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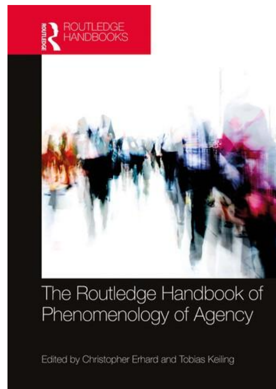

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26
INVOLUNTARINESS
Actions and their context

Günter Figal

Aristotle on action

Philosophical theory of action has a charter not difficult to discover. The first page of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) includes all essentials that have been dominating pertinent philosophical discussions till today. Stating the *teleological* character of actions, of production as well as of action in the narrower sense, Aristotle makes clear how activities can be determined such as to become actions. Only because actions have a particular *aim*, they are not just indiscernible moments in a continuous stream of life that are inseparable from each other like waves. Their respective aims make them intelligible; a particular action is defined by its aiming at a particular aim. Aims also function as unifiers of different effects and accomplishments performed by someone. Regarded as contributions to the realization of a particular aim, different accomplishments can be coordinated in order to complement each other. Since every contribution to realizing a particular aim is part of a particular action, the question 'What are you doing?' can best be answered by designating the aim one has intended and, if necessary, by explaining how particular accomplishments fit into the action they belong to. Such fitting is neither by nature nor does it just happen. Rather, it is the result of intelligently planning and efficiently coordinating different accomplishments so that they form an action as consistent as possible, or, to be brief, the result of technical and practical knowledge. Knowing for instance how to make a bowl or how to give a lecture, one is able to choose and coordinate different accomplishments as means for a particular aim, and, realizing them, to reach the aim in respect to which they could be understood as means.

The teleological structure as sketched applies both to productions, the aim of which is their respective product, and to actions in a more specific sense. Such actions can be characterized as aiming at results that are no products and mostly belong to the sphere of interpersonal life. Giving a lecture or a public speech, striving for a position, shopping or taking a train in order to get to work – all these are actions that, as intentional activities, are determined by their aims.

Aristotle's theory of action just explained has clear advantages. Giving a criterion that allows singling out distinctive actions from the stream of active life, Aristotle makes impressively clear why and how actions can be decided, planned, performed, explained, and, if necessary, justified. Thus he reveals the specific rationality of actions and, along with this,

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outlines the scope of practical rational discourse. And, finally, he establishes a basis for a clear understanding of human responsibility, freedom, and maturity. Persons cannot be regarded as responsible for the stream of life, but only for particular actions they have, more or less clearly, intended and initiated and have thus performed *voluntarily*. Deciding to pursue particular aims and pursuing them voluntarily, persons reveal their free will and, in this sense, their freedom. And, finally, doing deliberately and thoughtfully what they voluntarily do, persons prove to be mature human beings. Persons who act voluntarily and are thus, as they should be, in accordance with their practical rational faculties present themselves as the free, mature, and responsible persons needed for a good social and political life.

The sketched ideal of a free, mature, and responsible personality based on the very possibility of intentional and purposeful action cannot seriously be doubted without contesting the possibility of rationally guided social life. Since there cannot be any good reason for abandoning rationality, such a contest would have no rational ground. Nonetheless, Aristotle's conception of action and, going along with it, the ideal of free, mature, and responsible personality is not sacrosanct. It can be revised and refined, and it may even need refinement, not least in order to protect it against a problematic tendency of one-sidedness: rational persons manifesting their rationality by pursuing, explaining, and, if necessary, justifying intentional actions may be inclined to neglect that not all conditions of their activities can be adequately understood as fitting into the scheme of aim-oriented action. Such neglect may lead to the assumption that, at least in principle, everything could be taken as a possible means for a person's aims and, in case of appropriateness, should be brought under control. Everything withdrawing from control by rational persons would, in contrast, appear as marginal or as disturbing, if not as adverse. In the latter case, it would be a challenge or a threat to rational persons.

Aristotle surely is not disposed to arguing in favor of a human life dominated in such a one-sided way by will and power. In contrast to Sophistic positions, maintained for instance by Kallikles in Plato's dialogue *Gorgias*, Aristotle does not ignore the limits of rational action. Rather, he recognizes that things can happen to persons they are unable to technically or practically master, and accordingly just have to undergo. Aristotle calls the experience of such things 'involuntary' and thus contrasts it with the voluntary character of actions. Nevertheless, Aristotle does not definitely exclude the mentioned one-sidedness. According to his conception, human life is essentially active so that actions are more significant for human life than its involuntary aspects. Since Aristotle nevertheless discusses the voluntary (τὸ ἑκούσιον) in relation to the involuntary (τὸ ἀκούσιον) and thus considers the limits of voluntariness, he offers a good starting point for examining how the relation between the voluntary and the involuntary can be described most adequately. For the sake of such a description, one should find out how in detail Aristotle's conception of action and, going along with it, the ideal of free, mature, and responsible persons is in need of revision, and how it can be revised.

Aristotle on the voluntary and the involuntary

Defining the involuntary as something done under constraint (βιᾳ) or through ignorance (δι' ἄγνοιαν, NE III.1: 1109b 35–1110a 1), Aristotle implicitly argues for understanding involuntariness within the scope of aim-oriented action. Thus he excludes everything non-voluntary the understanding of which is independent from any reference to action. Such are physical processes as well as spontaneous but unplanned gestures or facial expressions. The reason for this may be obvious in the first case and comprehensible in the latter. Physical

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processes like heartbeat do not contrast with voluntary actions so that it would make no sense to call them 'involuntary'. They just happen, and they are not expected to be specifically relevant to actions. This is slightly different with gestures and facial expressions. They could be voluntarily performed, for instance by an actor or by someone just imitating someone else's behavior, whereas they normally are not intended. However, gestures and facial expressions are *not lacking* voluntariness for whatever reason. They can be understood as spontaneous and unplanned movements without any reference to the voluntariness of actions. The same holds true for emotions going along with actions. They, too, are not lacking voluntariness, and even if they hinder persons to consequently perform what they are aiming at, they are by nature unavoidable and accordingly cannot be in contrast to voluntary actions. As Aristotle says, they are human, and thus it would be strange to count them among the involuntary (NE III.3: 1111b 1–3).

So, according to Aristotle's argument, only what is in contrast to actions can be called 'involuntary'. Actions would be just voluntary, if they were not impaired by a cause 'outside' action and without any contribution of the acting person (NE III.1: 1110b 2–3). Negating voluntariness by constraint, at least partly, such effects are measured by voluntariness and therefore justly called 'in-voluntary'. For instance, a person carrying a vase and slipping on a wet floor so that the vase falls to bits does not slip and destroy the vase voluntarily. Slipping and dropping the vase just happens to this person. It was not intended, but rather happened impairing an intention.

Basically the same holds true for involuntariness through ignorance. Actions missing their respective aims because the acting person had no chance to understand these aims adequately are not voluntary. The failure going along with these actions was not intended, and necessarily so, because, as Plato's Socrates maintains, failure essentially cannot be intended.[1] As to this, Aristotle agrees with Socrates; but Aristotle in addition differentiates between actions that are 'not voluntary' and those that are involuntary in a strict sense. If persons just are ignorant of what they are doing, they do something they had not intended. However, if persons understand that their actions conflict with their intentions and, because of this, feel concerned and regret what they have done, they have done something involuntarily. So persons damaging a camera because they do not know how to use it correctly have caused the damage, just not voluntarily. Someone, however, affronting someone else mentioning the other's professional success without knowing that the addressed person recently lost her job, does this involuntarily. Speaking about the other's professional success was meant as a compliment, and only happened to be an insult. In this case, persons would regret a comment and thus indicate that the comment's effect was unintentional.

The distinction between the voluntary and the involuntary as it has been explained and illustrated so far should be plausible. One should add, however, that Aristotle does not suggest a neat contrast – as if persons would either do something voluntarily or undergo something involuntarily or would either have clear knowledge guiding their actions or be totally ignorant. Aristotle rather makes clear that practices can have both voluntary and involuntary aspects. Though briefly, he discusses what he calls "mixed actions" (μικταὶ πράξεις) and illustrates this designation by the example of a ship crew that, getting into a sea storm, would throw a portion of the load overboard in order to save the ship and their own lives (NE III.1: 1110a 8–12). Though the crew have of course not intended and initiated the sea storm, their throwing load overboard is not immediately caused by the sea storm. What they do is a possibly well-considered intentional action that, ruling out other options, has been decided on. On the other hand, however, the crew would not have considered throwing load overboard

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without the sea storm. So, the sea storm, as an event just happening to the ship crew, conditions their action, albeit not in every respect.

Aristotle's example is completely in line with his general conception of the voluntary and the involuntary. A sea storm is an event disturbing the normal practice of sailing and thus causing persons to do what they otherwise would not have done. It is a kind of accident that could not have been avoided and as such cannot be brought under control. The ship crew could only react to it, and, in doing so, at least partly re-establish voluntary control under adverse conditions. Thus Aristotle's example confirms the assumption according to which the voluntary has priority over the involuntary, and the involuntary aspects of actions only appear as restriction.

Moreover, the example illustrates the mentioned one-sidedness of understanding rational persons primarily as agents, whose actions, if ever possible, should be without any interventions from 'outside'. This understanding, however, is in need of revision, if such interventions are not at any rate disturbing, but rather supportive or even necessary. Then, involuntariness would still be regarded with respect to voluntariness. However, instead of negating voluntariness, the involuntary would complement the voluntary. As a consequence, understanding the rationality of persons should include the recognition of this complementarity.

Heidegger on involuntariness as complement of action

How can involuntariness complement voluntary actions? Heidegger was first to make a decisive step toward an answer to this question. Human '*Dasein*' as conceived in *Being and Time* is not only characterized as "existence" (*Existenz*), i.e. as openness to possible projects and thus to intentional, aim-oriented actions, but also as "facticity" (*Faktizität*), which essentially implies that a human being can understand itself "as bound up in its 'destiny' with the being of those beings which it encounters within its own world" (Heidegger 1977: 75, 2010: 56). In order to 'encounter' something whatsoever in the world, one has to understand oneself as being essentially connected with things that can be encountered. Or, to make this more concrete with respect to aim-oriented actions: in order to discover something as a possible means for realizing one's aim, one must have an understanding of things as allowing for such a discovery. Since nothing is as such a means for realizing particular intentions, all things can only be discovered as means if they have been understood in their primary being, which as such precedes voluntary action. Practical considerations concerning possible means for realizing a particular aim can only distinguish between things appropriate and things inappropriate as means if things are basically understood as what they are. As a consequence, such a basic or primary understanding is relevant for the rationality of aim-oriented, voluntary action and nonetheless beyond such action. In this sense, it is involuntary.

Heidegger has developed his conception of primary understanding by explaining the "being of innerwordly things" (*das Sein des innerweltlichen Seienden*, Heidegger 1977: 112, 2010: 82).[2] He determines this "being," which is the being of utensils or "things at hand" (*Zeug*) as "*Bewandtnis*" and thus introduces an expression hardly translatable, but nevertheless explicable. The meaning of the expression is twofold, and in order to grasp Heidegger's point, both aspects must be taken into account: "*Bewandtnis*" means "property," whereas the verb corresponding to the noun "*Bewandtnis*," i.e. "*bewenden lassen*," means "to let a matter rest." Taking the two meanings together one can determine "*Bewandtnis*" as a property of something that is only to be understood if one lets it rest – as a property not to be explicitly referred to, but to be grasped, as it were, tacitly. In order to understand "innerworldly

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things" practically one must not be attentive to them, but rather allow them to remain as inconspicuous as it is appropriate for things of that kind. For instance, using a tool in order to produce something, one is attentive to one's work, not to the tool.

The meaning of "*Bewandtnis*" just explained is not yet complete. It applies only to the particular use of something that must be "let rest" in order to be used. The meaning, to introduce Heidegger's terminology, is only "ontic," and not "ontological." However, as Heidegger argues, for "letting rest" a particular thing, an ontological "letting rest" that applies to "innerworldly things" in general is required. Understood ontologically, "letting rest" is a "previous setting free" (*vorgängige Freigabe*) allowing all things to be open possibilities for any particular practical understanding. Things are accessible only as such prior possibilities for action.

Speaking of a "previous setting free" Heidegger does not evoke an enigmatic kind of action that precedes all particular activities. As ontological "letting rest," this release is not an action at all, but rather a prior recognition of things as the things they are. This recognition can be called "involuntary," if involuntariness is not understood in line with Aristotle, as impairment of voluntariness, but as its enabling. Then, "ontic" involuntariness is a refraining from intentional reference, and, "ontologically" understood, it is a refraining that goes along with an intuitive understanding of all things in their potentiality preceding all particular practical determinations.

However, with his considerations concerning *Bewandtnis*, Heidegger only touches upon such a conception of a prior involuntary understanding of things. Instead of conceiving the potentiality that is the correlate of prior understanding as an objective character of things and as such beyond all kinds of practical discovery, Heidegger reduces this potentiality to the practical meaning of things as their being "at hand" (*Zuhandenheit*). As a consequence of Heidegger's view things are not really "set free," but rather predetermined by human practice. Accordingly, the involuntariness of "setting free" is predominated by the voluntariness of actions. Involuntariness is only a necessary condition for voluntariness, and measured by voluntariness. It is not its complement or even counterpart so that it could reveal the limits of practical understanding. So, Heidegger affirms the dominance of practical understanding, as becomes especially clear with his conception of the "ontic" version of "letting rest," which is nothing but a necessary condition of the efficient use of a thing whatever. For the author of *Being and Time*, all things are modeled on the paradigm of utensils and tools. Things, whatever they are, belong to the scope of human practice.

Heidegger has revised this conception developing a more radical version of "previous setting free" in his essay *On the Essence of Truth* (*Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*).[3] According to this version, things are not "set free" as beings "at hand," but rather just as unconcealed beings. Thus the prior setting them free is an engagement "with the disclosedness of beings" (Heidegger 1993: 125). However, whereas Heidegger's earlier version is too determinate, the later is too unspecific and, because of this, not applicable to reference to particular beings. As Heidegger maintains, any "letting be" of particular beings conceals the "previous setting free" of being as a whole (Heidegger 1993: 129–130). An attempt nevertheless to apply this "previous setting free" to particular beings in order to understand an involuntary "letting be" of such beings proves to be a failure. Unconcealment is the essence of all beings accessible for reference. Their unconcealment is no criterion for distinguishing between beings determined by voluntary actions and those one should involuntarily "let be" what and how they are.

However, despite this result, one should not neglect the importance of Heidegger's discovery. With the idea of a prior, and involuntary "setting free" of all things, Heidegger has changed the discourse on human practice in such a way that further clarifications of the

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constitutive role of involuntariness have become possible. In order to conceive involuntariness as a serious complement of voluntary action, one only has to develop Heidegger's idea independently from his presupposition of a world dominated by human practice and also to overcome his all too general considerations on "unconcealment." In contrast, one may assume that human practice is only possible in a world not dominated by it and, accordingly, find ways for a "setting free" of things that is concretely relevant for practice. How can such a "setting free" take place amidst actions, not as their integral part, but rather revealing how actions belong into a non-practical context? And how can a "setting free" apply not only to things but also to persons so that not only voluntary production but also voluntary action in the narrow sense could be complemented by involuntariness?

Strategies of involuntariness in the arts and the involuntariness of understanding

In order to answer these questions one should first concentrate on productive activities, because in this case the complementary character of involuntariness for voluntary production can well be illustrated and even explained by an illuminative example. This example is artistic production, especially painting and, even more, ceramic art.[4] Artistic production differs remarkably from 'normal' production. Though artworks often are crafted in a way similar to the production of things without any aesthetic significance, artworks considerably differ from such things in their originality and individuality. Accordingly, the production of artworks must not be oriented to a schematic form so that products more or less resemble each other. Artworks are as such not supposed to be examples of a particular kind of things with characteristic properties that make them identifiable and, if they are for use, functional. Rather artworks are made for appearing; they are supposed to appear in a way that would draw attention again and again. Artworks must not appear just as planned and constructed artifacts, but rather as if they were independent from the artists who produced them and also from a calculable process of production. As Kant puts it in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (§45), artworks, admittedly being products, should look "like nature."

Such originality of artworks cannot voluntarily be achieved. Artworks that show all too obvious marks of the artist's intention to produce something 'original' are for the most part of inferior aesthetic quality. Accordingly, artists, and especially modern artists, have taken the original character of artworks seriously and developed what can be called 'strategies of involuntariness'. Many artists have made attempts not to control every aspect of their production, however, without leaving production just to chance. Rather, they wished to introduce the involuntary into their practice and thus to establish an interplay of voluntariness and involuntariness.

At least in the first instance, this may sound paradoxical. How should one introduce the involuntary without doing that voluntarily and thus negating the involuntariness? However, regarded more closely, aesthetic strategies introducing the involuntary are not paradoxical at all. Artists developing such strategies do not voluntarily determine what is declared as 'involuntary', but rather restrict voluntariness in such a way that something involuntarily may happen. They voluntarily do something that is supposed to have involuntary effects. So, they do not just voluntarily produce something, but rather *allow* involuntariness to take place as a complement of voluntary production.

Probably the most prominent example for this in modern Western art is Jackson Pollock's "Drip Painting." Instead of neatly applying paint by a brush to a canvas positioned on an easel, Pollock poured, dropped, and splattered fluid paint to canvases lying on the ground.

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Thus performing voluntary gestures, Pollock initiated effects he had not intended and realized by way of a method. Another prominent artist introducing the involuntary into painting is Gerhard Richter. Richter's aesthetic strategy is different from Pollock's, but also establishes an interplay of voluntary practice and involuntary effects. For his abstract paintings, Richter generously applies oil paint on a canvas fixed to a wall of his studio before, using a board's edge as long as the canvas in a vertical position, partly, scrapes off the paint so that irregular traces of paint are left to the canvas. Because Richter repeats this procedure again and again, a painting regarded as 'accomplished' shows a rich and deep texture of many layers partly covering deeper layers and partly allowing them to be visible. Like Pollock's paintings, Richter's have not been planned in advance. Instead of being methodically produced, they originate. Nonetheless, however, their becoming is no natural event like a sea storm or the growing of a tree but rather a result of artistic practice as a combination of voluntary and involuntary aspects.

The involuntary is even more dominant in the art of Japanese ceramics, which, despite its age-long tradition, is true modern art.[5] Already the process of throwing a vessel is as such less controlled than painting. During long-time exercise, master artists would acquire a kind of certainty that makes planning and intentionally controlled work at least partly unnecessary. Working at a potter's wheel often is more a practice like walking or riding a bicycle than like intentional work. Moreover, it is no work depending solely on the artist's activity. Rather, a ceramic artist would *answer* to the movement of the lump of clay on the potter's wheel and thus would produce a vessel only, as it were, 'in interaction' with the wheel and the clay on the wheel. The turning of the potter's wheel, though initiated by the artist, is thus an involuntary counterpart to the artist's activity. The firing is even more an 'interactive' process, especially with a traditional *anagama*, a "cave kiln," which is fueled with firewood producing fly ash that would settle on the vessels and thus form a natural ash glaze. Though ceramic artists working with an *anagama* are able to control the firing to a certain degree and also to influence the character of the ash glaze by positioning the vessels in the kiln, they will never be able to plan the particular character of the glaze. So, firing an *anagama* ceramic artists essentially include involuntary processes into their artistic practice. They do so because of aesthetic reasons, and not because they would have no choice.

Artistic production thus described is not that much an exception as it might appear. Though production normally is not meant as interplay between voluntary and involuntary aspects that allows something original and individual like an artwork to appear, art may function as a paradigm for understanding production in general. Every production includes aspects that cannot be actively originated and pursued. All woodwork, for instance, is dependent on the growth of trees and on the drying of timber necessary for fabrication. Gardening and agriculture are productive only to a certain degree, and even industrial production would control only a limited section of what necessarily belongs to it. In all these cases, one must allow something to happen in order that something can be done. However, for the most part, these involuntary aspects appear as marginal because production is concentrated on its intentional and effective and thus voluntary aspects.

The involuntary also enables or at least improves social interaction and thus actions in the more specific or narrow sense. This may best be illustrated by one of the most basic modes of interaction, namely by dialogue. Persons can only converse with each other, make attempts to come to a common decision, or clarify something whatever, if they are able to *listen* to each other. Listening, however, is not an action, but rather something involuntary. Though persons can decide on listening to someone else more or less attentively or more or less focused, listening as such is nothing intentional. Persons listening do not aim at something and

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try to realize their intention, but rather allow other person's narratives or statements to be performed freely, and in a way gaining recognition. This would especially be so, if listeners would not just be up to grasping other person's words, but furthermore be receptive for their articulated feelings, views, and insights. This requires openness just to understand instead of taking what has been said as a confirmation of one's own presuppositions.

However, no one open for understanding will necessarily understand. One may wish to understand, but one will not be able to effectuate understanding, neither one's own nor another person's. Whereas persons can be forced into confessing or stating something, they cannot be forced to understand. So, understanding is no possible aim to be realized in voluntary action. It is involuntary, as Plato's Socrates clearly realized when confining himself to indirectly supporting other person's understanding in 'maieutic' dialogue.

The involuntariness of understanding is an especially important example for how the interplay between the involuntary and the voluntary should be conceived. Whereas productive activities, as has been shown, are mostly more or less explicitly complemented by the involuntary, actions in the narrow sense are *dependent on it* if they are dependent on understanding. The latter, however, is the case with all actions performed in an interpersonal context or even intended as interactions. Such actions will necessarily fail in whatever way if they are not guided by understanding each other at least to a certain degree, but only by presuppositions, strategic assumptions, or egoistic motives. Manipulating others, instead of understanding them and, in open dialogue or debate, find solutions acceptable to all persons involved, is essentially inadequate to persons. In accordance with their personality, persons should, in principle, be related to each other in interpersonal life, and not be regarded as means or 'objects' of voluntary actions. Accordingly, it is the involuntariness of understanding that, once recognized, again and again confirms that indirectness is essential to interpersonal life.

Situations

Voluntary actions, to sum up, being essentially, and more or less obviously complemented by or even dependent on the involuntary, cannot adequately be conceived if isolated. As a consequence, discussing actions philosophically one should take their interplay with the involuntary into account. Actions thus should be *contextualized* and described in their contexts formed by different versions of the involuntary. In a certain way, already Aristotle was aware of such a need for contextualizing actions as is mainly documented by his discussion of "mixed actions" – the voluntary action of a ship crew throwing load overboard is not intelligible without the context of the sea storm involuntarily experienced. However, as has been shown, Aristotle regards the involuntary only as limiting voluntary actions, and not as complementing or even enabling it. This one-sidedness, again, allows him conceiving of actions as he does: as aim-oriented and thereby voluntary activities performed in order to realize an aim initially intended.

Contextualizing actions does not require abandoning the Aristotelian conception of actions. Complemented by involuntary aspects, actions do not cease to be basically intentional. A ceramic artist, for instance, devoted to the tradition of *anagama* firing, would intend to make vessels glazed with fly ash. Someone pursuing, for instance, cooperation with someone else would intend an effective agreement concerning this cooperation. However, the intentions just mentioned differ from the canonical Aristotelian model in their partial indeterminacy. They include, as it were, blank spots, aspects that essentially cannot be planned and controlled throughout. As a consequence, persons performing such actions should have sense for the indeterminate particularly relevant for their intentions and activities. They should be

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unperturbed enough so as to let things happen instead of making attempts to force what by forcing could only be spoiled. Persons with a sense for such indeterminacy would be able to distinguish what can be voluntarily pursued from what one should allow happening involuntarily. Such person's practical rationality would thus include in particular a competence of judging which voluntary and involuntary aspects are relevant and how they can be related to each other.

What can thus be discerned could no longer be called just 'an action'. Including actions and more or less decisive involuntary aspects, it is as such neither action nor something happening involuntarily, but rather what could be called *the horizon* of both, an open field for possibilities and realities at a particular place. The particular state of such a horizon can be called *a situation*. Situations are nothing to be mastered, since they include aspects that cannot be mastered at all. They only can be understood, and understanding a situation means: realizing a constellation of possibilities and realities one belongs to and is confronted with. Since understanding is involuntary, the clarity of situations cannot be intended and not at all be forced. However, persons can be careful to keep an open-mindedness and a sense of the limits of their actions – not primarily as a sense of restriction, but rather a sense of clearly realizing what under given conditions can be done and what should be allowed just to happen.

These considerations directly apply to the aforementioned ideal of free, mature, and responsible persons as it goes along with the Aristotelian conception of action. Contextualizing actions, one has no reason to abandon this ideal, but only to slightly modify it. Contextualized actions, as may be repeated, do not lose the structure Aristotle has so impressively determined. Actions still are to be conceived as aim-oriented activities attempting to realize what has been intended. So, persons who are pursuing something initiated by their decision for a particular aim are responsible for what they are doing or have done. They are – or should be – able to say what they are aiming at, reflect what they are doing, and, if necessary, render an account of what they have effectuated, foreseeable consequences of their actions included. In contrast to responsibility, however, along with contextualizing actions maturity and freedom must be conceived differently. Mature persons then will not only have practical knowledge of such a kind that they will be able to find adequate means for what they are aiming at. They also will be able to discern particular interplays of the voluntary and the involuntary. And, finally, the freedom of persons will not coincide with voluntariness, but rather with the open horizon, the 'free space' persons, living their lives, find themselves involuntarily situated in. So, accepting or affirming the involuntary is no resigned fatalism. It is, not least, a recognition of freedom.

Related topics

See Chapters 7 (on Reiner), 8 (on Heidegger), 23 (Strawson), and 25 (Drummond).

Abbreviations

NE Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, recognivit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit I. Bywater, Oxford 1894.

Notes

1 Cf. for instance Plato, *Gorgias* 466d–468e.
2 For an extensive discussion of the following, cf. Figal (2013), especially pp. 66–74.

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3 For a more extensive discussion, cf. Figal (2019a), especially pp. 130–157.
4 For the first version of the following considerations, cf. Figal (2016), especially pp. 53–71.
5 For a more extensive discussion, cf. Figal (2019b).

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