

Can We Live without Philosophy ?

Conferencia impartida en la Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas, México.
Noviembre de 2013

Dr. Alejandro Tomasini Bassols

About the author

Dr. Alejandro Tomasini Bassols
Faculty of Arts
Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)
Email: altoba52@gmail.com

Surprising as it may be to more than one person, the question in the title of our presentation is far from being a simple question as we will slowly come to discover. It is a highly complex problem and the answer that can be provided is the furthest from being simple. Our initial problem, of course, is to understand the question itself, to clear any possible misunderstanding. Which is why the first thing you have to do is try to unravel its meaning, that is, to make it explicit. However, if the meaning of the question is what we have to deal with first, we immediately have to say that it is impossible not to notice that this question has not one but at least two meanings that we obviously need to distinguish: one that I would describe as "trivial" and another, slightly more complex which I would call 'serious' or 'deep'. Before answering our question, therefore, we must consider such ways and do it in the order mentioned.

The trivial sense

If we take the question 'Can you live without philosophy?' As a mere form of language, as an expression of Spanish in the form of interrogation roughly equivalent to the question 'Is it possible to live without philosophy?', The answer is immediate, simple and obvious: yes, it is possible to live without philosophy. This, however, may not be a satisfactory answer for us because once we realize that, and considering the question, that is, from a purely formal, modal view, the answer is the same for absolutely anything. Is it possible to live without milk? Yes. Is it possible to live without parents? Also yes. Can you live without money, without coca-cola, no meat, no shirts, no car, etc., Etc.? To these and all questions like that, considered distributive but not collectively, you can answer yes, but the reason is obvious: since the question is purely formal and we are not inquiring about its content but that are seeing as a mere question about a possibility, we know a priori that no possible answer can generate a contradiction and, therefore, the answer may be in principle always 'yes'. Of course, well considered, both the questions and the answers are banal in all cases, with one possible exception on which I think is worth attention.

In a wonderful story entitled 'The man that lives', Leo Tolstoy tells the story of young twins whose mother is about to die right at the time of birth, only the angel in charge of taking his soul to pity their prayers and let live a few days of what God had decided that she had lived. In reporting their negligence, God orders the angel

to take the soul of the young mother and punishes her disobedience and sends it back to the land where she shall remain until she learns the three divine lessons. The mother dies and the newborn is taken by neighbors that raise her as one of their own children. One of the morals of this great novelist is precisely that you can live without parents, but cannot live without God . I am of the view that Tolstoy is absolutely right , except that once again the meaning of his thought requires a minimum of clarification for which we will have to recover quickly and superficially some thoughts of the great Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein which are relevant to our topic.

In what is his first conglomerate of philosophical notes, “ Philosophical Papers 1914-1916 ” , written in the trenches during World War I, Wittgenstein addresses a variety of issues ranging from the essence of logic and language to the ultimate nature of the world. Issues that gradually lead him to considerations on the “I” . Here , for obvious reasons, we will miss his incredible philosophical trajectory and concentrate on some of the reflections that he gives us . Wittgenstein asked : what do I know about myself and the world? I know there is an objective world , which is composed of facts from which I hide or from which I face. I also know that the world as a whole is not indifferent but , so to speak , I care about it and It affects me. In other words , I evaluate and take a position on what happens in the world. You also know that this world has some problems and that the troublesome thing is its meaning and that the events that make up the world are neutral. For me it isn't, or in other words it has value for me because I judge the events ; I put them in order ; I accept them or reject them . The world as a whole , therefore , has a sense for me , whatever it is . In that sense it is called ‘God’ .

Lets return to Tolstoy : it is clear that what he says , namely , that you can live without whatever else except without God, seen in the light of the wittgensteinian clarifications it is almost a triviality , since what Tolstoy would be saying is pure and simple- there is no human life without meaning . God , that is, the meaning of life , is like his shadow everywhere he goes. The meaning of a particular life can be horrendous , contradictory, failed , successful, etc. . , But it is always given , because it is precisely the most unthinkable that a human life is completely devoid of meaning. God , as I said, the sense of life, can be failed , contradictory , negative, etc. . , But still remains the sense of this or that particular human life. To say that a human life could be totally meaningless is tantamount to saying that there is someone who is in the world and it does not affect it , like a stone or a river, a mere physical object. That is not conceivable . Now, if we identify ,

as does Wittgenstein, God with the world and the meaning of life is clear that the only question of the form " Can you live without ... ? ' , In the sense of ' Is it possible to live without ... ? ' , to which the answer is ' no ' would be the question ' can we live without God ? ' . For all others, whatever they are , the answer would be a definite " yes " . The problem then is, as I pointed out , that the questions at hand would be wholly trivial and without cognitive interest . But then if what applies to philosophy applies to anything else, the positive feedback has no value and would demonstrate that all you did was answer a trivial question . Claiming that it is possible to live without philosophy in the same sense that we cannot live without football advances nothing in our efforts to understand, and we still do not know if you can actually live without philosophy.

The serious meaning

Fortunately , there is another meaning to the question ' Can you live without philosophy? ' , Which is what makes it interesting , in relation to which the answer ' yes ' certainly no longer can be offered or with the same speed and with the same security . You might think that what I propose to do is replace the formal scheme ' Can you live without X ? ' To the question ' Is it worth living without X ? ' And show that in this case we cannot immediately offer an irresponsible ' yes ' to all questions that may arise . For example, is worth living without love, without affection? , without absolutely enjoying anything, without having any success at all, no prospects and no illusions about anything? The answer is not obvious , but most likely at least in some cases there has to be a resounding ' no ' . Our question , therefore , would have transmuted and what we would now be asking is whether it is worth living without philosophy. However, although this line of thought is interesting and a few words would lead us to the end of the job , what I wish is *prima facie* is rather to defend the idea that , regardless of whether or not it is desirable to live without philosophy , the fact is that it is simply impossible to do so and that philosophy appears in our lives and it is required for them like it or not . In other words , I intend to argue that philosophy is indeed not dispensable . Let us see if it is feasible to prove it.

To start building our point of view , I think I would have to agree about something , namely , that we try to give the answer to our question which must be a function of two things :

- a) conception of the human being that we make about ourselves
- b) the idea of philosophy that we have forged .

This is , I think , obvious. Anyone can develop a conception of human beings which agrees with their philosophy is seen as an irrelevant product, a waste of time , an unproductive activity, etc. . To me it seems intuitively obvious , however, that a view like that removes itself , since it is decidedly paradoxical: a conception of itself as a “philosophical” product. But how could philosophy be used to reject or cancel philosophy ? This view , therefore , is not viable. We have to choose other argumentative strategies . Therefore lets consider our issues in the order that was mentioned .

a) The human being. First ask ourselves : how can we consider ourselves ? It strikes me that we may be , first, biological beings . If we consider ourselves solely as biological entities, that is, as beings who prove biology, then it is clear that we can say with confidence that we can live without philosophy . The problem with this is that we can ensure that no one is to reduce its conception of human beings to purely biological beings . Someone who only sees their peers in muscles , bones , tendons, nerves , nail , instincts , etc. . , Would be something like a monster. In response , therefore , the “biological option “ does not help us.

Similarly, we can see our neighbors and ourselves not only biological beings , but also psychological beings , ie beings besides their biological characteristics which have or enjoy what we call ‘ mental states and processes ‘ . I mean, we all have a psychic life (images, memories , aspirations, volitions , beliefs, desires and so on) . That’s a fact. But from this perspective, for example considering humans only as biological and psychological beings : could we say that we can live without philosophy ? Sure, except that once again no one has done such a limited conception of people : nobody believes that their parents or their children as mere biological machines with a psyche . Counting only on biology and psychology, there is still much to enjoy a minimally acceptable view of humans. So once again , yes we can say that you can live without philosophy but only on the basis of an incomplete , falsified or distorted ridiculous conception of the human being. We need , therefore , to go ahead and complete our picture by trying to provide an answer to our question that it is sensible and convincing .

Advancing in this direction, can add to the biological and psychological the social dimension of human beings . It could be

argued that people not only exhibit biological and psychological processes but are also necessarily gregarious beings who need others, and have to interact with others. We could express the idea in this way : a purely biological and mental being is still a human being. We can then rethink our question, considered this way- that is, as social beings - and assuming everything that psychic life and biology involve : can we live without philosophy? I believe that , subject to refinement but as an answer for the sake of argument, would have to admit that maybe yes, yes in extremis . However, in the best of the cases the price fo endorsing a conception of human beings as being bio -psycho- social would be too high a price that virtually no one is willing to pay . Why? Because it would have to have a conception of humans as Neanderthals or perhaps as Stone Age men like our caveman ancestors , assuming them as pre - humans. Perhaps our ancestors , and it is highly disputable , were biological beings who were endowed with a certain psychic life and lived in groups and that was it. In that case , they may be the only members of our species who could say they did not need philosophy. But the question we now ask is : does anyone identify us , here and now, with them? Could someone live like caveman ? Can someone today reduce their conception of people, including themselves ,to mere bio -psycho- social beings ? I doubt it. Now, what this question highlights is that something very important is missing in our conception of man and that a vision of humans in which we just see it exclusively in their biological , psychological, and social dimensions is too poor compared to what is currently available . The important point for us is precisely that it is only on the basis of such a poor conception of human life which we are considering that you can continue playing with the idea that it is possible and worth living without philosophy . Obviously , something is missing . The question is : what?

B) The language platform. The perspectives of humans that we have briefly mentioned keep us in what we call the “natural world.” In fact, neither as biological beings , nor as psychological or social beings do we differ essentially from other animals, especially the upper primates and even other species of animals. Elephants, for example, have a formidable memory (actually better than human), Tigers have beliefs (right or misguided) about their potential prey, hippos can have severe pain , ants and bees are needed between them and cooperate with each other at work , gathering food, in the defense of their homes and so on indefinitely . But if this is so, then where is the specificity of the human? Where and how does it appear ?

I think that the answer is self-evident : the fact is that in addition to biological, psychological and social beings we are also, essentially, in a precise sense that does not apply to animals , linguistic beings. It is the platform of language that opens possibilities specific for us. It is true that members of many animal species develop more or less precarious communication systems and warn each other about hazards , food , rivals, etc. However, these rudimentary communication systems are not strong enough to allow the use of “language” in the strictest sense of the term . What is that sense ? In relation to the interests that we pursue at this time , the fundamentals of language is that it opens up the spectrum of thought. It is not the same to roar to call attention to a gazelle than to express something like:

Never was knight
Ladies as well served
As it was Don Quixote
When their village came .
Maidens cared for him
Princesses of his roncino

I do not need to argue , I suppose, that something like a poem is decidedly beyond any possibility of expression of any animal. It is thus with what you might call the ‘ realm of thought ’ that we are in the essentially human world and the peculiarity of the members of our species, *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Now in that realm , it is important to emphasize that its source or its roots in language. The concept of thinking, so important for our purposes, is complex and therefore very fast and somewhat superficial, and we have to do a bit of philosophical logic in order to clarify it and thus be able to articulate our response to the original question .

Perhaps the first thing to say is that , apart from being complex and not easy to grasp, the concept of thinking is also ambiguous. What I mean is that the term ‘thinking’ is used in two different ways , ie, it has two meanings which point to two different things.

A) Cartesian Thought. It is a fact that in colloquial language that the word ‘thought’ refers to a process that takes place in the heads of people . In this sense , thinking is a mental or psychological process , which in one way or another is connected with the brain and its functions. Thus understood , a thought is an activity of the mind. It is called , for known reasons which are not worth mentioning, ‘ Cartesian thought’ . This is thus a phenomenon of human subjectivity and in this sense we can say that everyone has their thoughts.

b) Fregean Thought. There is, however, another sense of 'thinking', which is what really concerns us here . In this second sense, we speak of thought to refer to the semantic content of a sentence, that is, is what the sentence means , its sense . In this sense of 'thought' we cannot say that everyone has their thoughts , since thoughts in this regard are public and shared goals . This is not very difficult to understand. We have on one side signs , such as in the Spanish sentence ' I'm in Tapachula ' , the English sentence 'It is raining ' or Polish the sentence ' Mieszkam Meksyku ' . These are the signs , but everyone understands that such signs do come with their senses. The signs are, as it were , the vehicles of the senses. These senses are thoughts. We use signs , written or oral , to convey thoughts. The signs themselves do not interest us, unless we make them semiotics, which is not the case. In general , what we want is what we can say with them. What we can say, what speakers transmit and capture , what can be translated from one language to another are thoughts. The thoughts do not belong to any particular language because, obviously , we can express exactly the same thought in different languages. I guess that we all understand that we can say exactly the same in Spanish , French, English, Russian, Tzeltal , etc. . 'It is raining ' is exactly the same as what the French mean when they say ' il pleut ' , the same as the Poles say when they say ' pada deszcz ' and when we say ' it is raining ' . That all these sentences express different languages, what all of them have in common is the thought in this second sense. By thinking in this sense we can call ' Frege thought ' , in honor of the great German logician Gottlob Frege . Thus, if in the first case , ie, in the case of Cartesian thought this is basically a process , a mental phenomenon , something happens as it happens to someone ; in the second sense, that is, in the sense of Frege thought, what we have is an abstract entity , an object that is neither material nor mental but logical.

In light of these clarifications, we are now in a position to show why the linguistic dimension of the human being is simply crucial : it is from language that comes "the sense", in the sense the thoughts, and in the thoughts both representation of the world as well as self-representation . In other words, it is because we have language that we have an idea of reality and, above all and more relevant to our topic , we can get a sense of ourselves and of our position or attitude towards the world . It is only with language where all of these possibilities of expression are contained, such as referring to someone , remembering the date of a particular event, the creating of illusions about such and such situations, etc. . However, it should be understood that thoughts usually do not come by themselves and certainly we want to have clusters of thoughts that are certainly

consistent, but not only that. Through and through our thoughts (in the Fregean sense) not only describe reality, but we form pictures of it or, as I prefer to call them, conceptions. Through these "conceptions" we (so to speak) "interpret". Naturally, the important thing about is that they are convincing. We want to make ours the best possible. Regardless of the latter, the crucial point for now is that it is virtually impossible to have a language as a linguistic being, without a formed or unformed worldview and a conception of self. In other words, we cannot be linguistic beings and form no conception of reality. Therefore, we cannot be linguistic beings and not create philosophy. As soon as we started talking about "ideas" we are already talking about philosophy. Naturally, the conceptions that language users can form both the world and themselves range from many points of view that may be more or less simple or complex, consistent or absurd, boring or sexy, simplistic or interesting, etc. But regardless of the latter, the fact is that we already have a well-grounded answer to our question of whether it is possible to live without philosophy. The answer is that linguistic beings, as we are, cannot live without philosophy, meaning 'philosophy' in this case is the formation of conceptions of reality and self. Let's try to dig further into this.

We talked about "conceptions of reality." We need to be a bit more precise about that expression, and the first thing that I would like to draw attention to is the fact that there is an important connection between the "philosophy" that you endorse or you can create, and the existence one takes, i.e., between the way of seeing the world and the way to face it and live it. In other words, there is a sense in which the quality of life of a speaker is a function among other things- the quality of their world and life. At this point the importance of thinking in the sense of Frege is manifested, as well as what might be called 'practical consequences'. We can then clear up a misunderstanding: it is clear that philosophy has no "practical consequences" in the sense that we can have it breaking stone or repairing the brakes of a car, but if we were wrong in what we have been holding is unquestionable that philosophy has practical consequences of primary importance, only in a less visible way, but much more general and all-encompassing. Indeed, depending on the conception that one has to treat people, animals, plants, etc., in one way or another, this will have an impact on your life. We are therefore authorized and need to maintain that is a total misconception that only those who use hammers and nails do something "practical." Claiming something like this is to be a victim of a radical misunderstanding. A thought, however abstract it is, is also practical, just in another way.

Secondly , it is important to understand that when we are talking about the ideas that everyone , so to speak , drags around with themselves, we do not want to be implying that these conceptions are consciously developed theoretical constructs which are particularly convoluted . That indeed is true of very few people. When we talk about the conceptions of the world and of life that people endorse, what we have in mind are the general concepts that are implicit -that is, from those who are observed can draw from both what they say as much as from what they exhibit through their behavior. We can talk of someone who acts “ in bad faith ” , although the person of concern will not preach right and left that they were acting in bad faith. Their bad faith is something that is shown , that others can detect and face which they react.

In short , speakers generally go through life with their “ philosophies ” , often without realizing them but letting themselves be guided by them. With such a result, perhaps we can begin to connect the dots .

It is relatively clear that a fundamental criterion for judging ideas is that more or less the complete character of the idea of man is at stake . This is important because it shows us that if someone endorses a purely “ naturalist ” conception of people - that is, if you merely see them as biological, psychological and social beings -we can infer that its design will be poor, disappointing and most likely cause harmful effects or at least be negative . Because , let’s ask : what kind of existence can someone have who endorses a conception such as this? What ideals of life are associated with a concept like that? I think it is not very difficult to visualize. If we imagine a case of successful domestic life ruled by the naturalistic conception or ones own values, what we would see would be that the person in question could become an athlete (biological health) , a man who leads a pleasant life (subjective satisfactions) and someone who is socially successful (social success). That would reduce the “success” of someone who endorses the purely naturalistic conception of human beings . It might seem like a lot and it might be found very attractive to more than one person, but it is immediately obvious that such a life even if fully successful (which , I think, would be virtually impossible for reasons that would be very difficult to provide) would be negligible and even hateful in its ways. Why? Because by not taking into account the linguistic aspect of the human being , the conception in question would be impoverished or skeletal , extremely incomplete, as the subject would have forgotten everything that they have done thanks to the linguistic dimension

of human life, and so, would put aside at least the moral , aesthetic and religious aspects of the person. For those who endorsed the crude conception , that is, naturalistic and scientist , the human being, the horizons of life are marked by the personal objectives of biological life , psychological life and social life and there ends the horizon of reflection . What is problematic about this is , as I said, in that landscape it has not yet made the appearance of neither the moral life, religious life, nor aesthetics and probably many other ways of being human . While ideally , therefore , the “naturalistic” is extremely impoverishing and therefore a certainly undesirable way of life.

Now, with thoughts and conceptions more or less the same happens as with manual labor : they can be both good and terrible quality . Obviously, it is desirable to have the best possible design, but do you determine which design is better? I think that while we certainly cannot get results in this context that exhibit mathematical certainty , we do however have criteria which when used allow us to prioritize concepts with relative ease. It would be a mistake to think that it is not reasonably possible to choose between one concept and another -it's all a matter of subjectivity or arbitrariness. It would be childish , on the other hand , think that we can articulate the perfect design . There is no such thing . In relation to the concepts that we need to develop is a sensible idea of perfection , not merely something fanciful . The German philosopher , Friedrich Nietzsche, rightly argued that the idea of perfection is a comparison . It makes sense that a more perfect conception is one that better explains the facts , because it is more structured , because it requires fewer assumptions, etc., But what does not make sense is to say that there is a conception that surpasses the views of all others . Such a statement does not point to anything, since it is involved in a spurious and useless idea of perfection . Now this is precisely what happens with the conceptions that we have been speaking about: we all start with the most trivial , the crudest , most primitive (in my opinion, the “naturalistic” vein) - but gradually , based on argumentation , reasoning , speculation , knowledge, experiences , failures , discussions, etc. . , we are polishing, honing , and perfecting . The important thing is that the more perfect our conceptions , that is, while they are less exposed to objections , the better our lives and the less we will be unhappy . The refinement of our thinking , therefore, is an issue that cannot simply be ignored, since it is one of the main areas of our life. Let's look at this in more detail .

When we leave the basic primitive conception , that is, the naturalist conception, and head down the path of refining our vision of

reality we automatically fall into the field of intellectual competence. Here it is important not to lose sight of the connection that exists between our thinking and our lives.

You have to understand that, since we are in terms of what each person does with his life, the factor that determines how far you want to go in our process of intellectual or philosophical refinement is just how useful we are which ultimately means how satisfied we are with our respective lives. We have to admit that it is perfectly possible to live a primitive, fragmentary, inconsistent worldview and still be happy. Against that, all I can say to someone who leads a life led by a more refined conception is something like: happiness is something that I do not care about, it does not attract me, it is no good to me. I will not be happy that way-but nothing more. In his famous *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein put it this way: "The world of the happy man is distinct from the world of the unhappy man."

It seems clear that if our conceptions of our people, others, animals, life, etc. systematically leads to conflicts, the sensible thing would be to modify them, but as I said, ultimately that is something that is determined by each person in their own case. So important is philosophy in human life that people often prefer to continue having problems with the world rather than alter their conceptions, that is, to admit that their ideas are poorly developed and structured, that their thinking is wrong, that their philosophy is wrong. For example, someone may be satisfied with their naturalistic worldview and their life and never understand or accept that their worldview is limited it is extremely conflictive and therefore that it would be convenient for it to be overcome. Thus, when it is not feasible to make the subject in question understand that his life is poor because his thoughts, world, and philosophy is of poor quality, philosophy as it is understood as a slightly more refined activity may not flourish. In this sense of 'philosophy', that is, as a permanent intellectual activity of clarification and systematization of our thinking, we must recognize that although you cannot live without it, it still has limits. What happens with this phenomenon is similar to what happens with psychoanalysis: for someone to seek the assistance of the therapist you must first recognize that you have problems, that you do not know how to deal with them and that you need help. It is important, therefore, that the individual may come to feel dissatisfied, unhappy with his life. Not because of others, but because he understands or at least has the intuition as to what needs to be examined which are their attitudes, their lines of behavior, their values. What we can say now is that if this state of dissatisfaction does not occur, philosophical

progress becomes impossible and , therefore , the persona does as well . This brings me to another topic.

We speak of intellectual progress and the development of our conceptions , but how can we perfect an idea , a concept , a “philosophy “? The answer is simple: there is only one method: using reflection , for which the exchange of ideas, discussion (not litigation) is indispensable. Often these discussions and these reflections occur after conflicts that we generate ourselves and are the trigger by which our reflection begins. Suppose a person stands up another., and the one who was stood up encounters his friend, the friend says something like “ I was just playing dominoes and I was very comfortable .” Obviously , that’s not a satisfactory answer and may even be an insult -mockery adding to the offense. But why? Why not, at least at first glance , would one disapprove of such behavior ? The interesting thing here is to notice that when trying to answer this question, what we are doing is philosophy albeit in a precarious , non-technical manner. We see then that at the root of such conduct we find an ethical principle such as “to do what generates pleasure“ , but since we found that the behavior of someone using that principle leads to problems, we infer that that principle, as appealing as it may seem, cannot be accepted in a crude way . We then have to amend it, gently refine it . We could then propose an alternative principle as “we must seek pleasure , but not at the expense of other people’s discomfort .” In this process we walk slowly from an almost automatic or spontaneous conception of a primitive philosophy to a philosophy that is a bit more refined, perhaps more technical ; a basic philosophy of life towards a vision of an increasingly structured , refined, justified life. Do we need to live –soaked in technical, professional philosophy? Of course not, although it is obvious that some contact with it will always be useful and helpful . For example , if the average citizen really knows about platonic love , that is the myth of the cave , that it is the categorical imperative , they would understand that there is a difference between statements of value or duty and statements of fact , etc. . , their world would be much stronger and , therefore , better regulate their behavior and therefore they would live better, not waiting for other things or reactions that it is logically impossible for them to receive-adjusting their lives to the facts of the world with greater success . They would then would be on the path of wisdom.

This leads me to say a few words about the value of philosophy beyond its purely primary or primitive stage . The value of philosophy is felt every time we reflect on our existence and we aspire to a correct conception not derived directly from practical considerations . The

wonderful world of philosophy appears to us as soon as we inquire about living, what do we live for, what is really worth it, what is beautiful and good, what is it that under no circumstances we should do, how is the world considered as a whole, how is knowledge possible, what is the relationship between mathematics and the material world, etc., etc. . It is highly likely that the vast majority of professional philosophers would like to argue that philosophy has a per se value, ie a value in itself, which by the very greatness of the subjects justify themselves; that they are the most important issues, the most sublime, etc. . I would like to adopt here a less romantic and more pragmatic view. I think, consistent with what I've been saying and contrary to the common opinion of people, that philosophy is valuable precisely because its consequences, that is, for the practical applications that it has-by the fact that thanks to it, one way or another, it shapes your life, even if the conception that you achieve can always be improved upon. The classic and perennial issues of philosophy are precisely those which require meditation, and it is when our thought comes into contact with these issues is when we give personal guidance to our lives. Our philosophy is the product of the activity of our mind when it deals with universal themes of interest, issues that due to their generality and abstraction cannot be studied scientifically. We distinguish the naturalistic platform above the linguistic platform. I would say that the issues that arise from the second science has nothing to say. There is no knowledge of good and evil, a science of beauty and art, a science of divinity, a science of abstract entities, a science of "I", etc. ., But it is precisely these issues that science studies which are intellectually more attractive, more exciting. Those which in one way or another are related to what we might call the ' meaning of life ' . And this brings me to one last point I want to quickly consider.

I quickly argue that the more deeply we include philosophy in our lives, the freer our lives become. Philosophy makes us free because we act not because we are subjected to external pressures, and therefore, to causal determinations, but because we got results that leave us intellectually satisfied and which we chose ourselves. Ask yourself: Who is more free: someone who is forced to do what your boss expects of him, even he benefits from their obedience, or someone acting because they convinced themselves that they have to respect this or that principle or because they are convinced that it is absolutely impossible to perform this or that action, even if doing they would benefit from it? Freedom, as everything, has a price, a price that I see worth paying. Why? Because by acting freely what I do is give my existence the face that I want to give it and by

proceeding in this way what I do is give my life the meaning that I want it to have. If someone acts out only for the interests of the moment, by the pressures of context, fears that others cause, their needs and requirements, etc., this person never acts freely and the meaning of his life will be what others will have configured for it. The sense that imbues my life moral action is precisely free action, therefore, what the subject in question really wants. For my part, I admit that I am convinced that freedom is worth the price you pay for it.

To make it clear that our lives are regulated or controlled by our respective conceptions, ie, that thought is not harmless, we simply note that the views of which individuals are forged are connected with two other notions whose importance cannot be put to question - namely, the ideas of mentality and culture. Indeed, when a particular view is more or less shared, and more or less prevails in a given population, we can talk about a certain mindset. So we can talk about, with the vagueness that the case requires, of the mentality of Mexicans, when what we want to do is to contrast with that mentality, for example, the Argentines, the French, the Poles and so on - or the mentality of Chiapas, where we want to contrast it with that of Tamaulipas, Jalisco or the capital. What that means is that the average citizen of each of those countries or communities tend to form different ideals, pursue different objectives, using different methods to achieve their respective goals, etc., than the average citizen of other parts. But it is clear that the matter does not end there, because mentality is not something that grows like a fungus, which in turn cannot enroll within a broader framework that somehow explains or sheds light on it. This general framework is what we might call culture. Thus, the concepts of individual conceptions of the world and of life, mentality and culture are intertwined notions that serve to explain each other and there is no vice in this circularity.

Conclusions

I think we are in position to offer a concrete but nuanced answer to the question that served as our starting point, namely, 'can you live without philosophy?'. First, in a basic or spontaneous but not illegitimate 'philosophy' sense, the answer is clearly "no". Beings endowed with language and therefore thinking beings cannot live with a minimum dose of philosophy. This, of course, is not to argue that everyone has to study philosophy, do philosophy professionally, or devote their lives to philosophy. To say that would be absurd. Now, between philosophy, say, "natural" and professional philosophy is

a gradation imperceptibly leads from the first to the second . In this speculative incorporating sliding van technicalities , theses, theories, etc. . , So that what at first was a more or less crude conception of the world gradually becomes a complex theory of reality. And this brings us to a second meaning of the question : can we live without philosophy in the sense of whether it is worth living with a thick conception settle for a crude view of life , not an idea developed for human beings and more generally of living beings and the universe as a whole? I think not and I think there are arguments implicit in what we have said that would support my position , but in any case this other discussion is something that we will leave for a later occasion.