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## The Economics of Metaphysics

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Professor Hoppe has made many eminent contributions at the crossroad of philosophy and economics. In the present paper, which I offer to my dear friend and mentor, I will fish in the same waters, but not from the same boat. Hans-Hermann Hoppe has dealt with economics as a philosopher. Here I will deal with philosophy as an economist. I will not discuss the foundations of economics, but some of the reasons for which people choose their philosophy.



One of the most characteristic features of the Austrian School of economics is its metaphysical framework. The Austrians have traditionally been philosophical realists. They have always considered that economic science deals with universals — economic laws that apply at all times and places. These laws are not purely intellectual constructs, or fictions, but rooted in observable human life. According to Carl

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Menger, they are ingrained in economic goods. According to Mises, they are embedded in human action.

This metaphysical stance has occasionally led to polemical debates, most notably the *Methodenstreit* of the 1880s and 1890s involving Menger and various economists of the German historical school. However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, disputes of this sort have faded away. What remains is a consciousness on all sides that the Austrians are very different from the rest when it comes to the methodology and epistemology of economic science. From a mainstream point of view, they are oddballs. From their own point of view, they have preserved and developed the economic realism that has characterised the methodological writings of the classical economists (see Whately 1847 and Cairnes 1875). Anyway, fact is that the realism of the Austrian School has increasingly become a minority position. It continues to bewilder even those who are attracted to Austrian writings on money, prices, capital, and the business cycle.

Now, the gradual decline of realism into the present state of near-oblivion cannot only be observed in economics, but in all sciences. Economics was not even the first discipline to undergo this transformation. First it hit the natural sciences, in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Economics followed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and through the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The 20<sup>th</sup> century then also saw the transformation of jurisprudence and legal science under the onslaught of legal positivism. Only philosophy, theology, and some of the humanities have stood their realist ground.

Theologians and philosophers have debated the pros and cons of realism and nominalism in Antiquity and then throughout the Middle Age. Many of the greatest thinkers of the West—such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and Leibniz—had championed realism. Alas, it would seem that they put their money on the wrong horse. Eventually, in modern times, nominalism achieved a sweeping triumph in most fields of scientific endeavour.

But *why* did this happen? A straightforward economic answer would start from the fact that nominalism and realism are in competition and that intellectuals *chose* to adopt the nominalist framework, whereas they discarded the realist one. It would therefore seem that nominalism is after all *more useful* than realism. It is probably more

accurate. At the very least, it produces the same results at lower intellectual costs. And, indeed, one could make the case that Occam's razor greatly simplifies the convoluted Aristotelean approach, which had dominated in the Middle Ages. Aristotle proposed that everything has four causes: its finality, its form, its matter and its efficient cause. But then came Occam and argued that one could eliminate the first two and still explain all things in nature with the last two. From the point of view of Occam's nominalism, final and formal causes are superfluous. All scientific knowledge is based solely on material and efficient causes.

As we shall explain below, it so happens that finality and form give rise to universal concepts, whereas material and efficient causes are bound up in a flux of constant change. The triumph of nominalism therefore implied that universals were discarded or at least neglected. But so be it! Just as we put away old, obsolete tools, we disregard old, obsolete conceptions. Man selects and retains superior tools and relegates inferior ones. He retains the material and efficient causes, while the final and formal causes are forgotten or fade into the background.

Still, this straightforward economic answer would be unsatisfactory in the present case.

Indeed, in the social sciences and even in the natural sciences, there are problems that have no nominalist solution. Raymond Ruyer (*Néo-finalisme*), Etienne Gilson (*D'Aristote à Darwin et retour*) and more recently Edward Feser (*The Last Superstition*), to name but three eminent authors, have highlighted the limitations of nominalism in biology, geology, chemistry and physics. How can one talk about cells without invoking their functions and, by implication, their *finality*? How can one talk about any organic chemical processes without asking similar questions?

The problem is even greater in the sciences of man. In the humanities and the social sciences, form and purpose reign supreme. Man pursues projects. He chooses means and ends. Human action and human interaction are characterized by many universal forms, recognized in jurisprudence and the social sciences: scarcity, production, success, failure, conflict, agreement, disagreement, convention, gift, contract, association, representation, community, society, price, income, cost, and so on. Looking back at the *practice* of jurisprudence and the

social sciences—rather than at their official nominalism—there is no denying that realism is still very much alive and kicking.

And yet, jurists focus their attention on statutory law (positive law), which is a more or less pure creation of human imagination and human will. And economists, sociologists, and political scientists, too, are cultivating the empiricist-positivistic conviction that “knowledge regarding reality, which is called empirical knowledge, must be verifiable or at least falsifiable by experience; and experience is always of such a type that it could, in principle, have been other than it actually was so that no one could ever know in advance, i.e., before actually having had some particular experience, if the outcome would be one way or another.” (Hoppe 2010 [1989], p. 120) What explains this obstinacy?

In our view, it reflects a bias resulting from government intervention. Indeed, the competition between nominalism and realism has not been a *free* competition. It has been biased by the interventions of political power. Governments did not necessarily seek to impose nominalism or any other philosophical doctrine. But they have *unintentionally* favoured nominalism by creating a state of affairs more in tune with nominalist conceptions. As interventionism develops, nominalism becomes more plausible and useful relative to realism.

Economists have long understood that state intervention can reverse the ordinary effects of competition. For example, Gresham’s Law tells us that a currency overvalued by statute tends to drive undervalued currencies out of the market. While the best products *usually* prevail on the market, monetary interventions can bring about the opposite effect (Hayek 1977, chap. VI).

Should one not expect a similar result when it comes to ideas? It goes without saying that the state has the power to deliberately promote one doctrine at the expense of another. We see this every day in public schools. But the same effect can occur unintentionally, as a collateral effect of interventions that are not necessarily aimed at this outcome.

In what follows, we will attempt to show that interventionism tends to create artificial advantages for nominalist conceptions, particularly in jurisprudence and economics, and that it also tends to eliminate the *disadvantages* of nominalism in an equally artificial way.

## I. REALISM VS NOMINALISM

The divide between realism and nominalism is one of the oldest philosophical quarrels in the West. Realism enabled Greek philosophers to reconcile two elementary experiences: that of difference (including change) and that of equality (including permanence). No two objects are identical in every respect. Even industrially mass-produced products differ from one another, albeit often very marginally and imperceptibly to the human eye. Similarly, the same object (the same tree, the same human being) is likely to change, if only in certain respects, over time.

What then allows us to assert that two tables, though different, are both “tables”? What allows us to affirm that an adult man, although very different in appearance, ideas and sensitivity from what he was twenty years ago, and from what he will be in twenty years’ time, is really “the same person”? Is this way of expressing oneself purely a linguistic convention? (This is the thesis of nominalism.) Or are there really common elements between different tables, between different phases of human life, universal and unchangeable elements?

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle all asserted the presence of such universal (or essential) elements in all things, interwoven with changeable (or accidental) elements. The universal elements of things are their forms and purposes. The changing elements are their material aspects and the circumstances under which they come into being. For example, all tables enable people to use their arms without bending (their purpose). This is universal. But tables can be made of different materials, they can have different dimensions, different ornaments and so on. The men who make them may be motivated by different motives, depending on the particular conditions of space and time. This is what is changeable or accidental. If Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have been revered in the West for 2400 years, it is not least because they developed this solution to the problems of difference and equality.

Opposed to this is nominalism, which asserts that forms and ends are themselves changeable. There are then no universal elements, only accidents.

It is true that we use the *same words* to designate objects that are fundamentally unequal. But according to nominalists, this is only due to an economy of thought and communication. We would not be able

to master a vocabulary so large that we could use a different word for each thing and every activity. We could not communicate with other people. Therefore, on purely pragmatic grounds, we use the same words for different things. Hence the term “nominalism.”

Hence also a great intellectual danger. Indeed, this pragmatism can put us on the wrong track. It can lead us to believe that words with universal connotations designate universal *realities*. But universal realities do not exist. It is our language that creates the *illusion* of the universality of things.

But let us leave these metaphysical considerations behind and take a closer look at their practical implications, first from a realist point of view, then from a nominalist one.

### *Implications of Realism*

Starting from realism, we should expect to find universal forms and purposes everywhere, not only in simple objects, whether animate or inanimate, but also in complex or compound objects. There is not only the universal form of a human being. There are also universal forms in human *relationships*: families, religious and cultural associations, companies, markets, conflicts, wars, states. Accordingly, there is a logic of the family, just as there is a logic of exchange and a logic of the state. There is a specific logic of language, a specific logic of the written word, a specific logic of law and so on. To understand these specific logics, we need to study these relationships, their causes and their consequences.<sup>1</sup>

This requires a number of caveats. For example, to say that a relationship between different agents follows its own universal logic does not mean that each agent is always, or only, in the same way linked to the others. There are equal and symmetrical relationships, just as there are organic and hierarchical relationships. A family is not *merely* a collection of three individuals sharing the same roof and fridge. A company is

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Adolf Reinach (1989), Paul Grice (1989), John Searle (1997), Olivier Massin and Anne Meylan (eds) (2014). Professor Barry Smith from the University of Buffalo has pursued for many years a very considerable research programme in applied ontology. See for example Smith (1989, 1993, 1999), Smith, Mark, and Ehrlich (eds) (2008), Smith and Munn (eds)(2008).

not merely a collection of different contracts. A market economy is not merely a set of different monetary exchanges in juxtaposition.

Similarly, as Carl Menger emphasised in his *Investigations*, the causes and consequences of social ensembles can be unintentional. The logic of different social relations may exist *spontaneously*, rather than as a result of deliberate human choices. Language is a prime example. It has a universal form and purpose. And yet it does not owe its existence to a deliberate creation. It is “alive” spontaneously. It is cultivated in the innumerable “speech acts” of everyone, every day.

Similarly, to say that money exists and has a universal purpose is not to say that all monetary exchanges owe their existence to deliberate creation, or that all forms of money need to be supported by deliberate acts of the state. To say that law exists and has a universal purpose is not to say that justice and jurisprudence owe their existence to a deliberate creation, or that all forms of law need to be supported by deliberate acts of the state.

The presence of universal human relationships in no way diminishes the reality of free will. But it does impose *limitations* on human will and action. Faced with its own logic, human action entails objective consequences. A husband is free to cheat on his wife, but this is not without consequences for the couple. An entrepreneur can cheat on his public accounts, and this has consequences for the future of his firm. The state has the power to nationalise law and money, but this has consequences for the quality of the law and for the quality of money.

### *Implications of Nominalism*

From a nominalist point of view, as we have said, it is absurd to speak of the logic of things as if there were any universal relations involved. Everything changes, everything entails change. What is more, change itself is not subject to universal regularities—the way things change is itself subject to change. Everything changes, and in principle everything can change in any conceivable way. And since everything is changeable,

everything can also *be deliberately modified*, at least in principle, in any conceivable way.<sup>2</sup> Let us see where this takes us.

In the early days of modern nominalism, during the Renaissance, nominalism inspired the alchemists (Newman 2006, Eamon 2010). These mad scientists of their time explored the hypothesis that there are no essences, only accidents. They believed that all these accidental elements of nature could, in principle, be combined in every conceivable way. They therefore looked for technologies such as the “fifth element” and the “philosopher’s stone” that would enable them to transform an apple into a table, a bird into a fish and so on. The overall aim was to improve nature. The great symbol of this quest was the *magnum opus*, the transmutation of any substance into gold.

It is not hard to see in these approaches the antecedent of contemporary biotechnology, assisted reproductive technology, maternal surrogacy, transgenderism, transhumanism and so on. But these are just the latest fruits of nominalism. They have attracted a lot of attention because they are still hotly contested and in the headlines. But they are part of a long line of nominalist conceptions and practices that have marked economics and law in particular.

The central idea of legal positivism is that the state can impose legal causes and consequences—starting with the law itself, which, according to nominalism, finds its sole cause in the will of power. The state also has the power to modify the consequences of legal acts as it sees fit. For example, it can decide that an employment contract entails consequences other than those foreseen by the parties involved. It can limit the civil liability of members of parliament, public officials and companies; or it can decide that a company is not liable if it has complied with certain formalities stipulated by financial regulations. The state can also create rights and obligations *ex nihilo*, without relying on prior custom or contract. The welfare state creates benefits and obligations to finance social security organizations. Similarly, it can impose the nullity of private agreements contrary to its will—think of marriage contracts and

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<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, although refuting the nominalism of Democritus, had closely studied the manifestations of change and transformation, notably in *On Generation and Corruption* and in the fourth book of his *Meteorology*. The doctrine he developed in these writings, now known as “corpuscularism,” inspired both chemistry and modern alchemical experiments (see Lüthi 2001, Martin 2013, Bigotti 2020).



inheritance. And it can impose the nullity of natural moral obligations contrary to its will—as in laws on filiation.

The contemporary dominance of nominalism is evident not only in deeds, but also in intellectual life. In law, this dominance is enshrined in the organization of higher education in France and other countries, where legal positivism is *de rigueur*, while the teaching of natural law is relegated to the antiquarian discipline called history of law.

In economics, nominalism is just as omnipresent, all the more so as economists, unlike jurists, are unaware that they are practicing it. They think they are simply applying “the scientific method.” Today’s young economists are the descendants of Monsieur Jourdain. If they were told that they practise the positivist approach, they would first be astonished, then delighted by this pleasant discovery.

The four-step scientific method (observation-hypothesis-model-test) has proved useful when dealing with inanimate objects. In this field, we can expect to find constant quantitative relationships between observed variables. However, when confronted with human choices, the same approach is contradictory (Mises 1957, 2012 [1962]; Hoppe 1983, 1995). But that has not stopped economists from practicing it with great enthusiasm. They love their models so much that they regularly confuse them with reality. The classic case is the microeconomic model of “pure and perfect competition” found in every contemporary microeconomics textbook. As an intellectual construct, it is innocent, if sterile. It becomes problematic, however, when viewed as a practical ideal, and attempts are made to transform the world to conform to this model.

Nominalism has therefore strongly influenced intellectual life in universities, particularly in law and economics. But it has also left its mark on the general mentality. In contemporary Western societies, we flatter ourselves with the conviction that everything is—or should be—possible for everyone, and that a better future awaits us thanks to the technological and political transformations of this world. There are no constraints in the *nature* of man, in the nature of the economy or in the nature of law. Water sometimes wets, and perhaps very often, but not always. Fire can burn, but not necessarily. Indeed, from a nominalist point of view, neither things, nor the economy, nor the law have natures. Anything can be transformed into anything. All we have to do is choose an objective, and the rest is a matter of will and means.

## II. INTERVENTIONISM AND NOMINALISM

Let us return to our starting point. What explains the triumph of nominalism in law and economics? Why do jurists choose to abandon the study of universal legal forms and devote themselves entirely, or almost entirely, to positive law? Why do economists neglect to understand the nature of choice and exchange, and concentrate instead on quantifying human behaviour? In short, what motivates the *choice* between a nominalist and a realist approach?

Everyone is free to adopt the conceptions that suit them, for one reason or another. This is as true for realist conceptions as it is for nominalist ones. Here, as elsewhere, the choice is the result of a multitude of motivations and objectives. In what follows, we shall focus our attention on the material incentives provided by the economic and political context. We will try to show that it is through state intervention that nominalism *becomes* increasingly useful relative to realism. To this end, we shall first highlight the practical usefulness of realist conceptions, and then look at how state intervention changes the picture.

### *The Utility of Realism*

The knowledge of a universal relationship brings three practical benefits: an economy of thought, a reduction in uncertainty and a reduction in inter-personal conflicts. The choice of realism can therefore be motivated by an expected reduction in opportunity costs.

The economy of thought is obvious and considerable. Anyone who knows the Pythagorean theorem does not have to measure all the straight lines in a rectangular triangle. They do not have to start from scratch when faced with a different rectangle. He may generalise previously acquired knowledge. The same advantage goes hand-in-hand with the knowledge of all other universal relationships, such as the law of gravity, the intercept theorem, the law of diminishing marginal utility, the law of returns, etc.

The same applies to universal knowledge of *impossibilities*. It is important to know that this or that cannot happen, that it is impossible. No one wastes time trying to square a circle, or finding a solution to a mathematical problem that has no solution.

It is in everyone's interest to know and learn the most widespread universal relationships. This knowledge is useful not only in the classroom, but also in practical life, when faced with the problem of uncertainty.

It is precisely when faced with an uncertain future that man benefits most from his universal knowledge. It enables him to reduce the number of unknown variables. It guides him through the darkness that separates the present from the future. An entrepreneur setting out to conquer a new market is unaware of many of the variables that will influence his success. But he knows from the outset that his services must be useful, that their prices will influence customers' choices, that customers have budget constraints, that monetary exchange is preferable to barter, that his costs must be measured in relation to his sales, that there are dishonest customers, that there may be legitimate disputes with honourable customers, that well-written and well-explained contracts reduce disputes and so on. Whatever his ignorance of the concrete conditions prevailing in this new market, it is never complete ignorance. Our entrepreneur arrives with a wealth of universal knowledge that reduces the uncertainties he faces and the potential conflicts to which he is exposed.

These remarks are not intended to diminish the importance of ignorance or error. They are indeed formidable problems, and universal too, but it is precisely because they are universal that they afflict a nominalist approach just as much as a realist one.

### *Interventionism*

Let us now look at how the usefulness of universal conceptions, characteristic of philosophical realism, is affected by state intervention. This requires a definition of interventionism (see Mises [1929] 2011; Hülsmann 2024, pp. 265–268).

Interventionism originated with the modern state in the 16th and 17th centuries. The modern state is based on the doctrines of sovereign power and the social contract. This state is not just the ultimate arbiter between different *interpretations* of the law, but the very source of right and wrong, of what is legal and what is illegal. The modern state makes the law. It is itself subject to the law only in the *formal* sense that its own

decisions apply equally to itself and its representatives. However, *materially*, it is above the law insofar as its legal definitions are not bound by principles higher than the mere will of the representatives of the state.

Such is the modern conception of the state. It is a nominalist pure-bred. It postulates that the state can freely associate the legal causes and consequences of its own acts, and of the acts of others. But the modern state transmits and reinforces this legal nominalism in other areas too. It is the driving force behind nominalism.

From an economic point of view, the difference between medieval political power and the modern state is reflected in the difference between mixed and interventionist economies. When governments buy and sell goods and services, they usually behave in the same way as all other individuals and organizations. They are an integral part of society and the wider economy. They play by the same rules as everyone else. Economists call this a mixed economy. Things are different when a government acts in the manner typical of modern government, i.e., when it overrides natural and customary rights. In such cases, it intervenes in the economy.

State intervention is a partial violation of natural and customary rights. When the government drafts soldiers, it violates the right that conscripts normally have over their own person. When it taxes citizens, it violates the ordinary right of taxpayers to use their money as they see fit. These are *partial* violations. Conscription is usually temporary, and taxation rarely amounts to complete expropriation. But in all cases, the ordinary property rights of the people are at least partially violated.

Yet these partial violations of natural and customary rights tip the balance of benefits and costs in favour of nominalism. They thereby tend to inverse the subjective value of legal positivism as compared to the subjective value of natural law (1). But they also distort the competition between nominalism and realism by imposing the costs of nominalism on all citizens (2) and by socialising these costs (3).

### (1) *Inversion of Values*

We have emphasized that the modern state can alter the consequences of legal acts as it sees fit. It can define civil liability, it can create rights

and obligations *ex nihilo*, and it can impose the nullity of private agreements contrary to its will. These interventions are motivated by the nominalist conviction that, in any case, there are no natural causal relations at the legal level. But they are not only *based* on nominalism, they also increase its subjective value.

Interventionism *destroys the universal legal relations of natural law*. It replaces them with contingent relations that are now imposed in the form of positive law. As a result, knowledge of natural causal relations *becomes* less important. The market value of realism diminishes and therefore its subjective value declines, too. This is the reason why very few legal scholars study natural law, or more precisely, they study only what remains of it in positive private law.

### (2) *Imposing the Costs of Nominalism*

Legal nominalism is associated with higher monetary costs than natural law. But this disadvantage disappears when nominalism is imposed or subsidized by the state.

This is particularly the case with the cumulative production of new norms. It is well known that the accumulation of laws, rulings, ordinances etc. leads to inconsistencies and even conflicts between these norms. These conflicts can be resolved by the principle of the hierarchy of norms and by rules governing the application of the law over time. However, this resolution is not instantaneous, but involves legal procedures spread out over time, and therefore costly.

What is more, the relentless accumulation of standards leads to profound disorientation. In a forest of rules that have *prima facie* nothing to do with nature, no-one can rely on the evidence of their own eyes and reasoning. To avoid conflicts with the law, and to settle disputes, it becomes necessary to benefit from the assistance of competent persons (lawyers, notaries, judges) who know the will of the positivist legislator, as well as the dominant way of interpreting this will. In other words, the accumulation of standards goes hand in hand with a growing dependence of citizens on legal professionals, and therefore with higher monetary costs.

Legal positivism drives up costs for yet another reason, namely, because it makes it possible to change all standards overnight. From an economic point of view, the power to make law has two diametrically opposed effects. Its immediate consequence is to create greater certainty, and therefore a reduction in the cost of economic life, since the state makes the same rule known and applied to everyone. But the same cause also produces an opposite effect. The power to change all norms at any time *increases ignorance of future norms*.<sup>3</sup> In the end, a certainty “for now” is not a certainty at all.

Economic life under an interventionist regime is therefore more uncertain than under a natural law order. This problem was dear to the heart of a great jurist and philosopher of law, Bruno Leoni (1991 [1961]), who pointed out that statutory law had the unfortunate tendency to increase the uncertainty of entrepreneurs. Robert Higgs (2006) has emphasised the great practical importance of this problem of regime uncertainty.

But who precisely bears these costs? Faced with an accumulation of standards and increased uncertainty, entrepreneurs will commit their time and capital only when they can expect higher returns on investment. In practice, this means trying to negotiate lower purchase prices. The nominalism imposed by the law therefore logically leads to a fall in wages and income from land, as well as an increase in gross corporate profits (see Rothbard 2007 [1962], t. II, chap. 7). Gross corporate profits increase because they now include a higher risk premium, in compensation for the uncertainties of positive law. It is clear that the attempt to negotiate purchase prices downwards will discourage a certain number of employees and suppliers. The overall result of legal positivism is therefore a reduction in economic activity below the level it would have reached under a natural law regime.

In short, legal nominalism is costly in more ways than one. In free competition, it couldn't go very far. If there were a free choice between natural law and legal positivism, most people seeking for arbitration of their disputes would resort to natural law and shun positivism. The

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<sup>3</sup> Another consequence is a profound change in the legal professions. Whereas the quasi-immutability of natural law values the experience and wisdom of the juriconsult, the “dynamic” systems of positive law value attention to legal news and the ability to opportunistically anticipate ongoing changes.

latter is only maintained by the power of the state, which can compel its citizens to bear the costs.

### (3) *Socialisation of the Costs of Nominalism*

State intervention also promotes nominalism in a more indirect way, by socialising its costs. Normally, market participants have an interest in behaving prudently, anticipating future problems and considering their natural and social environment. Any imprudence is likely to have a negative impact on their income. In particular, failure to respect the rights of others will result in legal action, with loss of money and time.

However, government intervention can change this. In particular, the state can subsidise a particular activity, and can give it legal preference. For example, it can ensure that a company that emits harmful gases is not obliged to compensate its neighbours; or that a pharmaceutical company that sells substances that are dangerous to health is not obliged to compensate its customers.

Such privileges are likely to encourage nominalist ways of thinking. Indeed, they devalue the effort of those who seek to master a trade or, more generally, to *understand the nature* of the activity in which they are engaged. Thanks to state subsidies and legal protection, it becomes possible to pursue an economic activity on the basis of a very partial, even superficial, understanding of its issues. It becomes possible to succeed on the basis of a reductionist vision and an irresponsible attitude. But the risk of failure remains. It is even increased when entrepreneurs and other responsible people neglect to take prudent steps, when they no longer try to understand the nature of their activity, because they know they are supported and protected by the public authorities.

Normally, it would not be prudent to act with a reductionist and superficial view of reality. Normally, it would be imprudent wherever there is genuine civil responsibility. On the other hand, where the State subsidises nominalist experiments (agriculture, medicine) or imposes them (vaccinations), things can change, even radically.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

We have tried to show how state interventionism tends to favour nominalist philosophical conceptions and, by the same token, to reduce the usefulness of realist conceptions. The triumph of nominalism and its overwhelming dominance today can therefore be explained by the wholly artificial support it receives from political power.

Positivist law flouts all rights that are defined independently of the State, especially natural and customary rights. It destroys the natural universal relationships that lie at the heart of realism, and this drastically reduces the value of knowledge about these relationships. State intervention also has a massive impact on the advantages and disadvantages (value and costs) of nominalist projects such as transgender, surrogacy, compulsory vaccination, the health pass and other techno-engineering and social transformation projects. But despite this powerful support, nominalist projects fail again and again because of the reductionism that drives them. It is therefore necessary to subsidise them and protect them with privileges against any legal claims and any competition they might face.

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