

CALL FOR PAPERS: PHILOSOPHICAL PAPERS

SPECIAL ISSUE: PHILOSOPHY'S THERAPEUTIC POTENTIAL

One difference between ancient and contemporary philosophy centres on philosophy's capacity for bringing about moral and psychological improvement. Philosophy is today a theoretical discipline; philosophers do not, as a rule, think they will become better people by doing philosophy. But such as the view of the ancient Greek philosophers, for whom the goal of philosophy was nothing less than moral goodness of an enlightened state of being.

Contemporary philosophy is an activity of rigorous, reasoned analysis and argumentation in an attempt to build a systematic body of knowledge. By contrast, ancient philosophers adopted a more expansive conception of philosophical practice, into which they incorporated various kinds of spiritual or contemplative exercises (Hadot, 2002). Even when ancient philosophers employed techniques recognisably similar to those of contemporary philosophy, they seem to have rationalised the use of such techniques by markedly therapeutic goals. For example, the Socratic Method involves the analysis of concepts; but, strikingly, Socrates links such "conceptual analysis" with the moral improvement of himself and his interlocutors (Apology 38a). This point generalises to all philosophers in the Socratic tradition: philosophical analysis was regarded as a necessary element in the morally worthwhile life.

Topics for discussion include, but are not limited to:

- The nature of the distinction between theoretical and therapeutic philosophy
- The goals of therapeutic philosophy
- The role of theory in philosophical therapy
- Techniques for practicing therapeutic philosophy
- Modern attempts to work within a broadly therapeutic framework
- The modes of communication appropriate for therapeutic philosophy
- Genres of philosophical writing in relation to the distinction between theoretical and therapeutic philosophy

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Authors should submit their manuscripts electronically, prepared as a PDF or Word document attachment, and emailed to philosophical.papers@ru.ac.za.

Authors should include their full name, affiliation and address for email correspondence with their submission.

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