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The paradoxical nature of privacy

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Perspectives of privacy

- **Law:** Some kind of rule/right concept or norm; focus on transgression, on the other (Thomson, Nissenbaum)
- **Normative:** A kind of principle or value; focus on features of principle, core, instrumental, intrinsic; relationship to normative theories (Moor)
- **Phenomenon:** A kind of social or psychological phenomenon; focus on relations, control, needs, skills, processes (Freid, Rachels)



Nature of privacy

Generally (not only in competition but probably always):

- Need/necessity for protection of own privacy but at the same time...
- Need/necessity to break others' privacy



Nature of privacy

In cooperation, trust, affection:

- Need/necessity for non-protection of own privacy but at the same time...
- Need/necessity to maintain the privacy of relevant others



An alternative definition

Privacy is about control of information;
information about oneself and about others

Privacy is also paradoxical; we need to
protect it and to break it



Principles, rules and policies

An illusion to think that we can find or create a general and permanent principle or rule to guide our actions regarding privacy.

Continuous adaptation and revision of any policy seems necessary.



Φιλοσοφείν-Philosophizing

- Processes and skills of entities, and methods and tools used by them, seem to be most important to focus on.
- We need rules and laws to regulate and support such process and skills.



Philosophical skill

Platon: Socrates's Maieytike and Aporia

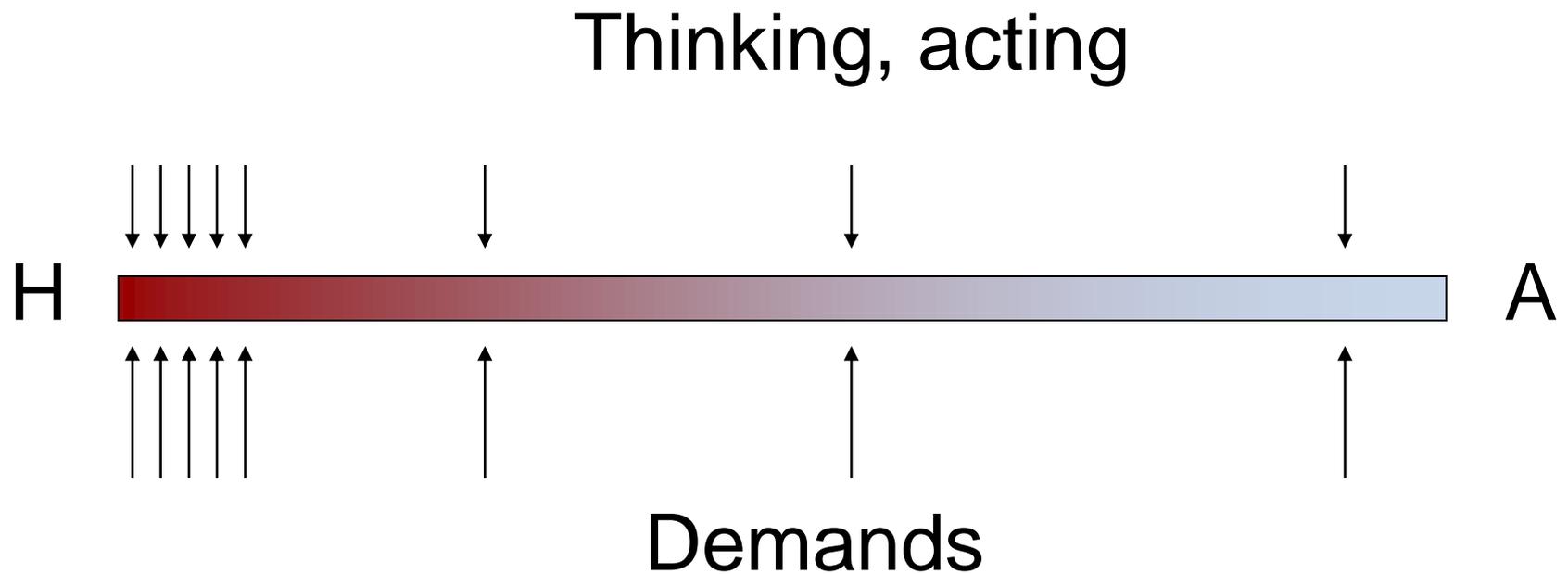
Aristoteles: Phronesis

Kant: Categorical Imperative, Dialectic Process,
Heteronomy – Autonomy

Piaget: Skills to handle moral problems

Vygotsky: Support/instruction/guidance for
development of skills

Ethical competence





It is difficult

Generally we are constrained regarding theoretical problems but practical ethics are harder:

- Incompatible values decide right and wrong
- Contradictory cases, e g. double standards
- Strong emotions
- Authority is very important
- Group and organizational constraints
- Focus on content not on process



Ethical insecurity

Handling of moral issues creates a big risk:

Important myths can be destroyed

- *For persons:* Resolution of problems, personal development, but risk to lose enthusiasm, get disoriented, lost, cynical
- *For organizations, society:* Hero, e.g. whistle blowing (courageous, responsible), or offend persons and principles (show no respect, disloyalty, treason, hostility)



What is needed

- *Ethical competence*: Know how to handle ethical issues, how to think
- *Ethical processes*: Roles, procedures, mechanisms in organizations
- *Ethical confidence*: Know that we can find good solutions and trust our ability (i.e. know that our skill and our way of handling moral issues is working)



ICT as a tool for philosophical skill

ICT is not only a source of problems or possibilities regarding privacy but...

- Easy access to information about products, services, political issues, etc.
- Horizontal and unmediated dialog and problematization
- Standardized information and dialog to stimulate philosophizing
- Tools for support of individual and group decision-making; guides self-criticism, creates aporia and builds the foundation for dialectic process, like ETHXPERT/COLLAB



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Thank you!

Questions?
Comments?