

Editorial Foreword

The study of value theory has become a distinct advance of philosophical activity in the twentieth century. In response to the questions of “What is value?”, philosophers divided camps in a variety of ways. While R. B. Perry proposed that valuation consist in the several predication ascriptions to objects as “good,” “true,” and “beautiful,” others were more specific with predicated valuations, claiming that the valuations divide areas such as moral, legal, and political. C. I. Lewis made important distinctions of the kind of values that are in the valuation, for example, whether they are extrinsic (instrumental) contributory, inherent, or intrinsic. Much of the focus presumed a subject-object or inherent-instrumentality dichotomy which received criticism by John Dewey, whose approach viewed value as a dynamic relation: a whole experience. That the nature of value as a whole or organic is not exclusionary became the underpinning of later axiologists, such as Risieri Frondizi, Robert S. Hartman, and Ludwig Grünberg.

Grünberg’s philosophical writings on value continue the explorations of his predecessors to discover the meaning of value – or as he aptly titles this work, *The Mystery of Values*. In his early works, he notes that “values are the reconstruction of what we experience as fundamentally human; that is, we value as human and are human in that we are valued in a certain way.” Grünberg extends the meaningful dialogue on value theory in his unique formulation of the “axiocentric view of the human condition.”

In his ground-breaking work, *Axiology and the Human Condition*, Grünberg, in characteristic humility, attributes his motivation to another Romanian philosopher, Camil Petrescu. Petrescu’s words became a motto for Grünberg’s life’s work: “I regard the problem of value bearing such great importance, that, without it being clarified, philosophy itself looks like an adventurous failure.” During my interview in 1994 with Grünberg, he commented that Petrescu’s works set him in the direction to explore the reconstruction ontology of the human condition, “supported by the presupposition that values stand for fundamental traits meant to define man’s specifically human way of existing as a being that creates and gets self-created by culture, while surpassing the *natural* condition to the *human* condition.”

Typical of his own way of living, Grünberg believed that any form of dichotomy of values presents a partial meaning. Instead, he moves toward unification and the universalism of humanity in valuation. He was an active member of the “Bucharest Axiology Circle,” whose efforts were moving toward a reconstruction of axiology as axiocentric ontology of the human in a universal project for the third millennium. Ludwig Grünberg’s life was a

testimony to value, and it received its regeneration in his faith in humanity. This hope will live on in the works he contributed to the clarification of being human.

G. John M. Abbarno
Associate Editor
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