

Truthfulness as self-responsibility towards co-responsibility

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Abstract

In my first speech I discussed my thesis from a theoretical point of view. Subsequently, in this second speech, I shall expand on my thoughts in respect of practical implications thereof.

The thesis of my first speech posited that *truthfulness* of a speaker is not a *validity claim* through which a speaker imposes a claim expressing its subjective sensations as effectively experienced – as assumed by Habermas and Apel – but rather that *truthfulness* is the *presupposition* with which the speaker fulfils the norms of *argumentative discourse* (K.-O. Apel) and *consensually oriented speech* (J. Habermas).

Furthermore, I posited that *truthfulness* is the sole *presupposition* which the *competent speaker*, at any time and with certainty, can *catch up* with.

Applying this concept of truthfulness, I explore the question as to how far a rational person can be held morally responsible for its own actions, referencing Hannah Arendt's question in "Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil".

By trying to answer this question, I would like to demonstrate that at the level of justification of one's own actions, any *rational competent speaker* has the duty to justify its speech acts and acts *truthfully*. This also implies, however, that every rational speaker has to take *self-responsibility* towards *co-responsibility*, together with all other co-speakers and towards any other people concerned, even those who are only affected potentially. Thus, due to the possibility of *truthfulness* in justification, any rational person can be held morally responsible for its own actions; precisely because *truthfulness* is the sole *presupposition* which the *competent speaker*, at any time and with certainty, can *catch up* with.