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WHOSE MOUNTAINEERING? WHICH RATIONALITY? THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY OF CLIMBING IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 20TH-CENTURY NORWEGIAN ECOPHILOSOPHIES

Silviya Serafimova

Institute for the Study of Society and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies
e-mail: silvija_serafimova@yahoo.com

Abstract:

The article discusses the genealogy of 20th-century Norwegian ecophilosophies as deriving from a specific philosophy of climbing, one which is irreducible to philosophy of alpinism so far as it is based on the principle of cooperation and on the intrinsic value of interacting with the mountain rather than on competition, which makes the mountain an arena for sport activities. In this context, the expression to think like a mountain will be analyzed as something more than an impressive metaphor, and examined as a new way of thinking that avoids the extremes of both radical anthropocentrism and biocentrism.

Key words: Norwegian climbing philosophy, applied ethics, imaginative rationality, ontological ethics.

1. The Long Way of the Norwegian Philosophy of Climbing

The aim of this article is to support the thesis that the establishment of 20th-century Norwegian environmental philosophies is closely tied to the justification of one specific philosophy of climbing which cannot be reduced to alpinism as a sport. In this context, Norwegian climbing philosophy can be examined by tracing the philosophical ideas behind the formation of two climbing clubs, namely the Norwegian Alpine Club (NTK) and Kolsås Climbing Club (Kolsås Klatreklubb) (KKK).

KKK (1967), consisting of 37 climbers led by Reidar Eriksen, Egil Myhre, and Per Gaarder, functioned as a local climbing club which countered the elitism of NTK (Olsen 1992: 67). In turn, NTK was considered to be "perhaps the most exclusive of a myriad of outdoor recreation societies," whose slogan was formulated by the prominent Norwegian philosopher and mountaineer, Peter Wessel Zapffe: "Climbing to other sports is like champagne to bock beer," displaying the spirit of "this upper crust fraternity" (Anker 2007: 458). In the late 1920s, Arne Naess met Zapffe for the first time in Kolsås, which was called a "center for advanced friluftsliv" (outdoor life) (Kolsrud 1992: 119); a meeting that became one of the most crucial prerequisites for the further development of 20th-century Norwegian ecophilosophies. According to Bruskeland and Støren, both Naess and Zappfe had been climbing Kolsås for over 30 years before the KKK was founded, and thus their climbing ethics was formulated as a matter of a "live" practical philosophy (Bruskeland and Støren 1992: 79).

Regarding climbing techniques, bolt climbing was promoted by Naess against the principles of NTK and the British influence in 1930s, while so-called clean climbing (Kolsrud 1992: 116) was imposed by the "father" of the Norwegian philosophy of outdoor life (friluftsliv), Nils Faarlund, and some other supporters in the late 1960s. During his stay in Austria (1954-1955), Naess was struck by the idea that the climbers in Norway should become as crafty as the Austrian ones, but by sharing another philosophy of climbing (Naess 1978: 125). He was one of the first climbers to argue that the aim of climbing is not the experience of the climbers themselves, nor the mountain's formations or routes, but rather the realization of the pilgrim meeting with the mountain (Ibid).

The anticipation of bolt climbing techniques had much to do with the fact that Kolsås and some other cliffs around it became "arenas" for climbing (Kolsrud 1992: 122). At first sight, it appears that

bolts were recognized as aiding the process of conquering the mountain, so far as they made the most difficult ways accessible for the climber. Accessibility itself turned into a key prerequisite for justifying the environment as an arena for conquering difficult or inaccessible peaks. However, rejecting the idea that peaks should be named after the people who have climbed them was a significant element of the new philosophy of climbing.[1]

On a practical level, the use of bolts showed an increasing tendency to expand dependence on external factors to overcome the difficulties the climbers faced, but it happened against the background of understanding man's responsibility toward both others and nature. Otherwise, the problem of interacting with nature would have been reduced to how to approach the peak of a mountain fast and effectively, with "effectiveness" defined from climber's perspective alone.

If effectiveness had become a key characteristic of climbing and replaced the "natural" intensity of the climbing experience itself, the debates about safety would have been simplified to the choice and application of means and their instrumental value. It would have been a problem triggered by the use of bolts as means rather than by their contribution to easing the interaction with nature. Bolt climbing was recognized as dominated by so-called responsibility for the product (Ibid: 123), namely how long the bolts will last and whether the climber has the competence to adequately place them. This tendency has developed in time with the more widespread introduction of "modern" ideas of climbing due to increasing industrialization and its impact on turning nature into an exploitable source.

Analyzing the ethical aspects of bolt climbing makes it questionable to define it as uncritically adopted within the values of climbing sport's ethics. Bolts are introduced in order to meet the requirements of rising safety concerns, i.e., to improve the safety level of all climbers involved. In the 1950s, the essence of climbing was defined by Kolsås by the following formulas: "Never stay on one bolt!" and "The first man should never fall down!" (Høibakk 1992: 62). The shared responsibility for the others is one of the most significant embodiments of the interaction between the climber and the mountain that grounds the understanding of climbing ethics as a certain type of applied ethics.

In the article *Bolt Climbing*, published in the journal *Norsk fjellsport* (*Norwegian Mountain Sport*) (1948), Naess claimed that it is not right to enlist and encourage people to take up a sport which might create great sorrow for their relatives (Hohne 1992: 42). It is an experience that presumes not only that one will make particular engagements, but also necessitates awareness of one's responsibility to the experience itself, which is understood as an inseparable component from the responsibility to climber's life as a whole. To a certain extent, bolt climbing naturally entails the avoidance of experiential dualism, i.e. separating the climbing experience as an object from the climber as a subject.

Examining the value of climbing itself, I would argue that the role of training in the context of climbing is not equivalent to training for a sport. In the 1930s, climbing was addressed in Kolsås as "our dear sport" (Olsen 1992a: 54), which shows that its prototype characteristics had less to do with the contemporary understanding of sport philosophy than might be thought. Climbing was described as "dear," since joy and fun are the characteristics that give coherence to the climber's experiential gestalt.[2] As it is defined by the members of the club, Kolsås was not a goal in itself, it was a preparation for the mountain (Høibakk 1992: 65) in which participants cultivated their skills in order to be able to face physical, mental, and psychological challenges. Mastering such skills was designed to improve contact with nature and others rather than make the aforementioned skills goals in themselves.

In this context, a specification must be made. The ideas of exercising and practicing this philosophy of climbing—which are expressed by another representative of the later Kolsås generations, Dag Kolsrud, with one Norwegian word signifying both activities (the word "utøvelse")—should be examined in its double meaning, discerning between climbing as an existential experience and climbing as a sport. Since Kolsrud calls clean climbing an example of "a new ideology within exercising/practicing of climbing sport" (Kolsrud 1992: 116), it is important to emphasize that in the beginning, Norwegian bolt climbing was adopted as a means for keeping the complex interaction between man and nature as transparent as possible, while the forthcoming ideology of sport built on exercising

[1] Naess mentions the name of the well-established Norwegian climber, Einar W. Eriksen, as an illuminative representative of a tendency toward wide egalitarianism and anti-heroism at that time (Hohne 1992: 41).

[2] The term "experiential gestalt" is borrowed from G. Lakoff (Lakoff 1980: 81).

rather than on "practicing"—understood as an existential mode of becoming—presumes treating the means as goals in themselves. On a micro-methodological level, it shows that the ideology of sport is focused on bolts rather than on bolt climbing, absolutizing the role of equipment by making it an object of severe competition: the more fashionable the equipment is, the better the climbers are. This is one idea whose development brings bolt climbing as it was introduced by Naess in Norway into question.

In turn, the revolutionary impact of "clean climbing" consisted in its introduction as a practical and environmentally friendly way to climb, since the changes in technique caused changes in the philosophical influences behind them. While the egalitarian ideas of NTK were influenced by British philosophy, clean climbing opened the door for a stronger American intellectual influence. According to Kolsrud, the American influence in question became more apparent in the late 1970s and early 1980s, triggering changes which, however, were not very instructive only for Norway (Ibid: 115). The Alpine traditions, the role of the mountain, and the philosophical foundation of outdoor life in the the lives of Norwegian climbers predisposed them toward adopting the practices of Middle Europe. In practice, such an impact means that the latter were rather replaced with some American ideas, shifting the focus to style and technology, and to the growing interest in safety equipment and free climbing (Ibid).

Free climbing itself was triggered by the generational shift in Kolsås in the early 1970s, as well as by the international development of the field of climbing, which both contributed to raising free climbing to the level of sport. The climbing in question also showed how the use of German words and expressions for climbing were being replaced with new English terminology. As Kolsrud himself argued, the secondary language in Kolsås was no longer Ny Norsk,[3] but English (Ibid: 117).

The intensive internalization of climbing in Norway led to its transformation in the face of the increasing impact of industrialization on society generally. This transformation had both its positive and negative sides with regard to the uncritical reception of different ideals. In the case of Norwegian climbing, although the uncritical import of American ideals partly followed other dividing lines, it revealed how the development of climbing follows the development of society (Ibid).

In this context, the sportification of climbing caused by the internalization of foreign values can be seen as emerging from an uncritical acquisition of foreign norms, which in turn provoked the replacement of climbing ethics with those of sport. The transformation in question presumed a change in the mode of becoming: the meaning of the climbing experience guided by the formula "Because it (the mountain) is there" was substituted with the Kolsås's "Because we are here."[4] Thus, in order to understand the genealogy of the subject change in climbing, we should focus on outlining the normative validity of experiential gestalt as grounded in the complex pattern of implementing different ideals of climbing—namely, whether climbing is recognized as ascending a traceless passage (ferdsel) or a well-trodden way (Ibid).

However, so-called clean climbing is not only a cliché (Ibid: 115). In terms of safety, the better equipment is, the faster and safer the climbing is. On the other hand, the necessity of creating more elaborate equipment does not exhaust the debate about the purpose of climbing, which is a significant argument in favor of the thesis that such an interest is not necessarily a sign of a need for its sportification.

Since industrialization requires a mass production of artifacts, climbing faces the negative influences of those changes. The so-called lime debate (kalkdebatten) (Ibid: 117) in Norway is an illuminative illustration of how the aforementioned mode of non-necessity comes into question through pressure to mass-produce climbing equipment. The debate concerns the quality of "climbing production," which "does not have only cosmetic or psychological effects" (Ibid: 119). It is taking place at a time when free climbing is being introduced, showing a gradual change in climbers' attitudes towards exaggerating the role of equipment. This is also one of the first signs of the forthcoming sportification that makes the price a value in itself, and thus encour-

[3] Ny Norsk (New Norwegian) is one of the two official Norwegian written standards. It was created in the mid-19th century in order to provide an alternative to Danish, which was still dominant in Norway at that time.

[4] These formulas are answers to the question of why people climb. The first one was given one hundred years ago by Albert Mummery (as a response to the question of why he climbed the Matterhorn in the Alps). He emphasized that the real subject of climbing is not the climber, but the mountain. The second answer shows the growing desire among the members of Kolsås to establish a certain type of group belonging which strengthens self-realization via the process of identification (Ibid: 117).

ages striving for sportification for commercial reasons.

In turn, raising the level of safety does not lead to ruining the mountain, since clean climbing happens "almost silently and tracelessly" (Ibid: 116). That new securing process is based on placing and removing bolts with one's hands, as ease of execution is not recognized within the contemporary context as merely raising the level of efficiency, i.e. as reducing the time for reaching the goal, but also extending the space for both others and environment by "cleaning" given signs of man's presence in it. On a macro-methodological level, it means that the formula "Easy and fast" is a formula which differs when adopted in extreme rock climbing or indoor climbing, because it does not concern the amplification of time, but the clarification of space understood as a horizon of interacting rather than as an arena for certain sport activities.

As Kolsrud emphasizes in his essay, clean climbing established both a concept and its own activity, but it does not follow that safety should be put under the umbrella of climbing itself (Ibid). Clean climbing does not have to be exploited to win a climb, to move upwards, but only to prevent and stop falling without ruining nature.

2. The Turn of Imaginative Rationality and Its Impact on the Philosophy of Climbing in Norway

The "magic" underlying climbing does not have to be interpreted as a form of anthropomorphism, nor as merely an effective metaphorical expression, but rather as a new type of rationality extending the boundaries of cognitive rationality. An illuminative example in this respect is Naess's idea of what it means to "think like a mountain."[5] I argue that such a mode of thinking becomes understandable through the adoption of imaginative rationality,[6] which gives normative validity to the state of contemplation. The latter provides the justification for man's being-for-itself as a "natural condition," i.e. as a condition initially concerned with nature's being-in-itself. On a macro-methodological level, the state of contemplation internalized as the purest form of meeting between man and nature has to be recognized as the most relevant form of self-realization based on the biosphere's realization.

Furthermore, the rehabilitation of the normative validity of man's holistic experience shows how mastering practical wisdom depends, in its initial stage, on a focus upon the physical experience of the climber, including the issues of food and clothes. Although the physical experience is a necessary but not sufficient condition for clarifying the whole process of self-realization, it contributes to specifying why the concept of knowledge should be extended beyond the boundaries of pure rationality. In this context, we can outline the other aspect of imaginative rationality. In turn, "talking and feeling like a mountain" presumes the rehabilitation of a certain type of ontological grounding, namely, seeing/hearing like a mountain, which is one of the most important goals in the process of contemplation as defined by Naess, Kvaløy, and Faarlund.

On a micro-methodological level, the reconsidered normative validity of understanding through the mode of imaginative rationality clarifies one of the puzzling topics in Naess's and Kvaløy's writings—how to talk about a mountain (i.e. Tseringma[7]) as a god, father, mother, and princess in an ontologically grounded way. At first sight, the reader faces the challenge of interpreting the aforementioned statements purely metaphorically. However, the temptation to talk about irrationality comes from the conceit of insisting on examining reality from the perspective of the formula *adaequatio intellectus et rei*, which ascribes irrationality to non-existing things. If we refer to the non-existence, we would question one of the main principles of the 20th-century Norwegian ecophilosophies—the idea of meaningfulness (recognized as a surplus of meaning) determining the process of man's self-realization (to be understood as driven by nature's realization). Although the surplus of meaning is justified as ontologically grounded, i.e. as stemming from a surplus of determined being, it does not follow the regulations of the adequation of intellect and things, since the correlation requires evaluating the role of both emotions and corporeal experience.

Due to adopting the concept of imaginative rationality, we can see how the dialectical tension between man and nature can be handled—by reconsidering the faulty presumption that irrationality has nothing to do with rationality as such.

On a macro-methodological level, this means that the process of understanding concerning man's self-realization is impossible if we reduce it to cog-

[5] The expression "to think like a mountain" was coined by the American environmentalist, Aldo Leopold, in his book *A Sand County Almanac* (1949).

[6] The term is borrowed from Mark Johnson (Johnson 1993: 3, 134).

[7] Tseringma (also Gauri Sankar) is a mountain in the Himalayas.

nitive knowledge as such. This would exclude complex understanding, which is key in cultivating sensitivity towards Otherness in all its representations. An insight in this direction is provided by A. Jensen, who comments on the Norwegian word "kjennskap" (knowledge) as understanding (Jensen 2000: 102-103), illustrating how encouraging sensitivity towards the biosphere presumes adopting an awareness that has an uncontradictory normative validity.

3. Some Specifications of Norwegian Philosophy of Climbing as Applied Ethics

In this context, we can find well-grounded arguments supporting the understanding of the Norwegian philosophy of climbing espoused by Zapffe, Naess, S. Kvaløy, and N. Faarlund as based on applied ethics. Regardless of the fact that ethics plays an implicit role in their writings, they agree about the main issue of climbing, which gives license to discuss Norwegian climbing philosophy as underlined by unquestionable applied ethics. The latter promotes the principle of cooperation over competition, as well as the rule of protecting nature rather than ruining it.

A good illustration of this is the so-called "anti-expeditions." Sigmund Kvaløy, who was one of the many young adherents of Naess, spoke of their eighteen-day road trip from Oslo to Gandhi's institute in Varanasi (1969) as a turning point in clarifying the role which Gandhi's ethics of non-violence can play in overcoming the problems triggered by Western thinking. In 1971, N. Faarlund, Kvaløy, and Næss set out on an "anti-expedition" to Nepal with the aim of helping the local Sherpa in their campaign to protect the sacred mountain Tseringma from the invasion of tourist-mountaineers. During that trip, Næss completed a sketch of a new environmental philosophy (or "ecosophy"), Kvaløy formulated the principles of ecopolitics of a "life necessities society" (as opposed to the dominant "industrial development society"), and Faarlund was inspired to continue his philosophy of outdoor life (friluftsliv) as a wider approach to outdoor education (Brennan 2013).

Judging by the aforementioned examinations, I would argue that in the beginning, dating back to Fridtjof Nansen's description of his experience in Jotunheimen (Nansen 1978: 17), the evaluation of climbing still relied on the contradiction between *Homo Ascensus* and *Homo Viator* triggering reminiscences of Romanticism's ideal. The ideal in question presumes vertical space to have higher symbolic value as a space of freedom and self-realization. It is the space where "fresh" and "free" are determined to be ontological synonyms (Nansen 1978a: 48) that in turn determine the realization of our nature, so far as both body and soul should "claim their right" (Rubenson 1978: 117).

The coherence of corporeal and spiritual experience having normative validity is illustrated in the early 20th-century Norwegian environmental texts as focused on the "material" part of the preparation, and its value as grounding the realization of the expeditions. The complexity of the climbing experience is gradually specified as an experience driven by all man's capabilities, namely by the coordination of his intellectual, emotional, and corporeal abilities. The engagement of corporeal abilities is recognized as being of high importance, since the choice of relevant equipment is essential not only for safety, but also for environmental protection. The latter involves other considerations, such as the way that traces left by the climber carry ethical implications due to the presumption that the climbers should pass through the deep snow unaggressively.

An example in this respect is Zapffe's essays *Soveproser* (*Sleeping Bags*) (1934), in which first contacts with wild nature are evaluated through the opportunity to spend the night under the open sky in sleeping bags. This direct physical interaction with nature is motivated by traditions reaching back to the first Norwegian polar explorers, R. Amundsen and H. Hansen (Zapffe 1978: 178). In turn, the outdoor life shapes man's mentality in a unique way, which leads to implementing practical wisdom against a different background. Referring to this explanation, I would argue that the aforementioned background has to be understood as stemming from a different idea of compression of time and space. The practical striving for efficiency, which is focused on shortening the time and space for realization, inflicts the justification of mechanical time at the expense of organic time,[8] as well as the recognition of city space at the expense of nature's space.

While Zapffe describes the interaction in question as driven by the necessity to introduce one biological-ecological theory (Ibid: 175), Rubenson characterizes the physical as a part of the religion of the stars' sky (Zapffe 1978a: 160). The latter does not have to be understood only as a metaphorical expression, but rather within the framework of what Rudolf Otto calls *numinous*. It provides ethics *per se* by which man's self-realization is defined as intrin-

[8] Kvaløy refers to Bergson's distinction between organic and mechanical time.

sically connected to the process of the biosphere's realization.

On a macro-methodological level, it means that the wide set of requirements regarding corporeal experience determines the way that successful (from an ethical point of view) interaction with nature should be accomplished. On a micro-methodological one, climbing values are justified by the normative validity of striving for harmony. If body and soul are in harmony with each other, it is a necessary and sufficient condition for recognizing harmony with nature.[9]

On the other hand, the democratization of climbing as represented by Rubenson can be sought by seeing applied ethics as a matter of a collective responsibility that encourages cooperation at the expense of competition. The point is no longer to talk about loneliness, which is not reducible to either the concept or the feeling of being lonely (Rubenson 1978: 119), but rather to talk about the intrinsic value of transperspectivity on a generic level, in which men as belonging to mankind interact with different living forms because they are also a part of the net of biospherical knots in the sense described by Naess.

The necessity of clarifying the role of ethics is explicitly stated by Faarlund, who claimed in one of his early writings, *Fjell og vidde* (*Mountain and Mountain Plateau*) (1968)—published in the *Tidsskrift for klatring (Journal of Climbing*)—that it is of crucial importance to introduce a more binding ethical evaluation of both climbing (klatreetisk vurdering) and action, so that it can be built on facts rather than on illusions (Faarlund 1968: 32). Referring to his thesis, we should clarify that the evaluation does not have to be understood within the framework of objective naturalism, nor does it question the role of what I called imaginative rationality in climbing. On the contrary, it has to be focused on specifying relevant ethical rules in governing the diverse moral experience concerned with climbing. Thus, it should aim at outlining in a noncontradictory way the methodological connection between ethics and moral experience as it pertains to the contact of the climbers with the mountain. It is the development of an ethical grounding for climbing—recognized by Faarlund as a significant branch of the outdoor life—that justifies Faarlund's philosophy as a form of modern pedagogy requiring the cultivation of one's awareness of the diversity of the biosphere.

In turn, the idea of democratization—understood as a pluralism of interrelated living forms—has its adopters in Naess and Kvaløy, who try to implement the principles of "natural" democratization as the most relevant societal model. The expression "natural democracy" is not an ontological oxymoron because it is implicitly seen as grounded in the initial interrelatedness of the living things, which have value in themselves. The ethical connotations derive from the presumption that all living things have an unquestionable intrinsic value, a value that depends on the fact that there is no Living Thing with capital letters.

In this context, I would argue that we should discuss the philosophy of climbing as based on applied ethics rather than the philosophy of alpinism. A reason can be found in Zapffe's essay *What Is Climbing Sport?* (*Hvad er tindesport?*) (1933). Judging by his explanations, I draw the conclusion that the Norwegian philosophy of climbing up to the late 1960s is irreducible to the philosophy of sport, because it should be understood through the Norwegian word *idrett.*[10] It is a matter of a physical activity that stems from the complexity of man's emotions, expectations, and cognitive abilities, and is focused on how one should situate oneself in the world.[11] In contrast to the present day, *idrett* used to be understood as a process of applying practical wisdom in different activities in order to orient oneself within the world. This idea contradicts the common contemporary understanding of sport as a competitive physical activity focused on achieving concrete goals like breaking records.

Extrapolating from Kvalløy's distinction between organic and mechanic time, I would claim that if *idrett* relies on the changing attitude towards time—from viewing it as a natural rhythm to seeing it as an intensification of speed—then the difference between sport and *idrett* can be defined as a difference between pace and speed, a difference wherein pace reaching its maximum corresponds to nature's pure rhythm, while maximum speed refers to the

[9] This thesis is also supported by Faarlund, although he does not emphasize the normative connection between man's harmony and nature's harmony, namely that the former is a necessary and sufficient condition for the realization of the latter due to its strong ethical connotations. Faarlund stresses the fact that it is one and the same harmony, but does not explicitly reveal the premises of the ontological ethics lying behind this assertion (Faarlund 1978: 46).

[10] There is no difference in the translation of the words "sport" and "*idrett"* in English.

[11] Discussing the context in which the word *idrett* has been used, G. Breivik emphasizes that it was first used to characterize the Vikings' endeavors to find new places and discover new lifestyles (Breivik 2010: 195).

"best" time available according to calculations by humans.

It is the sensitivity towards the world embodied in the concept of *idrett* that allows cooperation to be recognized as having a high normative validity. As Zapffe himself claims, climbing is a certain type of experiential learning with strong moral connotations, since it is seen as signifying the difference between good and bad (Zapffe 1978a: 87). Developing this idea, he explicitly argues that climbing is not a sport, but rather a Dionysian confirmation of life (Ibid). The Dionysian potential comes from the meeting with nature, which requires mastery of a different type of practical wisdom through what I called imaginative rationality. The latter determines the way in which nature can be understood as elusive. This elusiveness is one of the objects of man's strivings that allows the climber to obtain an aura of transcendence insofar as practical wisdom helps unify knowing and feeling in a state of beyondness.

According to Zapffe, the climber does not "crawl up," but "sets himself up" (Ibid: 87). The Dionysian entity of climbing is also emphasized by the idea of so-called fighting geniality (en vildt strittende genialitet) (Ibid) having its exotic combinations. On a macro-methodological level, it means that the turn of imaginative rationality allows us to understand cooperation within the framework of ontological ethics as a form of cultivating sensitivity towards Otherness in all its representations. Furthermore, cooperation is recognized as engaging both cognitive abilities and emotional dispositions, i.e. as creating moral understanding that presumes a high level of responsibility on the part of the climber during the meeting between climber and mountain.

The more concrete aspects of the imaginative rationality can be traced through climbing because the latter provokes ecstasies beyond the norm. Faarlund adds one more distinction, namely the distinction between ascending and climbing. So-called "free climbing" mediates a form of movement's ecstasy (bevegelsesrus), which relies on "seeing the solutions in one passage and living out the solutions" in question (Faarlund 1978: 46). The climber measures the rhythm of the mountain with his own pulse because both of them have no beginning and no end (Ibid). The mode of beyondness becomes based on the prerequisite of nature's repetitiveness, which is later interpreted in the context of increasing technocratization as a vicious circle.

The turn of imaginative rationality for climbing is also represented in Naess's writings, where Zapffe's Dionysian entity is recognized as a "climbing booze" (Naess 1978: 122). Naess's experience in the Pyrenees in the early 1930s is described as relying on spontaneity and prolongation of engagement (Ibid). According to him, climbing "in the high mountains has much to do with a given mountain's mythology" (Ibid). This justifies a new type of meaningfulness, which is reaffirmed by rehabilitating the normative validity of spontaneity. The mythological framework should be outlined as contributing to the recognition of meaningfulness as a surplus of meaning/being that becomes identifiable through the mode of beyondness. The methodological similarities between Zapffe's and Naess's ideas of climbing can be found by outlining the ecstasies they describe as prototype characteristics of the existential experience of climbing. The Dionysian is comparable with the booze, since in the ecstasies the climber sees the open face of nature, which fills him with joy.

Like Naess, Faarlund defines climbing as a life philosophy that is based on the development of joy as its highest value. While in his early writings he sees the practical effects of applied ethics, in later writings the implicit idea of rehabilitating the role of ecolife through the lens of ontological ethics is emphasized. It concerns the intrinsic joy of life philosophy affirmed as a way towards nature. It is the process of grasping that illustrates the gradual transition from applied ethics to ontological ethics. Similarly to the way the mountain grasps the man, man grasps the mountain in a non-aggressive way.

In turn, imaginative rationality is embodied in the idea of the sacred in the sense of Faarlund. It is his idea of the "very sacred mountain" (Faarlund 1983: 45-46) that determines the distinction between "grasping" understood in its literal meaning versus the act of self-realization. Such an understanding is part of already established tradition concerning the mythology of the mountain. According to Naess, the Big Mountain (Storfjellet) is what is called in mythology a God (Naess 1978: 120). A similar idea grounds the normative validity of the extended idea of rationality in Mahayana Buddhism, which has the benefit of avoiding the simplifications of anthropomorphic explanations. Naess claims that Tseringma makes it possible to identify the mountain with Buddha himself (Ibid).[12] In this respect, the most significant representation of implicit ontological ethics can

[12] The strong references to Mahayana Buddhism are a result of the so-called anti-expeditions, in which Naess, Kvaløy, and Faarlund become acquainted with the Eastern thinking for the first time.

be seen in how he argues that a new type of rationality has to be justified in order for the meeting between man and mountain to be understood as crucial for their common realization.

4. Conclusion. A Reconsideration of Norwegian Climbing Ethics as Ontological Ethics

The initially lower level of "sportification" of bolt climbing in Norway was defined by the intrinsic value of safety, which addressed both the climber's interactions with others and his contact with mountain as such, albeit in different ways. Furthermore, clean climbing, as it was introduced in Norway, cannot be be seen as a sport from the beginning, since its prototype characteristics of "faster" and "easier" primarily concerned the safety of the climber and did not have an intrinsic price, such as when they were adopted in justifying climbing as a sport. This derives from the fact that the mountain was not yet considered to be an arena for competition, but rather a landscape for situating man, which is why I would claim that Norwegian clean climbing did not encourage climbing to become a part of industrial production of safety equipment. On the contrary, it contributed to mastering the techniques needed to effectively emplay such equipment when climbing with others.

Regarding the Norwegian philosophy of climbing, we should talk about *adequation of understanding and things*, so far as the restrictions of the principle of adequation itself are driven by conceptual limitations, not by the matter itself. Such a perspective changes the idea of knowledge by recognizing "knowledge of senses" as something other than an epistemological oxymoron. The first prerequisite for justifying this epistemological theory, which should be interpreted through ontological ethics, is to clarify the normative validity of this extended idea of the rational. By referring to this process, Naess adopts the idea of "extended" rationality due to the goals of general cultural anthropology (Naess 1999: 59). The methodological concern in his contextualization, however, is that he is focused on the process of defining cultural identity, which is a necessary but not sufficient condition if it is interpreted beyond the problems of moral understanding and learning.

Analyzing the implicit ethical grounding of early 20th-century essays on the Norwegian philosophy of outdoor life (friluftsliv), I would argue that the Norwegian philosophy of climbing can be defined as a type of applied ethics due to the fact that it was developed as a form of experiential learning whose normative validity arises from outlining practical wisdom as its prototype characteristic. Yet in Rubenson's writings, the ideal experience of nature is explored as embodied in experiential learning while climbing (Rubenson 1978: 118), which makes the role of the senses inseparable from the understanding of knowledge as such. Cognitive knowledge is justified as having the same normative validity as seeing and hearing, so far as they all contribute to the realization of a pure openness to nature. In this context, Zapffe's famous saying that "climbing to other sports is like champagne to bock beer" can be understood if we introduce the comparison between sport and *idrett*, namely, that climbing to other sports is like *idrett* to sport.

With all this considered, I would argue that the "magical" power of climbing derives from the ontological tension created by the mode of beyondness, which shows how mastering practical wisdom in order to reveal nature as an object in itself is a matter of adopting a complex sense of rationality that does not coincide with common sense.

Ontological ethics is important for understanding 20th-century Norwegian climbing philosophy, since referring to it is a "natural" (in the sense of logical) consequence of striving to find a complex perspective which clarifies the problem of normative validity and its representations of man's interaction with nature. This striving is also a logical result of two ways of thinking about biosphere (Breivik 1979: 10), which can be seen as two worldviews that are not merely contradictory, but can also be reconciled with each other in terms of outlining the necessity of building the whole picture of rationality as irreducible to cognitive knowledge.

Last but not least, the need to justify the role of ontological ethics against the background of philosophy of climbing is driven by what G. Breivik calls a striving for a "new global ethics" (Breivik 1978: 15). In this context, I would argue that global ethics stems from the need to rehabilitate the interrelatedness of all living things, for which the only one way to avoid reference to the paradigm of objective naturalism is to reconsider the influence of ontological ethics as a way of justifying the normative validity of the meeting between man and nature. On a macro-methodological level, it contributes not only to avoiding the implications of growing anthropocentrism, but also to avoiding falling into the trap of radical bioegalitarianism.

Analyzing ontological ethics argues for a reconsideration of why Zapffe's implicit existential philosophy cannot be simplified as a pessimistic project in contrast to the ones of Naess and Faarlund, which

emphasize the role of joy in examining the aforementioned interrelatedness. The joy itself is explored as deriving from nature, because the normative validity of spontaneous experience guarantees the procurement of the complex nature of man's self-realization.

Faarlund argues that our lives can be easier insofar as life in nature is easy by default due to its naturalness. The overlap between his ideas of climbing experience and experience in nature can be seen in the way the word of grasping mediates the methodological connection between the ideas of joy[13] and the sacred. It is the outdoor life that "grasps us with joy" (griper oss med glede), and thus deepens both our knowledge and the sense of fellowship (Faarlund 1976: 29). Faarlund's thesis illustrates how joy makes the integrity of our experience and knowledge possible by developing the idea of rationality, which introduces the one of common engagement. Regarding the logical connection between understanding and learning, since the latter leads to the development of the former, I would argue that a certain type of fellowship should be encouraged. This would lead to a strengthening of moral understanding through the practices of learning that are recognized as moral practices.

Against the background of the aforementioned investigations, it is important to clarify why the idea that we can talk about pessimistic and optimistic visions—a conception that is even supported by Naess in his evaluation of Zapffe's theory—reveals only one side of the problem. Rather than emphasizing the aforementioned distinction based on overexposing the literal textual references in the philosophers' writings, I focus on pessimism and optimism as mutually interconnected representations of climbing philosophy, and on climbing philosophy as driven by the state of ecstasy experienced by the climber. Ecstasy becomes understandable insofar as man and nature have intrinsically interconnected values—values which are visible in the process of the interaction itself, as long as it is not evaluated from the perspective of moral objectivism—strengthening the anthropocentric model.

According to Zapffe, the first practical experience in examining mountains is characterized by a feeling of helplessness, thoughtlessness, as well as cramps of desperation and a reliance on destiny (Zapffe 1992: 147). In this context, I argue that such emotions also contribute to the state of ecstasy, as loneliness has many faces that help to spur climbers' self-realization in the mountain. Analyzing Naess's statement that the mountain is always on both our side and life's side (Naess 1978: 124), I would also argue that what he calls balance refers to harmony, which is not equivalent to the process of harmonization, which presumes that the dialectical tension of nature's own development has already been obtained. If the move from balance to balancing corresponds to the move from harmony to harmonization, so-called pessimistic feelings turn into a necessary condition for people and nature to be on one and the same side, making man aware that he is not the master of the universe.

Judging from the aforementioned investigations, I would argue that seeing Zapffe's project as contradictory to the ones of Naess and Faarlund is possible only if we interpret their texts as illustrating fundamental contradictions in the grounding of ontological ethics. Such a simplification would put in question the essential nature of Norwegian climbing philosophy—namely, the normative validity of experiential philosophy, whose prototype characteristic is practical wisdom driven by imaginative rationality. This can lead to misunderstanding common ideas about the role of bioegalitarianism as inflicting man's self-realization through the idea of biosphere. If Zapffe's climbing philosophy is examined as a pessimistic one focused on mankind's intrinsic deficiency, then the idea of self-realization itself would lose its normative validity for good.

Loneliness, understood and felt as a state of being alone, can be seen as merely one possible representation of the one's experience, taking into account that it is a necessary but not sufficient condition for triggering the sense of wholeness with nature. The idea of loneliness is still implicitly stated by Rubenson, who says that it is not the concept of it, nor the feeling, but loneliness itself (Rubenson 1978: 119). Therefore, what is evaluated in a negative way as pessimistic, wrongly equating concrete representations with their normative validity, should be rehabilitated as a crucial condition for the realization of the state of ecstasy, since the latter has both logic and ethics *sui generis*. It is the ethics in question that make it possible to talk about Loneliness with a capital "L" and understanding it as a physical condition, emotional state, cognitive concept, etc. Within the framework of ontological ethics, the eth-

[13] The methodological connections between Faarlund's and Naess's conceptions of the role of joy can be followed by analyzing the comparison which is outlined by Faarlund himself, namely by comparing his vision of joy with Naess' focus on the development of Spinoza's theory of *hilaritas* (Faarlund 1990: 22).

ics of the numinous becomes recognizable as a way of clarifying why ecstasy can be explored only in a dialectical way, i.e. by combining the methods of cataphasis and apophasis as mutually supplementing each other. In the state of ecstasy, jubilance is indiscernible from the deep sense of mortality and alienation, because the tension of their contradiction is what makes the catharsis possible.

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