting these public events in philosophy. As part of our proposal, we outlined a plan to include multi-language subtitles, transcripts, and dubbed speech for each of our public events in philosophy. Obviously, a lot of quality control, careful work, and thinking needs to go into a project such as that. But that's one way in which we can do better in public philosophy – that we don't just produce this content in English, but that we work with translators to make events and work accessible to people across the world.

N. S.: *When you enter university in Ukraine, it's almost necessary to know and understand English at some level, like upper-intermediate English. So, usually, when we speak about something in English, like some literature, podcasts, or videos, it's presumed that one already understands it, has to understand it to do homework or anything like that. It is really interesting to hear from native English speakers that you want more people to appreciate your podcast and go beyond English because we usually try to focus on English speakers and make our work understandable for them.*

N. R.: *Just a little clarification. We are talking about the new generation of scholars of independent Ukraine. Passing an English test is mandatory to enter the university now. However, many elder Ukrainian philosophers raised in the Soviet Union may have problems with English. Other countries may have a similar situation. Have you ever considered having a translator during the interview? Or would implementing such a format be problematic for a podcast?*

J. S.: That's not come to my mind in living memory. I don't think it would be too complicated, either. We're aware that people have ways of speaking that aren't well suited to radio or podcasting. When one is trying to speak in a language that is difficult for them, you can imagine that it's more difficult to engage with as a listener –, as a matter of fact – than if those words came to the speaker naturally and on the fly. If you've got a translator, perhaps you can save two birds with one birdhouse: you get the philosophical ideas of somebody who doesn't speak English as a first language with the fluency and translation of somebody who can do so. That's a great idea.

N. R.: *Great. I'm glad that our conversation turned out to be fruitful for you, too! I think we're ready to finish the interview. Guys, do you have any more questions?*

N. S.: *A lot, but I guess, for another discussion. Thank you very much. It was a very interesting conversation and very comfortable, informal in a good way.*

V. K.: *We may not have planned it, but now we have created this lively space. And thank you for that. It's almost as if we are going back to what philosophy was in Ancient Greece—*philia* and *sofia* — making us friends of wisdom.*

N. R.: *We want to thank you, Jack, for sharing your experience and views. It was an extremely interesting and useful talk! We wish you good luck in all your new beginnings and a successful continuation of your path of popularising philosophy today!*

J. S. It's been a pleasure speaking with you.

Одержано / Received 13.04.2024

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Rebirth of Socratic Origins of Philosophy in the Digital Era

It has been proven that philosophical dialogues and debates using digital information dissemination tools now play a leading role in popularizing philosophy beyond the academic community. It has been established that the main differences between oral dialogue and printed interviews are the degree of text editing, the possibility of changing the positions of dialogue participants, the presence of speech intonational and emotional colouring, and stylistic communication limitations. The perceptual advantages of oral dialogue lie in its accessibility to a wide range of people, deeper immersion in the communication situation, and a better understanding of the personal traits of the communication participants.

Джек Саймс, Наталія Рева, Наталія Щербина-Супрунюк, Всеволод Хома

Нове життя сократівських витоків філософії за диджитальної ери

Доведено, що філософські діалоги та дебати, використовуючи диджитальні інструменти поширення інформації, відіграють нині провідну роль у популяризації філософії за межами академічної спільноти. Встановлено, що основним відмінностями між усним діалогом і друкованим інтерв'ю є: ступінь редагування тексту; можливість зміни позицій учасників діалогу; наявність інтонаційного та емоційного забарвлення мовлення; стилістична обмеженість комунікації. Перцептивні переваги усного діалогу полягають у доступності широкому колу людей; глибшому зануренні в ситуацію спілкування; кращому розумінні особистих рис учасників спілкування.

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