Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions

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EDITORIAL

Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions (*PCT*) is a publication of the World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies. A multi-lingual philosophical journal, it appears annually in print format. Selected papers, along with a supplementary volume, are published in an electronic format.

Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions draws on the important contribution of Catholic Christianity to philosophy. Since it aims at the fruitful exchange of ideas among philosophy and religious and cultural traditions, it also includes studies outside the Catholic Christian traditions.

The journal publishes manuscripts in all areas of philosophy, although each issue will contain a number of articles devoted to a specific theme of particular philosophical interest. To encourage dialogue and exchange, the journal will include scholars from Africa, America, Asia, and Europe, and will represent a range of philosophical traditions.

Of course, some may ask 'Why another philosophy journal?'

The aim of the *World Union* is to bring scholars from the Catholic Christian traditions into contact and exchange with one another, but equally with philosophers from other religious and cultural traditions. More broadly, its aims are

(i) to initiate and develop contacts with individuals and associations who are engaged philosophical research and study in, or in areas related to, Catholic Christian traditions – and particularly with those who, for social or political reasons or on account of geographical location, have not been able to do enter into close relationship with philosophers elsewhere;

(ii) to serve as a conduit of information about meetings, conferences, and other matters of common interest;

(iii) to help, when asked, and as far as possible, in organizing and sponsoring lectures and educational exchanges, particularly in those regions where there is an interest in the Catholic Christian philosophical traditions;

(iv) to help, when asked and as far as possible, in the publicity and organisation of conferences on themes consistent with the work of the World Union and, especially, with world congresses of Christian philosophers

Most philosophy journals have little interest in drawing explicitly on religious and cultural traditions, or in pursuing exchanges of ideas between philosophy and these traditions – and some might even be said to be opposed to this. Again, while some philosophy journals are published by Christian philosophical organisations or through religiously-affiliated universities, *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions* aims explicitly to promote exchanges between religious traditions and cultures, and philosophy. Finally, to encourage the principle of exchange, *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions* will be thematic.

This orientation reflects the intentions of the encyclical *Fides et ratio*, and the view that such exchange is of mutual benefit to philosophy and religious and cultural traditions, without interfering with the proper autonomy of the philosophical enterprise itself.

Articles appearing in the journal will be of a serious scholarly character and more than just commentaries on issues of contemporary concern. Nevertheless, *PCT* is open with regard to methodology and approach.

The supplementary volume, published on the Internet, will include more general articles, discussion notes, interventions, as well as a selection of articles from the printed volume. The aim of this supplementary volume is to provide additional opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

The World Union hopes that *PCT* will provide a useful means of bringing scholars from across the globe into closer contact with one another – in a way that draws on insights and values to be found in the Catholic Christian and other religious and cultural traditions.

William Sweet

INTRODUCTION

Some fifty years ago, while developing what may be called his 'philosophy of culture', the French philosopher Jacques Maritain wrote, "The unity of a culture is determined in the first place and above all by a certain common philosophical structure, a certain metaphysical and moral attitude, a certain common scale of values, in a word, a certain common conception of the universe, of man and human life, of which social, linguistic, and juridical structures are, so to speak, the embodiment."[1] Such a formulation suggests that culture has emerged from philosophy, not the other way around. And yet, there seems to be little doubt that philosophy emerges from culture – that culture gives rise to the sorts of problems that philosophers pursue, that culture seems to tell us what counts as philosophy as distinct from history and religion, and that culture influences even the language in which philosophical questions are expressed and answered.[2] To be sure, from ancient times until the present, philosophy and culture have been intertwined, but the challenge is to determine the character of this relation in each era and to point out its consequences.

In the opening paper, "Religion, Science and the Culture of Credulity," Jānis Ozolins looks at the dominant cultures of the contemporary West, and sees in them an increasingly deep suspicion of rational argument and proof, and a corresponding growth of credulity. Interestingly, both science and religion are targets of this. Reason and argument yield to emotional appeals, empty rhetoric, and manipulation by politicians, cultural icons, and the media. Ozolins traces this to philosophical roots – to the emphasis on autonomous choice and the primacy of the individual, which leads to the view that all opinions are equally legitimate, and that there is no objective way to choose among them. Ozolins calls for a return to philosophy – specifically, a philosophy in which reason plays a leading role.

In the second paper, "Globalization and the Emergence of Philosophy in Southeast Asia," Tran Van Doan looks at cultures of the East, It has sometimes been said that philosophy, in the strict sense, does not exist in the Asian traditions; there may be wisdom or spiritual or cultural traditions, but not philosophy. Yet even if there is Southeast Asian philosophy, in a world that had been increasingly globalized, there is little chance that it will ever have a place on the world stage. Tran notes that these views are not only widespread in the West, but are to be found in many contemporary Asian philosophers themselves. Tran argues, however, that this is not a consequence of globalization; globalization is simply a means of dissemination of ideas and culture. It is true that Western ideologies and cultures have come to dominate philosophy in Asia and throughout the global south – a movement that Tran calls 'mondialization' – but this mondialization antedates globalization. Globalization, in fact, gives Southeast Asian philosophers a means not only to recover their own

philosophical traditions, but to bring these philosophies into contact with, and to contribute to, philosophy worldwide.

In "Building Cultural Bridges in the Era of Globalization," Joseph C.A. Agbakoba addresses the question, if philosophy emerges from culture, can it cross cultures and contribute to the building of universal values? Agbakoba notes the postmodern challenges to universalism, but signals that these challenges are more to universalist ideologies than universal values. He argues that there are universal values, taking the example of African philosophies and showing how they have a reach beyond the African context. This does not mean that any existing set of values is universal, and Agbakoba signals the need for mechanisms to allow the development of cross-cultural dialogue and thereby the articulation of shared values.

So-called postmodernism has often been seen as a philosophical movement that not only underlines the rootedness of philosophy within culture, but also the impossibility of philosophy transcending culture. Moreover, while postmodernism is generally regarded as providing a radical critique of the status quo, it has also been seen as profoundly relativistic, incapable of mounting any kind of normative critique of culture and, hence, conservative. In "Holistic Postmodernism: A New Paradigm for the Integration of the One and the Many," Warayuth Sriwarakuel reviews two models of postmodernism, one described by Lawrence Cahoone and the other by David Klemme, and argues that both are incapable of providing a satisfactory response to the question of how to reconcile unity and diversity in culture. Sriwarakuel proposes a third model of postmodernism, that employs a new logic of "both...and." This latter model, which draws on Buddhist thought, is not only more coherent, but has potential to solve the problem of the one and the many.

In "Reality Thought, Reality Lived," Richard Khuri reminds us of the tension between thinking about reality, and reality as it is lived. This phenomenon is also a problem of philosophy and culture – culture is 'real' whereas philosophy is largely just thinking about the real, and a matter of appearance. Khuri surveys traditions from the pre-Socratic, through the contemporary West, up to Zen Buddhism in the East. He calls on us to be conscious of this tension, to avoid the extremes of 'reality' and 'appearance', and to see the reality in appearance.

Although philosophy can be said to emerge from culture, it is also called on to be a critic of culture. In "Facing the Global Crisis: The Role of Philosophy in Challenging Economic Powers," Silja Graupe notes how economic systems have come to be regarded by many today as objective natural processes and, in this sense, are beyond critique. Graupe maintains, however, that philosophy can not only challenge this view of economics and of the culture that it brings with it, but can provide ways of directing or reorienting economic life.

Postmodern challenges to culture and to philosophy often underline their contingency and their radical uniqueness. Conceptions of value and truth from one tradition or culture are said to be, as such, incommensurable

with those of other traditions and cultures. In "Rehabilitating Value: Questions of Meaning and Adequacy," Karim Crow responds to this view. It is clear that we have to enter into a culture, so to speak, in order to grasp its philosophies and values, but this enables us not only to understand them, but to bring them to bear on and to contribute to concerns outside that culture. Crow argues that, by being attentive to language, we can find ways to cross cultures and, thereby, achieve a unitary sense of value.

In the final paper on this theme, "What Remains of Modernity? Philosophy and Culture in the Transition to a Global Era," William Sweet returns to the putative dichotomy between modern philosophy, with its insistence on the independence of philosophical truth from culture, and postmodern philosophy, with its view that philosophy is fundamentally and inescapably rooted in culture. Both approaches recognise and articulate legitimate concerns, and yet both also have their critics. Sweet offers a response to this dichotomy, by suggesting a 'third way' that includes their insights while avoiding the challenges to them. This is based on the model of 'critical history,' found in late nineteenth and early twentieth century British philosophy. Such a model, Sweet argues, may provide a way of recognising and drawing on the diversity of culture while avoiding subjectivism, and a way of assuring that different cultures can and ought to form common cause, without collapsing into a monolithic universalism.

The papers in this volume, then, recognize that philosophy and culture are intertwined, but also seek to determine the precise character of this relation, its consequences, and its limitations. This task is daunting but it is also crucial, for it bears on a question with which many, if not all of the authors of these papers are concerned: the articulation and cultivation of what may be called a new humanism.

Jacques Maritain devoted his life to the cultivation of this new humanism and consistently approached the study of culture in this context. Reflecting upon the way in which this new humanism could bring a new and necessary unity to culture, he argued that it "render[ed] man more truly human and [could] manifest his original greatness by enabling him to partake of everything in nature and in history capable of enriching him."[3] Maritain was not alone. Not a few philosophers of the last century saw this new humanism as emerging from the ashes of – and as the only alternative to – what may now be described as the in-humanism of the two world wars. Just a few years before the end of World War II, Maritain wrote, "In my mind the notion of the present trials endured by civilization [is] inseparable from that of a new humanism, which is in preparation in the present death struggle of the world, and which at the same time is preparing the renewal of civilization…."[4] This renewal, as Maritain and many others realized, is not inevitable or necessary, and must be creatively sought after and freely chosen and discovered anew in each generation. "Culture," he writes, "is the expansion of the peculiarly human life, including not only whatever material development may be necessary and sufficient to enable us to lead an upright life on this earth, but also and above all the moral development, the

development of the speculative and practical activities (artistic and ethical) peculiarly worthy of being called a human development."[5] Such moral development, of course, cannot be imposed top-down, but must be based on convictions that are born in freedom.

A similar point has, arguably, been made by Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Saved in Hope*, when he wrote, "[W]e must acknowledge that incremental progress is possible only in the material sphere. Here, amid our growing knowledge of the structure of matter and in the light of ever more advanced inventions, we clearly see continuous progress towards an ever greater mastery of nature. Yet in the field of ethical awareness and moral decision-making, there is no similar possibility of accumulation for the simple reason that man's freedom is always new and he must always make his decisions anew. These decisions can never simply be made for us in advance by others – if that were the case, we would no longer be free. Freedom presupposes that in fundamental decisions, every person and every generation is a new beginning. Naturally, new generations can build on the knowledge and experience of those who went before, and they can draw upon the moral treasury of the whole of humanity. But they can also reject it, because it can never be self-evident in the same way as material inventions. The moral treasury of humanity is not readily at hand like tools that we use; it is present as an appeal to freedom and a possibility for it."[6]

The papers in this thematic section all add to this "moral treasury," and were selected largely from those prepared for and presented in Seoul, Korea, in the summer of 2008, at a conference which took place immediately prior to the XXII World Congress of Philosophy. This international conference, on "Philosophy Emerging from Culture", was organized by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (CRVP) together with the World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies (WUCPS) and the International Society for Metaphysics (ISM), and was supported generously by Soongsil University, in Seoul.

Edward J. Alam, William Sweet
Theme Editors

NOTES

[1] Jacques Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, rev. ed., trans. Joseph Evans and Peter O'Reilly (New York: Macmillan, 1958), p. 69.
[2] See W. Sweet, "Culture and Pluralism in Philosophy," in *Philosophy, Culture and Pluralism*, ed. W. Sweet (Aylmer, QC: Editions du scribe, 2002), pp. x-xi.
[3] Maritain, *The Twilight of Civilization* (NY: Sheed & Ward, 1943), p. 3.
[4] Maritain, *The Twilight of Civilization,* p. viii.
[5] Maritain, *Religion and Culture*, in *Essays in Order*, ed. Christopher Dawson and T. F. Burns (NY: Sheed & Ward, 1940), p. 8.
[6] Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* 2007, section 24.

RELIGION, SCIENCE AND THE CULTURE OF CREDULITY

Jānis Ozolins

INTRODUCTION

A deep malaise seems to exist in Western culture which seems to be characterised not by a robust and practical rationality—a legacy of the Enlightenment, but by a deep suspicion of rationality and a rejection of a metaphysics which claims that the world is intelligible. Post-modernity, of course, has already rejected the possibility of truth being uncovered through the use of reason and opens up a conceptual space which allows thought to proceed unhindered by particular ways of thinking and unburdened by objective theoretical structures; its open-endedness makes relativism difficult, if not impossible, to avoid.[1] It is not, however, Post-modernity upon which we will focus in this paper, but upon that which led to it. Whatever the historical roots of the situation, not only do we no longer live in a post-Christian culture in the West, but also a post-scientific culture. In one sense, this can be seen as simply another way of saying that we live in a post-modern world and, to some extent, that is true: we would not be claiming that we live in a post-religious and post-scientific world, were it not for the fact that we live in a post-modern world. It seems to me, however, that in one sense at least, the situation is not the result of Post-modernity, rather it is the liberalism that lies at the very foundations of Western culture.

By exalting autonomous choice and the primacy of the individual in all aspects of life, the condition has been provided for the descent into credulity and superstition. If every opinion is equally valued, irrespective of whether or not it is based on evidence or rational justification and if there is no means of establishing independent criteria for assessing an opinion, then whether something has been established according to rigorous scientific method or whether it is asserted on the basis of subjective feelings does not matter. The modern Western world, despite its technological triumphs in many areas appears to be in a state of decline. Though much has been written about the state of Europe and European civilisation, this is not restricted to Europe, but at least includes its offshoots in America and Australia. The authority of both science and religion has been replaced by the manipulation of the population by the media and by advertising. In the former case, the media in their unashamed quest for bigger headlines and what will sell newspapers, magazines and advertising space, are completely unscrupulous, in many instances playing the role of a kind of lynch mob whose main role is to inflame the populace to react in increasingly hysterical ways. In the latter case, advertising sees its main task as persuasion and the creation of need and desire in people to consume the products that they promote. Persuasion is based on emotive appeals to

vanity, to the need to feel superior, to insecurity, to sexuality: it is never on an objective assessment of the merits of the product.[2] Reason is ignored. There are, therefore, numerous examples of the growth in credulity.

By credulity I mean a kind of uncritical acceptance of opinions on the basis of their popularity without any critical assessment of them. Once the idea that the aim of intellectual activity in both the humanities and of the sciences is a critical and reasoned reflection on the nature of our experiences of both the inner and outer world in order to separate fact from fiction is abandoned, credulity is all that is left. Of course, there are still scholars and scientists who are critical realists about what they are doing, and so have not abandoned the proposition that what they are seeking is the truth, but this is not a view that is popular among the general population. Neither is it a popular view among philosophers, who under the influence of Post-modernity and the linguistic turn of the twentieth century, have abandoned the rigours of metaphysical certainties for the comfort of relativism.

The thesis that Western civilisation suffers from a growth in credulity is supported by a number of analyses of Western Institutions that see them in crisis.[3] Marguerite Peeters, for example, argues that there are clear signs that the West has begun to break down with distrust between government and citizen, a lack of faith in the institutions of society and a loss of democracy. Increasingly, government is by the media, who whip up public opinion so that governments defy opinion polls at their peril. Justice, for example, is no longer a matter for the courts, to be determined through the sifting of evidence, but is increasingly determined by uncritical, hysterical opinions expressed in newspapers. The use of power, unvarnished and unapologetic, to impose a particular view is increasingly a feature of not just government, but also of corporations, banks and other instrumentalities which once provided a service to the public.

Peeters contends that traditional conceptions of society and the relationships between social institutions based on the Judaeo-Christian conception of the human person, the universality of human values and the responsibility that human beings have for the earth, have been replaced by a global governance paradigm which is highly ideologised, rejects traditional values and denounces modern industrial civilization. It seeks to replace these with new global values based on equality, sustainability and participatory democracy. Although few would object to these values, the problem is that the global governance movement seeks to impose a particular view of these principles on society.[4] Whether Peeters is right or not in her analysis or just indulging in polemic, she at least alerts us to the malaise from which Western democracies seem to be suffering, that is, a lack of faith in their own institutions as well as in the power of reason. The recent debate about the new European Constitution wherein no mention is made of Europe's roots in Christianity is a further indication of a shift to a post-modern relativism.

The pathological lack of faith by Western civilisation in its own institutions has serious consequences. Western civilisation, according to

Huntington, no longer believes in itself and this means that there is not only no longer a belief in any universal truth or institution but also a conviction that it is immoral to hold any such belief.[5] There is in such attitudes a rejection, in effect, of the intelligibility of the world and so a rejection of the view that there is any hope of finding truth. The universe is unintelligible and so there are no standards for judging any thing, since all viewpoints adopt a particular standpoint which ought not be accorded any privilege over another viewpoint. The consequence of this view leads to the adoption of some form of emotivism. Hume's view that reason is the slave of passion[6] is vindicated: feelings and emotions both determine and justify action. Reason's role is merely to enable the realisation of our desires and passions. As the role of reason diminishes, credulity increases.

SCIENCE AND CREDULITY

Science is venerated in modern society because of the technological advances that have made life easier, safer and healthier, but it is also the case that by and large the general population lacks any ability to understand anything that scientists may have to say. The numbers of science literate people in the population has been falling in many countries, and has probably never been particularly high. Understanding of even basic mathematics, for example, a key tool in science, is notably lacking in the general population and is falling.[7] Moreover, given the rapid advances that science has made in a great many different areas, from astronomy to zoology, and the increasing fragmentation of science into more and more specialisations, it is impossible for anyone to be scientifically literate in the sense of being able to grasp what is occurring in the vanguard of scientific research. This means that the claims made by scientists cannot be assessed by the general public, who must rely on what they are told by experts. This is a serious issue, because there are a significant number of scientific questions with not only ethical implications but also economic and social implications that require assessment and judicious decision-making. Decreasing scientific literacy and numeracy renders this increasingly difficult. When this problem is joined to the prevailing view that any individual opinion is considered to be on an equal footing with a rigorously tested and developed scientific theory, very serious problems arise. In particular, in medical science, where the prevailing ethos is to provide evidential support for claims that are made about the efficacy of treatments, difficulties arise when alternative medicines and natural remedies are sought without adequate testing of the efficacy of the treatments being prescribed. Credulity plays a considerable part in the acceptance, without any critical assessment, of the treatments offered by an increasingly broad range of alternatives to Western medicine. An important element in this is a failure to recognise any difference between conventional medical treatment and unconventional treatment in the form of alternative therapies. This is not to suggest that alternative therapies might not have efficacy in the treatment of

illness, but to contend that it needs to be subject to critical scrutiny in the same way other medical and health treatments are. Alternative medicines and therapies are big business and have moved increasingly into mainstream health care, indicating their increasing acceptance in the community. It is not at all clear, however, what the grounds for their acceptance are.[8] Arguably, therefore, the general public has blurred the distinctions between evidence based medical treatments and those which are not so based and hence accept alternatives in an uncritical and credulous manner.[9]

The problem of a lack of scientific literacy and numeracy is further exacerbated by the lack of clarity with which scientific problems are presented. For example, we are warned that we have to do something about climate change and global warming. It is not at all clear what is meant by climate change. Every day, for example, since it is different from the last, produces a different climate. Just as Heraclitus says, one cannot dip one's toe in the same river twice. As the water flows, the river changes, as the day goes on, the climate is changing, the temperature rises and falls, the wind blows or stops blowing and the humidity rises and falls. Meteorologists are likely to have a clear understanding of what they mean by climate change, certainly they will have a more sophisticated grasp of the term and its nuances, but this will not be so for the general public. A second example is provided by the extravagant claims made by medical scientists about the untold benefits that therapeutic cloning will bring, if only they are allowed to continue their research on stem cells derived from human embryos or from nonhuman-human hybrids. Leaving aside the very real ethical issues involved in the destruction of human beings, the creation of nonhuman-human hybrids and embryoids, the lack of success in this area of research raises considerable doubt about its claims, yet both governments and the general public seem to be prepared to believe that cures are just around the corner. The lack of a critical ability to judge between what is pseudo-science and what is science means that no distinction is drawn between what is supported by evidence and what is merely speculation.

In the social sciences, where a plethora of research methods prevail and problems may be explored using either quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods, the ability to make a critical, rational appraisal of knowledge claims is also much diminished.[10] Quantitative methods, heavily based on statistics, claim that their conclusions are objective, can be generalised to whole populations and so are superior to qualitative methods. Qualitative methods are based on examinations of individuals' lives and experiences, using interviews, personal experiences, case studies, observations and texts and claim that what is obtained is a more textured understanding of the lived situations in which human beings have their being. While it is accepted that qualitative methods do not claim to draw generalisable conclusions of the same kind as may be drawn from quantitative methods, nevertheless, the insights gained from the examination of a particular state of affairs may be applicable in other similar situations. Mixed methods attempt a middle way, using both

quantitative and qualitative methods. The problem here is that public decision-making may be based on too slight an awareness of the limits of the research methods and so draw unsupported conclusions.[11] The social sciences have been criticised for failing to provide an adequate science of human nature, but whether these criticisms are fair or not, pronouncements are made as if there was no possible doubt about them. Worse still, few members of the general public are sufficiently aware of the distinctions between the methods of the social sciences or have any ability to assess research conclusions[12] reached using these methods and so naively accept pronouncements from social scientists with remarkable equanimity.

IS AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH REALLY INCONVENIENT?

The lack of critical ability to be able to assess evidence and to make judgements is illustrated by the generally uncritical response to the issue of global warming. Here the question is not usually one in which the boundaries between science and pseudo-science are blurred, but rather a question of how evidence is weighed and interpreted. The lack of critical ability and a tendency towards credulity leads to an unreflective acceptance of global warming and hysteria about how best to handle altered climate conditions.[13] Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, purports to show the imminent danger that the earth faces from global warming and human activity. Although the evidence presented in the film seems to be overwhelming, closer scrutiny shows that some evidence has been selectively chosen and some elements only express half truths.[14] A critical analysis of the program exposes inaccuracies and interpretations of data that are presented as the only possible interpretations. The point here is not that, because there are falsehoods in Gore's presentation, human beings should not pay attention to possible environmental dangers, but that because of the falsehoods, human beings might miss out on how to best respond to such dangers. Popular unsupported myth may make both scientists and the intelligent laypeople blind to different interpretations of the data.[15]

Science itself suffers from a failure on the part of some of its practitioners to take seriously its central principles. That is, some practitioners have no qualms about falsifying results or exaggerating what their research shows. The truth can be inconvenient. The conviction that bad science will be exposed through others repeating experiments has not been always vindicated. Sometimes it can be years before fraud is discovered and, of course, there is no way of telling how much fraud has not been discovered, given the sheer weight of scientific publication.[16] Numerous examples abound of fraud in science and once exposed, these undermine confidence in the pronouncements of science. Worse still, however, the lack of a critical faculty to distinguish between science and pseudo-science and the further general disregard for the importance of evidence allows even the most half-baked ideas to flourish, since they are not subject to any standards of evidence nor to the dictates of normative theory construction.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Drees suggests that many believers don't take science seriously. Others, such as New Age believers, accept science uncritically.[17] He says that he regrets such attitudes and argues that religion needs to take science seriously and adjust religious beliefs to accommodate the new discoveries of science.[18] This is all very well, since it assumes, contrary to Aquinas, that in any clash between science and religion, it is religion which ought to give way. This is simplistic, since whether science or religion gives way will depend on what is at stake. The Galileo controversy, often depicted as a paradigmatic clash between science and religion, was in fact a clash between different views about scientific paradigms. Likewise, the clash between Darwin and the Bishop of Oxford was not simply a clash between an obdurate religious faith and a progressive and plausible scientific theory. The evidence for Darwin's theory simply had not been gathered.[19] Popular culture clearly has accepted a particular view of what occurred and so there is a false picture of a clash between religion and science. It is not always clear cut when religion ought to give way to science. It is possible to draw up examples, such as the claim by fundamentalists that the universe and the earth was created 4000 years ago and the evidence for this is the Bible, a claim that scientists would repudiate as false. Science on the other hand, claims that the earth is at least 6 billion years old and that it formed out of the condensations of gases many billions of years after the Big Bang. Deciding who to believe is not simple, since particular ways of seeing the world take hold and, as Quine says, a total theory of the world does not fall on the basis of one inconvenient falsification of what is held to be true.[20] Nonetheless, we want to be able to dismiss crackpot theories. For this, a critical reflective capacity is indispensable. Credulity, however, is not restricted to science.

RELIGION AND CREDULITY

Religion and what particular religions actually teach are often unknown to many people. Here there is plenty of room for credulity, with the most credulous perhaps being those who uncritically accept religious beliefs. This is a danger for any religion, giving rise to dangerous fanatics and religious cranks. Richard Dawkins takes aim at many of these in his most recent book, *The God Delusion*.[21] The problem is that though some of his criticisms are well aimed, his argument is virtually non-existent and his lack of any deep understanding or knowledge about religion is disappointing. We shall return to this below.

Unfortunately, the vacuum produced by a lack of religious knowledge and the ability to reason has seen a rise in superstition, prejudice and fear. This is perhaps best exemplified in the rise of interest in so-called New Age religions and a spirituality divorced from any connection to religion. It is plain that the religious is confused with the psychic and

spirituality with belief in the efficacy of crystals, for example, to heal our troubled souls — hence a 'new age spirituality' that seems to identify spirituality with some form of animism. In a world that has become divorced from religion, the search for meaning has taken a turn towards belief in astrology, in Tarot cards and a higher consciousness that is not God, but a kind of realisation of full human potential. God, if God exists at all, is not the personal God of the Abrahamic faiths. New Age religion, if it can be called that, comes in many different forms and is not easily categorised, though all versions seem to have in common the idea of some kind of universal power that pervades everything and of which everything is a part. This can be God, but equally, can be the Universe or Nature itself. One objection to 'New Age' religion is that it is essentially self-centred and limits its horizon to the individual. Thus, healing crystals are used to heal the individual; meditation to release the individual from his or her careworn conscious states so that inner healing can occur; and divination to foretell the future of the individual.

Not everything about New Age religion is to be rejected, for it may lead people closer to God. There is nothing wrong with using meditation, for example, to calm one's mind and to re-energise oneself. Equally, it is not wrong to listen to New Age music and burn incense because this has a calming effect on a person after a long day at work. A New Age appreciation of the oneness of nature is not to be condemned and a search for meaning is at least the first step towards an authentic spirituality and to an openness to the Spirit of God; however, because it does not encourage critical reflection and a rational understanding of what is meant by a search for oneness, it remains simply an emotional release of some kind. Because of this, its adherents remain prey to false beliefs, to ministration by charlatans and frauds and in the grip of credulity.

THE DELUSIONS OF DAWKINS

A major difficulty faced by religion is that just as the general public is largely ignorant of the creeds of the major religions, many of its critics are also disappointingly ignorant when voicing their criticisms. This is case with Dawkins, for example, as we have already mentioned. There have been several books rebutting Dawkins recent diatribe against religion[22], so his arguments have been placed under scrutiny by a number of authors[23] and it is not our intention to repeat these arguments here. It is, in fact, all too easy to show that Dawkins's arguments are for the most part based on faulty reasoning, ignorance and are lacking in sophistication. This is easily illustrated by a consideration of a few examples; however, we shall content ourselves with only one.

Dawkins considers various proofs that have been put forward for the existence of God, beginning with Aquinas's famous five ways. It should be noted that prior to proposing the five ways in the *Summa Theologica*, what Aquinas discusses is the place of human reason in relation to faith.

Aquinas notes that in the sciences, proofs are not offered for their basic principles, rather argue from their basic principles to other truths, similarly, it is possible to reach other truths by the use of human reason beginning with what God has revealed to us. This supposes that our questioner is prepared to accept that there are truths of revelation, that is, of Faith. If not, Aquinas says, "Si vero adversarius nihil credat eorum quae divinitus revelantur, non remanet amplius via ad probandum articulos fidei per rationes, sed ad solvendum rationes, si quas inducit, contra fidem." ["If our opponent believes nothing of divine revelation, there remains no longer any means of proving the articles of faith through reason, but only of answering his objections — if he has any — against faith."][24] The non-believer, therefore, is hardly likely to believe a truth that rests on the acceptance of premises which are articles of faith and depend on Divine revelation.

In the second question, where Aquinas considers the question of whether God's existence can be proved, he begins by considering whether God's existence is self-evident and concludes that it is not. What is salient here is that he is responding to the assertion that God's existence is self evident and argues against this. His interlocutor is a believer. This is also evident from the second Article, where the objector contends that God's existence cannot be demonstrated because it is an article of faith and so not amenable to proof, secondly, since the essence of God is not known, we cannot prove or demonstrate the existence of God, and lastly, we cannot prove the existence of God because His effects are not commensurate with Him as their cause. That is, because God is infinite, His effects are not proportionate to their cause, namely, God and so His existence again cannot be demonstrated. Aquinas argues against each of these propositions, importantly allowing that if a person cannot follow or understand a proof, he or she can accept the existence of God as an article of faith.

In Article three, Aquinas addresses the question of whether God's existence can be proved. The second objection is interesting, for it seems to be put by a very Dawkinsesque figure, who argues that everything in the world can be explained by reduction to nature and similarly voluntary action to human nature or will and so there is no need to claim that God exists. Aquinas's response is to say that God's existence can be shown and to suggest the five ways. He says, "Respondeo dicendum quod Deum esse quinque viis probari potest." This can be translated as, "I reply saying that God's existence can be demonstrated in five ways." The word "probari" does not necessarily mean prove in the sense that it is often taken.[25]

Dawkins dismisses the first three ways as being essentially the same and though it is true that there are similarities, it is not the case that they are the same, especially if they are considered from a scholastic — or Aristotelian — point point of view. The first proof, the argument from movement, depends on an understanding of act and potency, a very significant part of Aquinas's metaphysics. Aquinas says that it is not possible for something to move unless it is put into motion by something which is actually in motion already. This is perfectly sensible, since what is

potentially in motion cannot put something in motion because it is not actually in motion. What is not in motion is not able to actualise motion in something else. To modern ears, this suggests a modern interpretation which assumes knowledge about the concept of momentum and also the concept of energy. These are both modern conceptions which were not really properly understood until the 18th century. As a proof beginning from a particular metaphysical background, the proof from motion is not as easily dismissed as Dawkins seems to think, nor does it reduce to the causal proof.

The second proof is where we find the proof from the need to stop the infinite regress of efficient causes. Aquinas notes that nothing can be the efficient cause of itself, since it would have to be prior to itself, which is clearly impossible. The only solution is to postulate a first efficient cause. This first efficient cause, however, needs some quite special properties, since if it is to be the first efficient cause it needs to have been able to have brought itself in to being. This proof is not based on act and potency as the first is, but on the nature of the causes which exist in relation to one another. If there is no first cause, then neither can we talk about an intermediate or an ultimate cause, since the relationship between causes does not seem to provide a coherent understanding of how one cause can be followed by a sequence of causes. If there is no first cause, there is no way of being able to specify what is the first cause, what are intermediate causes and what are final or ultimate causes. This seems to me to be rather different from the first proof.

The third proof relies on an understanding of possibility and necessity. Again, this does not seem to be very closely related to a reduction to a concept of an ultimate cause, though it is true that Aquinas invokes what has already been proved (in his view) namely that if something is necessarily caused by one thing, that thing itself needs to have been caused by something else which itself was necessary. To break the infinite regress, of course it is necessary to invoke the existence of something which necessarily brings itself into existence. Aquinas is well aware of this. The argument is not a causal argument. Aquinas says that if it was only possible for something to exist, there would be no reason why it should be the case that it exists at all. That is, if there was nothing, there is no reason to suppose that this state of affairs would not continue, since nothing which potentially exists has any means whereby it comes to exist, hence, it would continue to not exist. But there is something in the world, so, since something exists in the world and is necessarily caused by something else which exists, to stop the regress we invoke the idea of something which necessarily exists of itself. Though this is similar to the proof from efficient causes, it is not quite the same. Again, Dawkins misses the subtle differences which make a difference in our understanding of the proofs of God's existence.

Dawkins has much more to say about belief in God and its irrationality in the remainder of his book, but, as indicated above, falls prey to the irrationality of which he accuses believers. His attempt to show once

and for all that God does not exist falls well short of the sophisticated and considered way in which Aquinas deals with the non-believer. The real problem is not so much Dawkins himself, but those who would accept Dawkins's views in the same uncritical and credulous way that he says religious believers accept religious beliefs.

PUBLIC EDUCATION, CULTURE AND CREDULITY

One of the major sources of credulity, particularly about religion and religious faith, is the lack of adequate religious education or even education about religion. The distinction between these is important in countries, such as Australia, in which the public or government education system is secular and non-denominational. In the government education religious instruction takes the form more usually of education about religion, rather than religious education. Parallel to the public education system is Catholic school system, as well as schools established by other Christian denominations. Religious education is taught in these schools, but students do not seem to have a strong knowledge of their faith. Within the public (government) school system, despite the provision for religious instruction, students seem to know very little about the Christian faith or any other faith. In the relatively few schools of other religions, such as Muslim and Jewish schools, it is difficult to make any general observations about the extent to which students leaving these schools have a grasp of the key tenets of their faith. In the main, ignorance to a large extent of what religions actually hold and teach and why they do so grips a very large percentage of the population.[26]

Within the tertiary sector in Australia, despite the presence of affiliations of departments and schools of theology to universities and even of schools of theology within a few universities, their importance in terms of their ability to make a contribution to public debate is quite muted.[27] Theological argument is rarely heard in public and a theological response to particular public concerns and issues is seldom taken seriously. Arguments which introduce a religious dimension to a discussion are simply dismissed as Catholic or Christian and so having no place within the public discourse. In some cases, views opposing politically correct secular ideas are dismissed as the ranting of a biased lunatic. As MacIntyre argues, the idea of an educated public with a common tradition and understanding has vanished, so that public debate in which the protagonists are familiar with the cultural tradition in which a debate is conducted is no longer possible.[28] This is most strikingly evidenced in the lack of understanding of basic Christian references which were once part of the common culture. What is worrying in the lack of consideration of theological argument is not only the lack of an educated public which understands the subject matter of theological argument even though it disagrees with it, but also the reversion to faulty reasoning. Dismissing an argument on the grounds that it is Catholic, for example, is simply an *ad hominem* attack and a sign of either

intellectual laziness or a lack of openness to rational argument. The latter is a manifestation of a form of credulousness, since rationality is dismissed.

Coupled with a lack of knowledge about what religions actually stand for is the appropriation of religious symbols as fashion accessories, but more worryingly, is the decoupling of profoundly religious practices from their contexts within a particular religion. A crucifix becomes merely a fashion accessory when it has become emptied of any religious significance and this occurs when the general public has been rendered ignorant of what such a symbol means. Spirituality, as we have already said, has become detached from its religious roots and as a result, has lost any connection with the ineffable and the sacred. Wholesale ignorance leads to credulity and, as we have already commented, the uncritical acceptance of New Age spirituality as a substitute for a religion based on rationality simply on emotional appeal is credulousness which can have harmful consequences. Contemporary studies of spirituality report that there are almost as many different definitions of spirituality as there are writers about it.[29] Without a connection to religion, it is difficult to see in what sense what people refer to as spirituality is connected to a conception of it within a religious tradition. The attempt to redefine spirituality as some kind of sense of the cosmological or a feeling of oneness with the universe empties it of content and renders it banal. This is a serious problem because a content-less spirituality is no spirituality at all and people are being duped.

In Australian culture and Western culture more generally, there is a well chronicled flight from Christianity.[30] The result of abandoning, for example, a Christian culture, also seems to give rise to a kind of privileging of religious practices of Aboriginals or native peoples and the notion that these religious practices can somehow capture the notion of the Divine more ably than, say, Christianity. The Shaman is considered more of a religious leader than the priest, if present practices are any guide. Of course, if a Christian faith is abandoned, it has to be replaced with something else and often this is a kind of cobbled together set of beliefs which are barely comprehensible and often incoherent.

Benedict XVI, as Joseph Ratzinger, has argued that in Europe, Christianity in particular has been marginalised and that this poses grave dangers to European civilization.[31] Moreover, he writes that dishonouring Christianity and what is sacred to Christians is not considered to be a lack of respect, but rather, it is thought in such a case to uphold freedom of speech to allow Christian faith to be jeered at and for sacred symbols to be shown disrespect. Great respect, on the other hand, seems to be shown to non-Christian religions.[32] There is some considerable evidence of this in Australia, which is specifically hostile to Christians and Catholics in particular. Catholic positions on various public issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, therapeutic and reproductive cloning, gay unions and many others, tend to be dismissed not because of faulty logic, false evidence or unsound argument, but simply on the grounds that it is Catholic. Religion is forbidden any role in the public domain, so that, in the case of Christian

politicians, they are attacked for taking particular positions on the grounds that they ought not bring their religious values to bear on their decision-making on policy matters. On the other hand, those who espouse no religion and have only secular values are not required to similarly leave them to one side in decision-making. It is unclear how decision-making on any policy issue can avoid invoking the values and beliefs of individual politicians, since their perspectives on the world will have been shaped by their experiences, by their upbringing and their personal values.

Relativism has given rise to credulousness and it is evident from the foregoing that ignorance, intellectual laziness, a reluctance to act rationally and a lack of critical judgement have played a considerable part in this. Relativism canonises no religion, but this has the effect not of freeing individuals to construct their own religious values, but of not having any at all. Worse still, because religion is based on a metaphysics which holds that the universe is intelligible, is able to be understood through the power of reason and that the truth can be learnt, the abandonment of religion undermines any conviction that there are any absolutes at all. This is a parlous state of affairs to be in.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have argued that post-modernity and liberalism, though in many ways having a positive influence on human thought by encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own beliefs and values, has, through the rise of relativism, encouraged the view that any opinion is as good as any other across all levels of Western institutions. The Protagorean idea that man is the measure of all things[33] has given individuals licence to think that mere opinion is enough and that since there are no standards of truth, there is no reason to suppose that one opinion is better than another. Sources of information are uncritically accepted, without any assessment of their reliability.[34]   The media no longer appeal to rational argument, but rather seeks to influence by playing on the emotions of a very credulous public.

Credulity in the public sphere manifests itself through a reliance on intuitions, on emotions and feelings: rarely is there an appeal to reason. This is manifested in credulity about scientific matters, where theories are accepted without any attempt at assessing them. Global warming and climate change, for instance, are uncritically accepted without any recourse to a rational assessment of any scientific arguments. This is not to suggest that there are no serious climate issues to be faced, but simply to point out the lack of critical judgement being shown by the general public. The same may also be said about the promise of miracle medical cures.[35] The overblown claims in other areas of science are also accepted without critical scrutiny.

Religion and religious faith as a communal activity has also given way to individualism and to a view that one faith is more or less as good as

any other. Since reason has been abandoned, this has resulted in the rise of irrational religions, of beliefs and values which are largely cut off from any notion of an ultimate truth which we strive to reach. Dawkins, who one might have been inclined to praise for his spirited and outspoken polemic against fundamentalism and so, in a misguided kind of way, defence of truth, fails because he falls prey to the same irrationality for which he criticises his opponents. Spirituality, for a long time the heart of Christianity, has been appropriated by New Age gurus who peddle a superficial spirituality which is shorn of any connection with its religious origins and so lacks any rationality, relying heavily on feelings of oneness and wellbeing.

It could be argued that faith in consumerism and technology has to some extent replaced faith in religion. Technology and consumerism are not completely unrelated, as new technology, plasma and LCD screens create demand for consumption of these products. One can seriously question whether religious faith has been replaced by consumerism in the capitalist West. There is ample evidence for this; it is the logical outcome of a society which is obsessed with gratifying individual wants and desires. There is, however, some signs, albeit forced on the world through skyrocketing oil prices, that there are more fundamental communal needs to be served before individual needs.

The sudden realisation that consumerism may be driving the planet to extinction may be one reason why there is a realisation that human beings need to work together if they are to bequeath a world worth living in to their children. There is, therefore, hope that reason will prevail over sectional and personal interests and there will be realisation that though there is some truth in Spengler's view[36] that civilisations rise and fall, nations and communities are too closely interconnected for the fall of any civilisation, such as the West, not to affect the rest of the world. This may herald a return to rationality and an end to credulity and selfishness.

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NOTES

[1] Postmodernism, whatever else it does, rejects the view that there can be only one interpretation of history, for example, that there is only one truth. It denies that there are any criteria for distinguishing between so-called high culture and mass culture, it rejects grand narratives (to use Lyotard's well known phrase), and hence any privileging of particular ways of doing science. Religion is only one source of spirituality and one religion is as good as any other. Although maintaining a healthy scepticism and an open mind is important, postmodernity falls prey to relativism and it is hard to see how it can avoid self-contradiction.

[2] Baudrillard – despite his postmodernism – points out, rightly, that in modern society, advertising and marketing develop a range of signs which become the language by which we communicate. Worse than this, because of the centrality of language (according to postmodernism) to how we depict and understand the world, these signs structure our reality. The world just is the way advertising and marketing says it is. See J. Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", in M. Poster (ed.), *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 22. See also P. McLaren and Z. Leonardo, "Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Terrorist Pedagogy," in M. Peters (ed.) *Naming the Multiple: Poststructuralism and Education* (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 1998), p. 218. Though it is not intended to take this up here, Baudrillard's nominalism about language not withstanding, consumerism demands consumption whether or not persons want to consume or not. That is, people go shopping not because they need to purchase the necessities of life, but in order to surround themselves with objects and goods of various kinds. There is something deeply irrational about this.

[3] See, for example, M. Harrington, *The Politics at God's Funeral: The Spiritual Crisis of Western Civilisation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983); E. R. Statham, Jr., "Ortega y Gasset's 'Revolt' and the Problem of Mass Rule", *Modern Age*, vol. 46 (2004), pp. 219-226; David B King,. *The Crisis of Our Time: Reflections on the Course of Western Civilisation, Past, Present and Future* (Cranbury, NJ: Sasquehannna University Press, 1988); Leo Strauss, "Progress or Return? The Contemporary Crisis in Western Civilisation", *Modern Judaism*, vol. 1 (1981), pp. 17-45; M. Nussbaum, "The Clash Within: Democracy and the Hindu Right," *Journal of Human Development*, vol. 9 (2008), pp. 357-375.

[4] See M. Peeters, *Hijacking Democracy: The Power Shift to the Unelected*, vol. 2-3 (2001), available at http://www.aei.org/ publications/ pubID.14879,filter./pub_detail.asp [Accessed: 30/6/08]. In essence, Peeters's point is that various global movements, though espousing values that most agree with, because they are removed from any connection with the individual living in a community, seek to impose a particular view of these from above. Global problems, because they need global solutions which must be sought across many states, result in the diminution of sovereignty as well as decision-making remote from the individual. The financial crisis gripping the world is perhaps illustrative. No one nation is capable of solving the crisis and it may be that even nations acting together may not prevent the world sliding into recession. World leaders take their cues from financial officials and various remedies are being tried, but the individual worrying about his or her mortgage or indeed whether he or she will have enough to eat, has no voice in the discussions and for the most part is not responsible in any way for the crisis which threatens livelihoods and blights futures.

[5] See S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), p. 310.

[6] D. Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, edited by E.C. Mossner (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1984), Book II, Part II, p. 379. This role of reason, as subordinate to passion, can be contrasted to Plato's tripartite analysis of the soul, in which reason is the charioteer who attempts to control the unruly horse of passion, while guiding the good horse of courage, prudence and ambition. Reason, according to Plato, is not subordinate to passion, though of course may be overwhelmed by passion. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. and intro. C. Rowe (London: Penguin, 2005), esp. Sectn. 246. Plato also discusses his analysis further in *Republic*, Book IV and *Timaeus*, Sections. 69c-70a. See Plato, *The Republic*, tr. and intro. H.D.P. Lee (Harmondsworth: Penguin; 1955) Plato, *Timaeus [and Critias]*, tr. and intro. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin, 1971). Reason's role is not just to determine the best means to achieve desires, but to also determine what desires are worth pursuing.

[7] For example, in a radio broadcast, Jane Watson, a Reader in Mathematics Education at the University of Tasmania, observed that few adults, much less children, had any understanding of what 'statistics' meant. The concept of an average, for example, was ill-understood. A crucial skill to develop, given the number of opinion polls published in the daily press. See J. Watson, "The need for statistical literacy" at URL http://www.abc.net.au/rn/science/ockham/stories/s29.htm (1997) Accessed 2/7/08. For a more recent report on the falling levels of science literacy, see the CSIRO media release of February 1, 2005. "Declining interest in science a concern", At URL http://www.csiro.au/news/ps2uk.html Accessed 2/7/08. On the other hand, the PISA survey of scientific literacy, numeracy and literacy, indicated that Australian school students are performing well in these areas. Nevertheless, Australia's relative standing against other OECD countries has significantly declined. See S. Thomson and L. De Bortoli "Exploring Scientific Literacy: How Australia measures up. The PISA 2006 survey of students' scientific, reading and mathematical literacy skills" *OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).* Paper 2 (2008). At URL http://research.acer.edu.au/ozpisa/2 Accessed 2/7/08.

[8] The difficulties of conducting research on alternative therapies should not be underestimated, however. Nonetheless, it is problematic that there is little or no research to support its use in the community. See E. Edzard, "Obstacles to research in complementary and alternative medicine", *Medical Journal of Australia*, 179 (2003), pp. 279-280.

[9] Bradley reports that there is little regulation of alternative therapists and that the number of adverse events reported as a result of people using such alternative treatments has risen considerably. See M. Bradley, "Too many

quacks in alternative medicine", *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 31, 2004. At URL   http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/05/30/1085855438025.html Accessed 2/7/08.

[10] See, for example, J.W. Cresswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2008), for an outline of research methods used in the social sciences.

[11] For some discussion of the debates about quantitative and qualitative research, see M. Hammersley, "The Relationship between Quantitative and Qualitative Research: Paradigm Loyalty versus Methodological Eclecticism" in J.T.E. Richardson, (ed.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 159-174.

[12] The remarkable ease with which contradictory conclusions on the same question that can be reached is astonishing. In education, for example, debate has long raged about whether single sex schools are better than mixed sex schools without any firm conclusion being reached. One study will show one conclusion, another, the other.

[13] The perils of extrapolating data are well known. See for example, A. Kohler, "The Dangers of Mathematical Modelling", *The Mathematics Teacher*, vol. 95 (2002), pp. 140-145.

[14] Marshall Sahlins, however, warns that sectional interests have no qualms about using scientific uncertainty to create doubts about what the evidence may currently show as way of continuing to pollute and degrade the environment. See M. Sahlins (2003) "Artificially maintained controversies: Global Warming and Fijian Cannibalism", *Anthropology Today*, 19, 3, 3. On the other hand, *Time* magazine reports Judge Michael Burton as claiming that there are nine significant errors in Gore's film, including the claim that sea levels will rise about 6 metres if the ice covering Western Antarctica and Greenland were to melt. *Time*, "Examining Gore's Truths" (29/10/2007), 170 (2007), pp. 14-15.

[15] Data and theory are intertwined in any case. Observation is theory laden, which means that people will see something and then interpret the observation in a particular way. It is not uninterpreted. There are many articles which take issue with Gore's analysis. A quite interesting one is provided   by   the   website   Junkscience.com   at   URL http://www.junkscience.com/Greenhouse/ Accessed 13/5/08.

[16] See K. Shapiro, "Lessons of the cloning scandal (Observations) (Hwang Woo Suk)", *Commentary*, 121 (2006), 61-65.

[17] William B. Drees, *Religion, Science and Naturalism* (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 1996), Preface, p. xii.

[18] Ibid.

[19] David Stove, for example, takes great delight in demolishing some of the cherished views of Darwinianism. See D. Stove, *Cricket versus Republicanism and other essays*, edited by J. Franklin and R.J. Stove (Quakers Hill, NSW: Quakers Hill Press, 1995).

[20] W.V.O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", *From a Logical point of View* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 41.

[21] R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam Press, 2006).

[22] Dawkins, *The God Delusion*.

[23] See A. McGrath and J.C. McGrath, *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine* (London: SPCK, 2007); T. Crean, *God is No Delusion: A Refutation of Richard Dawkins* (Oxford: Family Publications, 2007); D.R. Stone, *Atheism is False: Richard Dawkins and the Improbability of God Delusion* (Lulu.com, 2007); John Haught, *God and the New Atheism: A Critical Response to Dawkins, Harris and Hitchens* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

[24] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* [hereinafter *ST*], tr. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, rev. D. Sullivan (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), I-I, Q.1, Art.8.

[25] Fergus Kerr in a discussion of the five ways argues that the five ways ought not be taken out of a theological context in the way that many philosophers have. It is true that the Five Ways depend on the acceptance of certain kinds of proposition, but these are not particularly contentious – namely of the fact of one's own existence and hence, at least the possibility of that which is the source of our existence. See F. Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 58ff.

[26] Nevertheless, studies do show that Catholic schools do make a difference. See Thomas C. Hunt, Joseph A. Ellis, and Ronald J. Nuzzi (eds.) *Catholic Schools still make a difference: Ten years of research 1991*-2000, 2nd ed (Washington DC: National Catholic Educational Association, 2004). Though this may be so, this does not mean that students are not ignorant about major beliefs of their faith.

[27] The lack of real interest in religion in Australia is indicated by the marginalisation of religion that occurs in the Academy, where few secular universities have thriving departments of theology. This may not be uniformly the case all over the world. In Australia, there are quite a number of independent providers of theological education, such as the Melbourne College of Divinity which is affiliated with the University of Melbourne,

the Sydney College of Divinity which is affiliated with Sydney University, Australian Catholic University, Edith Cowan University and the University of Western Sydney, the Adelaide College of Divinity, which is affiliated with Flinders University and the Brisbane College of Theology, soon to be dissolved, which is presently connected with Australian Catholic University, having previously been connected with Griffith University. Other affiliations also exist, but it cannot be said that theology is at the heart of the secular university in the way in which Newman envisaged theology ought to be in his vision of what a university should be. See J.H. Newman, *The Idea of a University*, ed. Frank M. Turner (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), Discourse IV, pp. 58-75.

[28] A. MacIntyre, "The Idea of the Educated Public" in P. Hirst (ed.) *Education and Values* (London: Institute of Education, University of London, 1987), 15-36. MacIntyre says in an interview for *Cogito*, published in the *MacIntyre Reader*, that instead of an ever widening educated public we have a semi-literate television audience. See K. Knight (ed.), *The MacIntyre Reader* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), p. 272.

[29] Wilfred McSherry, Keith Cash, and Linda Ross, "Meaning of spirituality: implications for nursing practice", *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, vol. 13 (2004), pp. 934–941 In this review of the use of the term "spirituality", the authors examined some 2000 papers and concluded that the use of the term fell into two broad categories – those that involved belief in God and those that did not. Spirituality was identified as being about the meaning and fulfilment of life, connectedness with others and existentialism.

[30] The number of churchgoers has been in decline for a number of years, as indicated by various census figures.

[31] See J. Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Roots of Europe" in J. Ratzinger and M. Pera, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, tr. M. F. Moore (New York: Basic Books, 2007), pp. 74ff.

[32] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Roots of Europe," p. 78.

[33] Plato, *Theaetetus*, tr. Robin A. Waterfield (Harmondwsworth: Penguin, 1987). See also U. Zilioli, *Protagoras and the Challenge of Relativism: Plato's Subtlest Enemy* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2007).

[34] For example, what is called common knowledge in many instances, since it relies on information from the media or what is gleaned from the Internet, from websites such as Youtube and Facebook, may be inaccurate, but is uncritically accepted as true. Wikipedia is a very good example of a great idea which unfortunately has gone wrong. The idea that a compendium of information could be collected from a variety of contributors is a very good one. The problem, it has been discovered, is that there is no one vetting the information being placed on Wikipedia, and so no control over whether

what is placed there accords with the facts. In one sense, perhaps, in a post-modern world it does not matter whether what is uploaded on the Web is true or false, since the question of what is truth is arbitrarily answered.

[35] A recent exposé in the *The Sunday Age*, highlights the credulity of people to the promises of charlatans with some modicum of scientific knowledge. In this case, cancer sufferers were told that their cancer could be cured through a series of expensive alternative therapies. See W. Birnbauer, "It's a cancer clinic called Hope. But critics accuse it of preying on the vulnerable and peddling unproven treatments, for $3500 per week", *The Sunday Age*, front page, 6th July, 2008.

[36] O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, tr. and notes by Charles Francis Atkinson (London: Allen and Unwin, 1932).

GLOBALIZATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Tran Van Doan

INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asian philosophy has never been, and is not yet, taken into account by most Western philosophers. More curiously, it is still not even recognized by many Asians and Southeast Asians themselves.[1] In their eyes, such a philosophy does not exist. As a consequence, the recent effort of Southeast Asian philosophers to build their own philosophy is often brushed aside, considered as so much nonsense, and/or simply ignored.[2] At the threshold of a new era, wherein globalization has become the law of survival, the hope for a Southeast Asian philosophy seems to be as good as dead. How could the tiny, divided and even confused local philosophy compete with the giant system of philosophy backed by the same (Western) world which dictates the law of globalization, prescribes its language and commands its future?

I stand in direct opposition to such pessimism and want to argue, rather, that Southeast Asian philosophers can use globalization to defend their own valuable heritages and to reconstruct their own unique philosophical traditions. It is true to some extent that, globalization could be misused to support the claim of neo-imperialism. And there is certainly more than one case of this in human history. One knows well that the Enlightenment has been abused by the West to justify their insatiable lust for power and wealth. However, it is precisely thanks to the Enlightenment that the East can be emancipated from a "self-inflicted" inferiority complex.[3] The revival of Chinese and Indian philosophy and the rise of Japanese philosophy testify that the Enlightenment, like the sciences, is not a Western product but a universal instrument. So, the real question is rather that of self-awareness and wise application. Only those who well know and wisely realize its spirit can derive benefit from it. This means that, just like the Enlightenment, globalization could become a very effective instrument liberating Southeast Asian philosophers from the iron cage of Western ideology and, consequently, inspiring them to work out their own philosophy.

THE DILEMMA OF GLOBALIZATION

The unbelievable success of the computing sciences and the irresistible expansion of the power of informatics have given birth to the "peculiar" idea of globalization.[4] Similarly, under the flag of "press freedom," the mass media, particularly cable news networks, have forcefully (and

sometimes violently) demonstrated globalization's absolute necessity. Globalization is taken, naively, as a kind of "natural" law, carrying the same weight of Newton's law of gravity. Of course, such belief remains a belief so far, surely, not because of its not yet entirely verified status but, rather, because of its artificiality. Globalization is a human product to satisfy human needs (and greed).[5] It is not something *a priori*, like space or time. So, any equation of globalization with natural law is erroneous and ungrounded.

As a human artifact, globalization has been greeted with rather mixed reactions. Optimists would glorify it as the new panacea to social, economic, political and even scientific problems. To them, globalization will bring equality, democracy, progress and prosperity. Against such a view, pessimists find in it, rather, a neo-imperialism in an attractive form. To them, the iron-cage prophesized by Max Weber is finally coming.[6] Globalization would bring disaster, far more than that caused by Hurricane Katrina and the Indonesian tsunami of 2004: not only the loss of autonomy, but even the collapse of any resistance.

Both camps have scored some points. However, there is little doubt that they have intentionally simplified its complexity by reducing either its risks or its benefits, in order to convince the ignorant. By employing the straw-man fallacy, they brought a premature conclusion to the process. No doubt, there is *some truth* in each's view. However, that is not the *whole truth*. How can one grasp the whole if globalization is an ongoing process, still not yet final, and perhaps never ending? The firm belief in one's own capacity of possessing the whole truth, in fact, displays either a naive ignorance or a blind belief in one's own absolute knowledge. The "logic" of reducing the whole process to a single static point is intended to back such a claim. Since globalization comes into being, not by accident, but rather as a continuity of the infinite process of the human quest for the better, it can be understood only partly, and namely in the context of a certain life-world and its relation to other worlds.[7] Thus, one can say, globalization has not been, and is not yet, completely understood if it is treated as a simple instrument, or if it is mistaken to be a simply human end.

Aware of the complexity of globalization, this paper argues for a different approach. It contends that globalization is neither the aim of human activity nor a scientific method. Globalization is rather an instrument and, at the same time, a medium for a certain purpose, or many purposes. It claims to widening our knowledge, deepening our understanding and bringing us to a close encounter. It could force us to accept a certain form of life, incompatible with our nature. And, in the final analysis, it could pretend to be an effective medium through which human beings may be able to express themselves freely, to overcome their own boundaries and to enjoy life. However, globalization could betray its own claim by reducing the human power of autonomy, or worse, by destroying human resistance against the inhuman invasion of technology. Globalization could be misused – and this is the most fearful and real prospect – by unscrupulous merchants

and ambitious politicians. To them, the most "scientific" way (hence, the most effective means) to enslave human fellows and to rob their neighbours is globalization. So, the basic question is not globalization, but human wisdom. Like any instrument, globalization would bring benefits only when one wisely uses it.

Hence, the question here is that of a wise application. This question requires further investigation into human awareness of the aim and the reason of our choice of globalization. Wrong aim leads to wrong choice, and any wrong choice would be never vindicated by any "scientific" method. So, a wise application requires a full awareness of the aim, an adequate knowledge of the method used, and deliberation in choosing the means. In a certain sense, globalization reminds us of the Enlightenment and its dilemma in the 18th century. The Enlightenment has been the force behind human progress. It has catapulted sciences to absolute power. It has been the main spirit behind the quest for freedom and democracy. However, it was also the main factor behind neo-barbarism and a renewed serfdom. In the name of reason and science, one mercilessly destroyed innumerable cultures. In the name of reason, one arrogantly dehumanized weak races and violently subdued less developed countries. Capitalism, colonialism, imperialism and racism are the illegitimate children born out of the wedlock of absolute reason and the insatiable lust for power.[8]

Of course, reason is *in se* not responsible for all these atrocities. In contrast, it has been and still is the main force behind human progress and the warrant for lasting peace. One can hardly deny that the Enlightenment has had great effects in philosophy. Thanks to it, modern philosophy and a pluralism of philosophies flourished. For the first time, German philosophy could claim its own status, and catapulted itself into the height of philosophical world with great figures like Kant, Hegel, and others. Cartesianism, the proclaimed model of modern rationalism, once dismissed or brushed aside as a non-academic subject, became dominant and enjoyed an unexpectedly royal reception in the academic syllabus. Thanks to it, Italian philosophy, Spanish philosophy and even Danish, Dutch, and Belgian philosophy caught the attention of the academic world. Spinoza, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche (the outsiders of academia) would be dismissed as "dead dogs" if the idea of pluralism had not been on the lips of high-class society.

SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

We begin with the fact that the above-mentioned dilemma of globalization is no longer a fiction but a reality. However, one has to acknowledge that such a dilemma is not the essence of globalization. It displays rather a part of the nature of any instrument. The same instrument could either bring great benefit or cause grave damage, depending on its users and on their aims. So, harm and benefit come not from globalization. They are not its direct consequence. Harm and benefit can be understood only in a web of

relations: globalization could be good for some but dangerous for others. As such, the real problem comes from us, the users of globalization and not from globalization itself.

To accept the essence of globalization as instrumentality means to acknowledge the role of human. Thus, it is the question of practical wisdom (of how and why and for what globalization is employed) that emerges and catches our attention. Practical wisdom is known first with a full consciousness of the subject, a full awareness of the conditions (both material and social) and the consequences, as well as deliberation. That means that the prerequisite conditions for any decision for globalization are self-consciousness and full awareness, which consist of a thorough knowledge of the nature of globalization, a deep understanding of our purpose, as well as a full comprehension of the conditions of our life-world. In other words, full awareness and self-consciousness are the pre-conditions determining what Aristotle once called *phronesis*, i.e., practical knowledge. This kind of knowledge combines different know-how, know-what, know-why and the knowledge of the world in which we live. Accordingly, globalization can fulfill its positive role only when one knows its nature thoroughly, when one is certain of the purpose of its application, and when one can firmly grasp the conditions of the world one wishes to change. In a word, the dilemma of globalization can be overcome only with a full awareness of its nature, of our purpose and our life-world.

GLOBALIZATION AS INSTRUMENTAL REASON

Enlightenment, rationalism, globalization and the like are actually only instruments for certain purposes. Their values are restricted in its instrumentality, or in Max Weber's own jargon, instrumental reason.[9] Our unawareness of a clear distinction, or to put it better, our laziness in searching for the differences among different types of reason, pushes us towards an easy and uncritical belief in the uniqueness and the omnipotence of reason. It is this dogmatic *credo* that catapults simple instrumental reason into the orbit of the ultimate ends of knowledge and consequently, of human life. Analogously, like the Enlightenment, globalization has been one-sidedly understood. It is wrongly believed to be omnipotent. As a consequence, its claim of absolute power is uncontested, its replacement of dethroned myth is ignored, and its fictitious exaggeration becomes the new ideology of our age.[10] In short, globalization is, at the same time, the reality of an instrument to deal with modern problems, and the fictitious claim of being the ultimate *telos* and the most effective means of human life.

If globalization is, contradictorily, a reality and a fiction, a rational way of living and a myth, then *phronesis* requires an urgent need for a clear distinction between reality and fiction, between a rational way of living and mythical thinking. Such a distinction cannot be done by a pure description or analysis, but rather by a deep awareness of the relation between the means (globalization) and the end (better life), and between the end and our

life-worlds. Furthermore, if globalization is not yet, or perhaps will never be, completely understood, then the important issue for us may be neither the theoretical question of its foundation nor the practical question of its application (how can we practice it without an adequate understanding?), but its impetus for self-awareness. In any case, self-awareness is the first prerequisite for the birth of philosophy in general. The rise of modern philosophy has been in a certain way possible thanks to the self-awareness of thinkers like Descartes, Bacon and Locke; and its height has been achieved precisely by philosophers like Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. In a word, self-awareness has been the *conditio sine qua non* for the rise of philosophy in general. Southeast Asian philosophy is, doubtless, not an exception.

Self-awareness begins first with our reflection on the relation between the subject and its world, with the calculation of the effectiveness of the means one takes to acquire (satisfy) interests, and, then, with our recognition of the actual and ideal conditions that the subject has to confront.

GLOBALIZATION OR MONDIALIZATION[11] (THE SUBJECT AND ITS WORLD)

The ideas of independence and democracy, just like the idea of equality, freedom and fraternity, are the fruit of a long reflection on the relation between the subject and its world, between human existence and human existential conditions, between the actual and the ideal. In other words, human dignity would never come to our mind if there were no self-reflection, i.e., self-awareness of human life. The world (in which human beings live) would be still non-human, if the ideas of transcendence and the ideal were still strange. The human world is human so far it transcends the animal world. That means, so long man is still enslaved, mistreated, and robbed of his own means and conditions of living, and so long as mankind is still living in fear and despair, then such a world is inhuman. Marx is right here when he reiterated Hegel's idea of needs and desires as basic human nature. The human is human as long as human needs are satisfied in a just manner.[12]

There was a time when the subject was understood as the Western world, and the life-world was identified with the Christian life-world. As we know, the world, *mundus* first and later *le monde*, was restrictedly (and falsely) given to Europe. Of course, Asia (notably *le monde chinois* and *le monde indien*) was discovered by European merchants.[13] However, they were regarded as *other* worlds, fully detached and incompatible with Europe. Columbus' discovery of the new world might have given to the West a new, more complete picture of the whole world. However, it did not change the ideology of Europe as the centre of the world. Thus, non-European worlds cannot and are not allowed to enjoy equal status. They are rather the objects of exploitation. In other words, the non-European worlds

are not treated as subjects, equal to Europe. Asia, just as Africa and South America, were the objects, first of exchange, then of exploitation, and finally, of free slavery. In this context, the term mondialization is used. It means not the sacred mission of "Westernization," i.e., bringing civilization to the still "primitive," "barbarous" and "pagan" worlds, but rather a subjugation of the rest of the world to the West.[14] Mondialization is indoctrinated as the "sacred" duty of imposing Western values (religions, politics, civilization, etc.) on other non-Western worlds.

After the triumph of the Enlightenment, the West switched to secular values, as seen in the proclamation of the French Revolution. Sciences and technology, along with democracy, became their most predominant ideologies. Of course, the switch to "new" values did not, however, include a switch to a new world. The tragedy comes precisely from human inability of "differ*a*ncing" (to use Derrida's language) the values and the worlds (where these values are *regarded* as prevalent). As the consequence of the "unclear" and "confused" identification of values and the world, Asians have opted for an easy (or lazy) and uncritical path: they choose to be Western.[15] Such total surrender entails a complete abandonment of one's own values and philosophies. For what use are our philosophies now, when our world is no longer our world? As the consequence of our embracing of the Western world, we have no other choice than to adopt its philosophy and to dismiss our own. In the case of the Southeast Asia, the need for philosophy, if there is any, becomes a fiction.

The intimate relation between the life-world and our thinking unmistakably explains the existence, logic and form of philosophy. A particular philosophy would rarely pop up in our mind if we had no idea of our own life-world, our particularity and our needs. That means the idea of a particular philosophy would never appear if we found in it no value (use, interest) for us. This is the case of Southeast Asian philosophy. How can we convince our people of our own values if we uncritically embrace the Western world and its values? How could Southeast Asian philosophy come into existence if Asians absent themselves from their own world? How could a philosophy be authentic if it is not emancipated from the invisible yoke of Western ideology (or Islamic ideology as in the case of Indonesia and Malaysia), and especially from the illusion of being Western.[16]

So, one can say with some confidence that, long before globalization, Asians had already almost lost their identity due to mondialization. Thus, the "real" questions for us may be neither the danger nor the opportunity of globalization, but whether we have the capacity to avoid the mistakes of the past (our uncritical adoption of mondialization). The naive embracing of mondialization has not only destroyed our own philosophies, but has even prevented the birth (or the renaissance) of any philosophy in the future.

GLOBALIZATION AS THE MEANS AND NOT THE END

My reflection on the nature and function of reason[17] sheds some light on the instrumentality of globalization. Globalization *in se* is not the end, or at least, not the final end, of the human world. Only through its function and its effectiveness is globalization defined, recognized and redefined. What if globalization brings more harm than benefits, more sadness than joy? This question seems to fall on deaf ears. However, if one poses a different question, about its utility: What if globalization can no longer satisfy the new "*über*-needs" (in the same sense of *über*-man) then, I am sure, we should have second thoughts. Globalization would run "out of gas" and become obsolete if it can no longer render good service. It would be thrown away, the way old software is disposed of, once it is surpassed or a new release is available. And it would be dammed if more harm were detected.

As a means, the first question will be its effectiveness in dealing with certain problems. Here it is clear that globalization may be good in dealing with certain problems, though not with all problems. The next question would be: Which problems can globalization effectively deal with, and which problems not? The third question would be about its life span. Since globalization is born out of human needs, and since human problems are growing at a never ending rate, no single means could claim to be lastingly effective. The fourth question would be, can it be implemented, or adjusted, or changed in order to be more effective? Due to the limits of our discussion, I would not venture to go into the detail of each question, and attempt to find out satisfactory answers. I would rather be content with a general inquiry into a more fundamental question on the relation between human needs (desires) and human problems. My arguments run as follows:

1. In a global world, human needs, and, hence, human desires are increasing at an incredibly rapid rate. These needs (desires) are no longer limited to the so-called basic needs (desires) – the ones pinpointed by Giambattista Vico as birth, death and religion – but extended to unimaginable, not yet born, desires and, consequently, needs. So, human needs are no longer purely "human," but far above human. To say after Friedrich Nietzsche, human needs are now bearing a rather divine character: the need to become *Übermensch*, the need of realizing the impossible (the ones we were content with in our dream), and the need for being creative.[18]
2. "Über-desires"[19] would stimulate our new needs, or "über-needs," i.e. the ones we did not have in the past, and they are in some degree not part of the basic nature of human beings (as defined by philosophers from Aristotle to Kant).
3. Our problems, hence, consist of (1) whether these needs constitute our human essence, (2) whether we are able to realize them, and (3) whether they could satisfy our quest for happiness.
4. By reflecting on the urgency and primacy of human needs, one may

find that most of human "über-needs" and "über-desires" in the global age are, in fact, not real but fabricated. This means that such needs would never emerge outside the context of globalization. The point is, globalization is the unavoidably actual fact, and our present life-world cannot be 'not global" even if we desperately object to it. As such, one encounters a paradoxical dilemma: one would hardly survive in the global age without satisfying the "über-needs" which are rather artificial, and even incompatible with human nature.

CONDITIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

In *The Postmodern Condition*, Jean-François Lyotard refers to our present world as the post-modern world in the sense of post-industrial and the post-rational.[20] Such a description is "true" to some extent. But its "truth" is, paradoxically, vague and imprecise. "Post-industrial" is perhaps a mode of production (that is much different from Western mass-production and the mechanistic reaction), while post-rational refers to an attitude, a way of living (that is no longer dictated by reason). The point we are inquiring about is "What are the conditions of so-called postmodern society?" Lyotard did not (and could not) give a clear-cut answer. He nonetheless has pointed out one condition, at least: it is "informatics" or the science of information.[21] One could hardly survive without information. In a word, if the industrial society could not survive without reason, then postmodern society would not be possible without the science of information. It is the force of informatics that coerces human beings to accept global life; and it is the force of computer sciences that decides the fate of a people, a country or even, thought a little bit exaggerate, of our present world.

If Lyotard's diagnosis is true, then the specter of a new domination and new slavery is looming over us. The truth about the new masters, i.e. the power-holders is no longer a suspicion: they are the masters of informatics, the producers of the computer industry, the owners and the super-managers of multi-concerns or large firms which command trade and dictate the world market. They are the masterminds behind an exchange of billions of dollars, electronically, day and night.[22]

If so, then what is left over for the under-developing countries, the "pejoratively degraded" Third World? What about Southeast Asia, where the majority of its people are still suffering from hunger, illness and illiteracy? Informatics, in general, and even the most basic hardware are luxuries, beyond their reach. The hope for an economic miracle remains a dream. Worse, the newly proclaimed economic order turns to be an iron cage manufactured by the rich and the powerful to suppress the less fortunate and less privileged. Evidently, disadvantage prevents the Southeast Asian philosophers from any opportunity to compete with the Western colleagues on a fair ground.

PHILOSOPHY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE QUESTION OF LOGIC AND THE WAYS OF THINKING AND LIVING

If the above logic is strictly observed, then we have reason for pessimism. Hope would vaporize. Fortunately, such logic remains pure theory, because no logic, no rule, no law can claim absolute power. No logic, including the almighty God himself could exercise absolute control over the human. Human beings, due to their essence as freedom (Kant, Heidegger), could change the law, and even the course of the Heaven.[23] (Human) logic may not always follow the same pattern of nature, but may take a quite different path, namely, it would stimulate a kind of revolt among the oppressed and non-privileged, providing that the latter are conscious of their misery and their own force. Marx's logic of revolution could be justified, and headed down the right path if people are fully conscious of their freedom of choice, and if they are conscious of their force and their role in deciding their own fate.

In my opinion, however, Southeast Asian philosophers have no need to follow revolution-logic, even if they may despise the satanic essence of the logic of "who has power, rules." A revolution may help to acquire power, but could not warrant the birth of new ideas. The reverse is true. Without Rousseau's ideas of freedom, equality and fraternity, without Montesquieu's ideas of power-sharing and power-control (the independence of the juridical, legislative and executive sectors), the French Revolution might have been a banal revolt of Parisians, tired of tyrannies. People like Maximilien Robespierre and Jean-Paul Marat (just as Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-Tung)) would have favored a revolution-logic to cement their power indeed. So, one may say with confidence that a revolution-logic would prevent the birth of any possible local philosophy if it is not nurtured by noble ideas. Only noble ideas can contribute to the birth of an original and progressive philosophy.

If the revolution-logic is of little help for philosophy, then Southeast Asian philosophers have to discover their own logic. And that is their first task in the enterprise of building their own philosophy. Their logic should not and will not be identified with that of globalization. Precisely thanks to their full awareness of the conditions as well as the (positive as well as negative) consequences of globalization, and thanks to their rich heritages, they could find a better and more suitable logic for their lives. To be more precise, this kind of logic must be worked out from their own traditions and from their acquired new knowledge (from the West). It must be appropriate for Southeast Asian philosophy.

Now, what is the kind of logic that Southeast Asian philosophers should favor? In my view, it is a kind of evolution-logic. By evolution-logic I understand a step-by-step approach, a kind of "piecemeal engineering."[24] That means philosophy is in a permanent process of formation and transformation by means of rational selection (critique and conjectures) and self-enrichment (*Aufhebung*).[25] Southeast Asian philosophy would comprise

its own traditional (selected and preserved) values and the newly acquired Western values. It would preserve Southeast Asian heritages but also open them for new possibilities. And at the same time, it should know how combine them, and to produce a worthy synthesis, i.e. a "new" approach that can deal precisely with their life-worlds in the global age. In other words, Southeast Asian philosophy should seek to enrich itself dialectically.

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

As I have dealt with the question of self-awareness in the above section, here I would like to discuss briefly the problem of social consciousness. An awareness of the instrumental role of globalization, and an adequate knowledge of how to maximize its positive role in the build-up of philosophy are, of course, the first conditions for philosophical construction. But, it would be insufficient if one stops short here.

The rise of technology has, no doubt, diminished the meaning of the real life-world. But, precisely thanks to modern technology, the desire for autonomy, the desire to be the self is intensified. An awareness of the self has long been on the agenda of Southeast Asian philosophy. However, as I have argued, self-awareness would lead nowhere without any concrete aim, and if our aim is centered on the self. So, what one needs is to go a step further beyond the self. The ideas of prosperity, happiness, and security, just as the ideals we set for our lives, are constituted not by a single individual but by humankind. It is these ideas that motivate and push human beings forward. As such, it is required that any self-consciousness must be at the same time a social consciousness: humanity is conscious of the interconnectedness, intimate relationships, non-separation among all humankind, and between humankind and nature, humankind and its world, humankind and its hopes. This is what I mean by social consciousness.

From this double consciousness, Southeast Asian philosophers have to go deeply into the worlds in which they live and which constitute them. To penetrate deeply into their worlds means a thorough investigation of the psyche of their people, the conditions of their life, the environment where they live, the morals and beliefs on which and according to which their people act and think, as well as their expectation and hope for a better future.

SEARCH FOR PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

A thorough investigation into Southeast Asian worlds consists not only in a historical unearthing of this world, but much more, a constant search for problems and solutions. There are the problems, long existing and hidden in the lives of the people. There are other problems emerging only just recently. There are also problems emerging from human multi-relationships, or from our inability to cope with the coming new worlds. Of course, there are the problems which are not yet existing, but which will surely pop up in

the future. In short, human problems are permanently emerging along with our world, our life and our contact with other worlds. In order to facilitate our discussion, I would like divide human problems into (1) the permanent, (2) the temporal, (3) the spatial (geographical), (4) the basic and (5) the non-essential ones. As a philosopher, one has to discover the permanent, the basic and the most urgent problems.

The search for problems is, however, only the first step. It must be completed by a second, no less important, step. That is the search for solutions. If philosophy is, in its most essential form, a search for wisdom, then it is the solution that represents wisdom best. Thus, the question posed for us here is whether Southeast Asian philosophy could offer certain wisdom to its people, and to humankind. Real philosophy is not a description or an interpretation. Real philosophy must contribute some solutions – theoretical as well practical – to human problems.[26] Only by being so, can it be worthy of being called philosophy. In this sense, Southeast Asian philosophy can be respected as genuine philosophy only if it can offer the best solutions to its people, and furthermore, to humankind. We know that the better solution is often more durable, more effective, longer lasting, and more available to a great number of people.

Of course, Southeast Asian philosophy, like any other philosophy, has to concern itself with an aesthetical dimension, human hope, aspiration, and human ultimate ends. However, due to the limits of our discussion, I would not venture to go into the details, and leave these problems open for further discussions.

CONCLUSION

The question I have attempted to raise in this paper is, perhaps, the main concern of Southeast Asian philosophers. I have no doubt about the possibility of Southeast Asian philosophy, but I have still greater concerns about how to realize it. Globalization may serve here as one of the best instruments for such a purpose, if we are fully conscious of its instrumentality and if we stay firm on our own ground.

I have so far taken the term Southeast Asian philosophy in the singular. Here I wish to clarify the reason of my choice of the singular term, even if I am fully conscious of its manifoldness, its complexity, and even its inner contradiction. Southeast Asian philosophy is not a single philosophy, or a unique system of philosophy. There is no unity of all systems of philosophy in any history. We know that Western philosophy is loosely referred in general in a singular term. But it is by no means a single philosophy or a unique system of philosophy. It encompasses different schools of philosophy, different ways of approaching reality, and diverse methods, in the search for human problems, as well as different kinds of solution to these problems. So, it would be too simple-minded to put all different ways of thinking and living into a single concept. In this context, it is foolish to claim that there is a unique Southeast Asian philosophy, just as

it would be irrational to accept only one kind of wisdom. So, I may say with some confidence that Southeast Asian philosophy may express only a common concern *of being the self* among philosophers in this region. It would by no means reflect a common method, common purpose, common sense, etc. Since our problems consist of the common and the particular, and it is the particular that surpasses the common, I can say that each attempt to approach each kind of problem would point out a peculiar school of philosophy, and each effort in searching for solutions would show the difference and not the commonality. For all these reasons, even when I extensively use the term Southeast Asian philosophy, what I have in mind is a plurality of different systems of philosophy. Globalization forces Southeast Asian philosophers to side with Western colleagues to search for common human problems and solutions, to change the region for the better, and finally, to reflect on their own problems, and to discover the solutions suitable to their own people and countries.

I have no doubt that Southeast Asian philosophy is in the process of emergence, and that it will flourish very quickly thanks to globalization. Its value would be acknowledged once it can offer better solutions to humankind in general, and to the Southeast Asian people in particular.

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NOTES

[1] In almost all philosophical dictionaries or encyclopedias edited by Western scholars, and even by Asian philosophers, one can find hardly any entries on Southeast Asian philosophy. Vietnamese, Indonesian, Malaysian, Thai, Filipino, Cambodian, and Burmese philosophy are almost completely ignored. The situation is no brighter in Vietnam, the Philippines and Singapore, even though philosophical activities in these countries are sometimes reported; what we find mentioned there is, rather, Chinese (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism) or Indian, or Western philosophy. Only recently has their philosophy captured the attention of their own philosophers. The first essay (Ph.D. dissertation) in Filipino philosophy, *The Filipino Mind,* by the Rev. Leonardo N. Mercado, appeared in the 1990s (thanks to the effort of Prof. George F. McLean), while the works of Professor Kirti Bunchua (Assumption University) on Thai philosophy have become known only in the last ten years (published in *The Proceedings of The Asian Association of Catholic Philosophers,* Tokyo, 2002). Vietnamese philosophy has been discussed as early as the 1970s by Rev. Kim Dinh, but only among a small circle of Vietnamese intellectuals. It is dismissed by Westernized Vietnamese as rubbish, and is completely unknown to the Western world. See my "Kim Dinh's Search for a Viet-Philosophy" in *Vietnamologica*, No. 5 (Toronto, 2001). Cf. Tran Van Doan "Einige Überlegungen über asiatische Theologie" (Muenster, 1985); Tran Van Doan,

"Konstruktiver Realismus am Beispiel chinesischer und Vietnamesischer Sprache" (Vienna, 1992); Tran Van Doan, "La logique de relation" (Louvain, 1998); Tran Van Doan, "Der Anti-taoist Nietszche" (Zuerich, 1999). Since 1997, Professor George F. Mclean has encouraged my work and has supported my research projects in Vietnamese philosophy, which has resulted in the following publications: Tran Van Doan, *The Idea of a Viet-Philosophy* – Vol. 1. *The Formation of Vietnamese Confucianism* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005); Vol. 2. *The Spirit and the Form of Viet-Philosophy* (forthcoming). In addition to these publications, a volume in Vietnamese has recently been published: Tran Van Doan, *Collected Essays on Viet-Philosophy* (Los Angeles – Washington DC: Vietnam University Press, 2000). Two other volumes are presently in preparation.

[2] At the XXI World Congress of Philosophy (Istanbul, 2003), there was no session on Southeast Asian philosophy. The papers on Vietnamese philosophy (of Prof. Nguyen Trong Chuan and Prof. Pham Van Duc of The Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences) were arranged, rather, in a session on a completely separate theme on the very last day of the Congress when most of the participants had left. At the World Congress of Philosophy (Boston, 1998), a session for Vietnamese participants was scheduled (Prof. Nguyen Trong Chuan, Prof. Nguyen Duc Huyen, Prof. Vu Kim Chinh and Prof. Phan Dinh Cho, with Prof. G. McLean as moderator). It must be noted here that McLean is unique among Western philosophers in that he is most conscious of this bias and has taken steps to overcome it. On his initiative, many Southeast Asian philosophers have worked extensively at cultivating and presenting their philosophies. Among these are, the Rev. Leonardo Mercado, Prof. Manuel Dy, Prof. Leovino Garcia Ma and the Department of Philosophy of Ateneo de Manila University, along with others in the Philippines; Prof. Kirti Bunchua and his Institute of Philosophy and Religions at Assumption University in Thailand; The Institute of Philosophy in Hanoi with its (former) Director, Prof. Nguyen Trong Chuan; Prof. Chai Heng and his collaborators in Cambodia, as well as some scholars in Malaysia and Indonesia. Also thanks to the assistance of McLean, the *Southeast Asian Philosophical Association* was formed (in Bangkok in 2001) by a group of Southeast Asian philosophers. Its core members: Warayuth Sriwarakuel (Assumption University, Thailand), Nguyen Trong Chuan (Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam), Chai Heng (Royal Academy of Cambodia), Manuel Dy Jr. (Philippines). Its Board of Advisors: George F. McLean (CRVP), Tran Van Doan (National Taiwan University), Vincent Shen (University of Toronto) and Kirti Bunchua (Royal Academy of Thailand). The first volume, with the collaboration of Southeast Asian philosophers, was published by The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy in 2005 and distributed during the Conference on *Dialogue among Cultures and Religions* at the University of Indonesia

(Jakarta, June 2005). See Warayuth Sriwarakuel, Nguyen Trong Chuan, Manuel Dy, Chhay Yiheang, and J. Haryatmoko, eds., *Cultural Tradition and Contemporary Challenges in Southeast Asia: Hindu and Buddhist* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005).

[3] Chow Tse-tsung, *The May-Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), and Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 505 ff. See also John Dewey, "New Culture in China," in *Asia*, XXI: 7, pp. 581 (July 1921). Mentionned by Hsu, p. 506.

[4] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition – A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978).

[5] As a matter of fact, globalization has been primarily understood in terms of economics, or more precisely, of global markets. See Iain Carson, "Survey on Manufacturing," in *The Economist* (January 20, 1988), p. 5. See also Oliva Blanchette, "Globalization or Humanization: A Question of Priorities in Human Development," in O. Blanchette and T. Imamichi, eds., *Philosophical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2003).

[6] See the very interesting debate on Globalization between Oliva Blanchette ("Globalization or Humanization) and Gary Madison ("Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities") in *Philosophical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization*.

[7] I have dealt with this thesis in another paper: "The Ideals, Traditions and Social Progress" (Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, June 2004, and Hua-Dzong University Technology and Sciences, July, 2004). The Chinese version appeared in the *Journal of the Institute of National Spirit*, Hua Dzong University, Wuhan, 2005.

[8] Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno have warned us of the danger of a blind belief in reason. See their work: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944, New York: Continuum, 1972). In *Eclipse of Reason* (1947, New York: Continuum, 1954), Horkheimer wrote: "If by enlightenment and intellectual progress we mean the freeing of man from superstitious belief in evil forces, in demons and fairies, in blind fate – in short, the emancipation from fear – then denunciation of what is currently called reason is the greatest service we can render."

[9] Max Weber once developed Kant's distinction of pure reason and practical reason into more modern terms of value-reason (Wertrationalität) and purposive reason (Zwecksrationalität). The latter consists of purposive and instrumental nature. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 3 vols., ed. Gunther Roth and Claus Wittich (Bedminster Press, 1968).

[10] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

[11] The term "mondialization" (from *mundus*, *le monde*) has a double meaning: (1) the process of secularization (after the French revolution), and (2) the process of spreading and imposing the West and its culture on the whole world. In this paper, I prefer the term mondialization (Verweltlichung) over worldlization.

[12] Marx wrote in *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848): "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." (Jeder nach seinen Fähigkeiten, jedem nach seinen Bedürfnissen).

[13] Actually, the first discoverers of the Far East, most probably, were missionaries and not merchants. It was said that St. Thomas the Apostle settled and built the first Christian community in India. Much earlier than Marco Polo came the Nestorians to China, and built the first Christian community there. However, Asia was clearly the target of merchants, and was made known among European intellectuals and aristocrats alike, through exotic products like silk, porcelain, pepper, and the like. Since then, "mysterious" Asia has been considered a 'support world,' providing the European nobility and the "nouveaux riches" with luxurious goods (gems, silk, pepper, noodles, etc.).

[14] Note that, as early as the first century, Christians had attempted to bring the 'good news' to the whole world. Evangelization was the term describing such a sacred mission. Regretfully, the term "evangelization" was misleadingly changed to mondialization by unscrupulous politicians and heartless merchants to justify their secular ambitions and quest for wealth.

[15] It is not too exaggerated to say that most Asian countries are, at least partly, "mondialized." Their customs, their ways of living, their organization, their laws, their religions and even their languages are "molded" after the European models. Singapore and the Philippines are not exceptional. Even China and Japan, the two most 'conservative' cultures, have imported a number of Western values and integrated them into their own values.

[16] The influx of Southeast Asians to the West is certainly not only caused by economic need, but also by the idea of Western superiority. It is an undeniable but sad fact that a great number of Asians (and Southeast Asians) have alienated themselves from their own roots, even when they know that a full integration into the Western world is almost impossible. The tragedy of "Between" and "Betwixt" of Asian Americans is a case in point that the Vietnamese theologian, Prof. Peter C. Phan of Georgetown University, has depicted in his most recent publications: See Peter Phan, *In Our Own Tongues – Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2003), *Being Religious Interreligiously – Asian*

Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue (New York: Orbis Books, 2004), *Christianity with An Asian Face – Asian American Theology in the Making* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002).

[17] Cf. Tran Van Doan, *Reason, Rationality, Reasonableness* (New York, 1989; republished, Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000). See also Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, pp. 3 ff.

[18] I have explored the need for being creative and for the sublime in other papers: Tran Van Doan, "The Unfinished Project," *Soochow Philosophical Journal* (1999).

[19] Heavily influenced by Nietzsche, postmodern writes have invented new jargon such as "über-sexual," "über-effective," "über-beautiful," etc. By "über-desires," I understand as the desires of transcending the actual and real world. So, Nietzsche's desire to become God, just as the artist's desire of being a sort of creator, or the desire to attain the sublime, all could be called "über-desires."

[20] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition – A Report on Knowledge*, pp. 1-3.

[21] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, Introduction.

[22] Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights: The Battle that is Remaking the Modern World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), p. 371f; cf. Blanchette, p. 13. According to Yergin and Stanislaw, ca. 1.3 trillion dollars is exchanged on the foreign exchange market daily.

[23] The Christian emphasis on the role of the human (i.e., law is for man and not man for law), just as the insistence on the importance of human in Chinese and Vietnamese philosophy – as seen in Mencius, and in the Vietnamese principle of the "Tao of the Heart" (Tam Dao, Xua nay nhan dinh thang Thien cung nhieu) – clearly support the view of human freedom.

[24] Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations* (New York, 1968), p. 313.

[25] Popper understands (the Hegelian) *Aufhebung* in four consecutive acts: the act of reduction, the act of negation, the act preservation and the act of sublimation (elevation). See Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (New York, 1961), p. 234; *Conjectures and Refutations,* p. 314.

[26] Marx once criticized philosophy, as Feuerbach understood it, as useless. He insisted (in his *Thesen über Feuerbach*, Thesis 11) on the active role of philosophy as the effort of changing the world for the better.

BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

Joseph C. A. Agbakoba

INTRODUCTION

It is becoming increasingly clear that it is necessary for the world to have a global ideology that would provide for and project justice and respect for persons and communities as well as provide a basis for the minimizing and resolving of conflicts locally and internationally. In this paper, we shall explore the possibility of social mechanisms (interactive processes) that can aid the development of cross-cultural dialogue and shared trans-cultural beliefs and values (universal values), which will foster inter-communal and international peace and harmony.

We are looking at culture here from the perspective of social action, that is, as an instrument that transforms individuals and communities; culture here is considered as an expression of the guiding principles of action in a society. An expression of a popular philosophy, ideology or world view; culture or ideology in this regard provides a common frame of reference and legal structures for the development of knowledge, ethics, laws, economic, and political and social institutions. To achieve our objectives, we shall address the following questions:

1. Can we have cross-cultural dialogues that can bring about shared or universal values?
2. What is the nature and basis of such values?
3. What challenges and problems are there in the formation and development of universal values?

We shall also try to demonstrate concretely that we can have positive answers to the above questions by uncovering some potentially universalizable values and elements of African culture.

THE PROBLEMS OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISONS AND UNIVERSALISM: MODERNISM AND POSTMODERNISM

Let us begin to answer the first question by pointing out that modernism was universalist in outlook, but much of its universalism was the universalization and the projection of the values/ideology of a particular class, ethnic group or culture. This constitutes one of the major critique of modernism by postmodernists; who have pointed out that the creation of ideas, truth and knowledge are context-based and so confined to contexts.[1] Postmodernism is deeply relativist; it undermines universalism; and, is itself unable to provide a common frame of reference that will help in solving the

world's problems, such as violence and conflict, and the integration of peripheral economies into the global economy. In order to achieve one of the major purposes of this paper (which is to answer the first question above positively), we have to formulate universalism in a way that overcomes the major problems and issues raised by postmodernism. We shall address the issues raised in the second and third questions above.

One major challenge posed by postmodernist thought to the emergence of universal values (or a universalistic ideology) centres around the relativity of conceptual schemes, and even of truth itself, which make universal and objective standards baseless and cross-cultural comparisons and exchanges fruitless. The problem can be stated thus: conceptual schemes differ; conceptual schemes determine the meaning and significance of observations and ideas; and they do not only determine what counts as evidence in favour of truth claims but also direct the search for such evidence; truth, knowledge and logic thus differ according to conceptual schemes; there are no objective standards outside conceptual schemes to which we may appeal in order to determine the superiority of one conceptual scheme over another.[2] However, as W.H. Newton-Smith points out, this is based on the erroneous assumption that two people from different cultures, holding contending and different ideologies, theories or paradigms cannot communicate. They, however, can communicate and understand each other via the medium of translation; and given this communication, they should be able to agree on what they mean in respect of a given observation or idea and, consequently, they should be able to have a common basis for agreeing or disagreeing about the truth or falsity of their claims, about consistency and coherence, et cetera.[3] This however raises the problem of the accuracy and reliability of the translation of one language, theory and paradigm into the idioms and expressions of another; and consequently, issues of commensurability and incommensurability.

THE PROBLEM OF THE COMMENSURABILITY OR INCOMMENSURABILITY OF IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

The way that the question of commensurability or incommensurability arises depends on whether or not the concepts, notions and beliefs of a system can be adequately captured by the language, concepts, or notions of another belief system. However, we need not worry too much about this type of incommensurability. This is because language is usually sufficiently rich and dynamic to capture the concepts and meanings of other languages. Further, the disagreements between worldviews and ideologies are not so much about differences in meaning, but rather about conflicting and contrasting views.

We should, therefore, be concerned with another type of commensurability and incommensurability; we may call this ideological commensurability / incommensurability. Commensurability (or, as the case may be, incommensurability) refers to whether or not a pair of

ideologies/belief systems agree on the kind of evidential supports required to validate/invalidate the claims of an ideology/belief system, including whether or not a given evidential support is required in the first instance and the weight attached to it (for some ideologies, especially religious ideologies, are based on unconditional claims which many classes of events would not invalidate). Debates and disputes can be readily resolved between commensurable systems by reference to shared standards of what counts in support of truth and falsity, right and wrong, et cetera – that is, shared views of evidential support. Belief systems that appear very different may be commensurable, while apparently similar ones may be incommensurable. For example, Christianity and African Traditional Religion, which are very different (for instance, one is monotheistic, the other polytheistic) are commensurable to a large extent. This is because, in African Traditional Religion, the evidence for the existence, power and prestige of a divinity lies in the material survival and well-being of an adherent. This intersects with the part of Christianity that says that a believer will not lack what he/she needs for his/her material sustenance. This to some extent explains the rapid evangelisation of certain parts of Africa, notably South Eastern Nigeria. The missionaries brought material survival and well-being to the people through their schools and hospitals. Education made it possible for people to work in the modern sector of the economy and rewarded people far more than the traditional sector, raising their status in society; hospitals brought medicine that saved lives and restored health in cases where traditional medical and health care were ineffective.

A situation of commensurability allows one ideology to subsume another with minimal irreconcilable conflicts. Commensurability allows for the universalisation of an ideology or elements of an ideology as it goes on to subsume other ideologies. However, the world is not composed of commensurable ideologies alone; there are incommensurable ideologies and these pose greater challenges to the emergence of a universal ideology that will serve humankind. The existence of this partly explains the lack of promise of (what Plamen Makariev describes as) abstract universalism and essentialist universalism – the one projecting a set of context-free, ahistorical values that do not actually exist; the other relying on a metaphysical unity that is not proven and demonstrated and which does not have any practical value in terms of accounting for or reducing, the conflict of ideologies.[4]

The real problem with incommensurable systems is that material evidence cannot readily lead to the settlement of disputes. Thus, convergence and agreement can only be found in the realm of reason (reliance on intuition – defined here as information/knowledge obtained without recourse to reason or the senses – will not help; because people may have different conflicting intuitions with equal clarity and certainty; in any case, some of the incommensurable ideologies we have, especially religious ones, are based on conflicting intuitions or "revelations," as the case may be). We should, therefore, look at the structure of an ideology – that is, its

logical or formal structure – to determine: (a) The internal consistency of an ideology and (b) The horizon or radius of consistency of an ideology.

The internal consistency of a system of thought is the basis of its coherence, and this has been the bedrock of the coherence theory of truth. But the internal consistency of a system is only inward looking; it looks at the constituents of a system, not at the system as such – that is, at the system itself in relation to formal possibilities (e.g., How much of reality or humanity, for instance, does a given system, or part of system, represent or describe?; Is the representation or description positive or negative, or neither positive nor negative?). When we address these logical dimensions, we will be able to determine the radius or horizon of consistency of an ideology – and this tells us how much of reality and possible experiences such an ideology addresses or deals with, and how much it leaves out or tends not to address, as well as how consistent it is in dealing with reality and possible experiences.[5]

The wider the radius or horizon of the consistency of a system, the more comprehensively coherent and true (in the sense of the coherence theory) such a system is; the more its appeals to reason; the higher its chances of convincing people on rational grounds. Let us note here that even though an ideology/culture as such may not have a perfect radius of consistency, some ideas that are a part of it or have developed within it, may have a formal structure with a perfect horizon of consistency. Such ideas have actual or potential universal dimensions and applicability.

It is possible to have two different systems sharing the same radius of consistency, that is, the same formal structure but differing in their claims and imperatives. However, it appears that if there is any such pair of systems, they will converge on many fronts – for instance, we can expect convergence on respect of human life, stealing, conservation of the environment, and so on. Such points of convergence could be developed to form the basis of a universal ideology.

THE CONVERGENCE OF IDEOLOGIES AND UNIVERSALISM

As we can see from the foregoing, ideologies can converge in the march towards a universal ideology by: (1) one ideology subsuming another in the case of commensurability – though it should be noted, that the subsuming of one ideology by another is not usually entire, because elements of the subsumed ideology/culture survive in the dominant one, enlarging and diversifying some of its aspects; (2) (especially in respect of incommensurable ideologies) rational persuasion, through embracing an ideology that shows superior consistency in relation to another[5]; (3) locating the compatibility of ideas in ideologies that have perfect radii of consistency and internal consistency.

Apart from the above, the process of the convergence of ideologies and the advancement of a universal ideology, will be enhanced by focusing on and using values that are inherently compatible with or expressible in a

comprehensive consistent formal structure. One of the values that are inherently expressible in this form is beneficence – and, thereby, values that directly derivable from this notion, namely, empathy, charity, solidarity and cooperation. The more beneficence is endorsed and expressed (intensively and extensively) by an ideology, the higher the potential for such an ideology to provide the fabric for a global ideology. Thus, the radius of beneficence of an ideology is a major asset in the evolution of an ideology in the convergence process of ideologies. It should be noted that the radii of beneficence and consistency of an ideology determine the inclusiveness and potential for inclusiveness of an ideology, and that the strength of inclusiveness of an ideology is a key factor in its success on the global level.

The mechanism for building a global ideology in our view is communication. Communication, here, involves intense dialogue that will demonstrate the radii of consistency, beneficence and inclusiveness of an ideology/culture; that will bring out the potentially universalisable ideas that express beneficence, inclusiveness and other notions compatible with a global ideology; and that will cause the subsuming, conversance and fusion of ideas. Education is part of this communication process that should aim at the preservation, consolidation and transmission of the beneficial fruits of dialogue and exchange of ideas. There is also a need for the transformation and reform of customs and social institutions to provide the structural and legal basis for the expression of universal values; where necessary.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND UNIVERSAL VALUES

Let us now look at traditional African beliefs and values in the light of the criteria set out above. Placide Tempels properly identified the ontological conception of the world in traditional African thought in the notion of vital force(s).[6] The world is composed of forces of different degrees of strength and essential qualities. Hence, the universe is organised in hierarchical order with the supreme vital force at the top and the least vital force at the bottom. Moreover, it would appear that a higher vital force can control and direct a lower vital force. (The Igbo express this notion of force by the word, *ike*, and the notion of the variety of forces by the statement*: ike di no kpu no kpu,* that is, that there are different forces with different capabilities.)[7]

In addition to the belief in the existence of a variety of forces organised in a hierarchical order, Africans tend to believe that lower order forces share in elements of the higher order force. This is akin to John Scotus Erigena's idea of lower order universals contained in or derivable from higher order universals.[8]

Things (both physical and non-physical) are known according to the force they manifest, and the totality of these forces is reality in its entirety. Although we can experience the manifestation of force physically (for instance, we can observe a lion or a dog showing courage), the power that makes this possible is a non-physical essence that may exist independently of the physical thing; in order words, ultimate reality cobsists

of essences that are like Leibniz's metaphysical point – active, intense, causally efficacious, but non-local; they may however be embodied or disembodied at any time.[9] Thus, beings in the physical world are essentially the same as beings in the non-physical world; hence we have the saying among the Igbo: *ka o di na enu, ka o di na ani*: as it is above (in the heavenly or spiritual order) so it is below (in the earthly or material order).

The ontological view forms the foundation of the African conception of human nature, knowledge, ethics, society, and social action. One idea that follows from the view that – for the self-conscious being like the human being – the world is made up of forces, is the conscious pursuit of self-survival, including especially material self-survival and the pursuit of an ever-increasing forceful manifestation of the self. The more powerful a being manifests, the stronger and higher it is in the ontological order (for instance, a king occupies a higher place in the ontological order than his subjects). This leads to a highly subjective orientation in the conception of human beings, ethics and social action; for instance, 'Do not kill' usually means 'Do not kill a member of your family or clan or community'; 'Do not steal,' means 'Do not steal from a member of your community.'[10] There is no objective order as such, because things, events and social reality are from the point of view of how they increase or decrease the vital force of a person and his/her ability to manifest power; they are good and acceptable in so far as they conduce to survival and the manifestation of power, bad and unacceptable in so far as they do otherwise. We have here a highly subjective, personalised and ego driven view of the human being and his/her place in the scheme of things. One might well think that traditional African thought is at its roots existentialist and Nietzschesque.

This type of ontology and conception of human nature explains the foundation of African ethics in blood-bond as well as its particularistic character (that is, its self-regarding focus – the self here refers not simply to the individual, but also the collective self and the community in which the individual is anchored) and its relatively narrow radii of consistency, beneficence and inclusiveness.[11] People from the outside group are to be taken advantage of as one pleases and as circumstances permit; and obviously, such persons are not to be given the same rights and respect as an insider; they can only gain such rights and respect if they undergo some process that will cause them to be 'grafted' onto the family tree or the blood line of an insider; inclusion is thus restricted and difficult.[12] In spite of the above observations, however, there are elements of African philosophy and values that are universalizable, and that can meet our criteria for universal values namely social justice/welfare and collective responsibility.

UNIVERSALIZABLE AFRICAN VALUES

In the search for equity and fairness, the Igbo consider the individual as an instance of vital force, of being, equal ontologically with other human beings, possessing potentials that are ultimately unfathomable.

Consequently, unless there is some overriding reason (such as an office, which gives higher responsibility and demands more expenditure), things are shared equally among people regardless of age. For instance, in a polygamous family (and the norm was polygamy in the traditional setting), the distribution of a man's wages or earnings amongst his wives is done on the basis of the equality of the wives, regardless of the number of children each of the wives may have, or the sex of such children, or indeed whether a wife is childless. It might appear unjust for a wife with six children to receive the same agricultural products or money for her sustenance and that of her children as a wife with one or no child. But it is calculated that the woman with six children apparently needs resources while her children are growing; she has to work extra hard and possibly depend on relatives for the sustenance of her children. When her children are grown, however, and are able to help on the farm, she will have more hands working in her farm than the woman with fewer children or no child; at this time she will have many hands contributing towards her upkeep, and she can relax and enjoy the fruits of her labour, while the woman with fewer children or no child will have fewer hands contributing towards her upkeep and she will endure more hardship. It is therefore expected that a wise wife with few or no children will use the surplus that she may have in her more youthful years to help in bringing up the children of her co-wife who has many children, so that when she becomes old and is in need of help, her stepsons and daughters will look after her. The important thing here is that these women are given their rights; they can now act freely to secure or not secure their future. The interesting idea here is that people are given their due, regardless of circumstances. This is interesting because the consideration of what counts in favour of getting more than others, and vice versa, in respect of distributive justice is frequently subjective and arbitrary. And, the application of the wrong principle in distribution can lead to conflict – as could be seen in the Niger Delta area in Nigeria where militants are up in arms against the Federal government for keeping the bulk of the revenue that comes from oil and petroleum; whereas the oil producing areas should take the bulk of the revenue that comes from their land.

In traditional Igbo society, unlike more individualistic societies, people make demands on their relations, especially wealthy ones. A person may expect, for instance, that his uncle should pay his school fees, not on the grounds of charity, but as a matter of his or her right; similarly people expect that wealthy relations should redistribute some of their wealth to their relations and the community; the more they do so, the better. The ideas that justify these views include: (a) that the poor could refuse to obey the laws of the system that produced the wealthy person and, if such a system collapses as a result, the wealthy man will collapse with it; and (b) that the community relies to a large extent on the poor for its security in the traditional society. The contributions of the poor in this regard were not monetized or rewarded formally in cash or in kind; their reward came informally, via the voluntary redistribution of wealth by the rich.

The acceptance of a social order in which there are poor who perform invaluable security services, makes the compensation of the poor necessary. This is not socialism but, rather, social justice; the poor should have some compensation as a matter of right. We may compare this with the social welfare and the welfare state of the West, which try to provide for low income earners and the jobless, The justification given there relies more on a watered-down form of Marxism – e.g., that the people who participate in production should be given a larger slice of the proceeds of their effort than they received in the early days of Western capitalism and industrialisation. Such economic arguments have little or no place in traditional African societies. However, their reasons for social redistribution of wealth are very important and applicable to contemporary societies.

The practice of the traditional African society above stresses the need to discover and practice reciprocity among individuals, among groups and among individuals and groups. These ideas are captured in the traditional Igbo notion of: *Ife kwulu, ife a kwudebie* (whenever a thing stands in a place or takes up a position, something else takes up a position close to it or stands in a close relation to it; a thing always stands in relation to some thing else). This saying stresses the need to look at things holistically and in relation to other things, and as comprehensively as possible. From this idea, one can derive the attitude of valuing all members of a society, whether they are rich or poor and regardless of their status and potential, because one cannot occupy the space meant for another. In addition, the Igbo say: *Mmaduka* (a human being, particularly a member of the family or clan, is greater or more important than anything else); consequently the human being who occupies the space no one else can occupy is invaluable.

Based on the above notions, the traditional Igbo practiced some notion of social welfare for the poor; indeed, the word for poverty, *ogbenye*, means, in English, living on the charity of the community; which comes to the same thing as living on dole.[13] However, the idea of dole is regarded differently in the West from that of traditional Igbo society. In Igbo society it is loathed, because of its ontological implications, unlike in the west where poverty is associated with displeasing the gods – the result of sin or an unfortunate destiny. All of these are to be feared, because poverty threatens the full manifestations of a person's vital force; it even threatens the immortality of a person, because immortality lies in having a progeny, but poverty may prevents a person from having many wives and children, and poverty may prevent a person from having a proper burial ceremony. People, then, strove to be wealthy and there was a strong work ethic. If, however, in spite of a person's efforts, including sacrifice to the gods and other spiritual efforts, he or she remained poor, that person could count on the charity of other members of the community. What the African notion of social justice and social welfare point to are the universalizable ideas of the invaluable nature of the individual, the intrinsic worth of the diverse social roles that individuals are capable of, the value of striving and the need to

consider and look for reciprocity contextually and comprehensively, embracing the past, present, and future as much as possible.

The drive to labour within a comprehensive social context, at least partly accounts for the African idea of collective responsibility. The traditional African society held the collective (the family, extended family, clan, et cetera) responsible for the wrongdoings of all of its members; and conversely the collective could take pride in the achievements of any of its members. The collective, consequently, could be punished for the crimes committed by any of its members, especially if it is a grave offence such as murder. Collective responsibility has been criticised by individualistic thinker and legal systems. However, the justification for collective social responsibility lies in the fact that individuals are a product of the social stimuli they have received. If a person turns out to be a thief, for instance, it shows that those who were responsible for his or her upbringing did not do their work well, and they should, where possible, receive some punishment. Collective social responsibility gives a more accurate reflection of the diversity and extent of our social relations.

When we apply our criteria for a global ideology, we see that collective social responsibility is more consistent with the reality of social existence, and we can conjecture that if a society in structured in favour of collective social responsibility, there will be more encouragement for action in favour of public spiritedness and the public good (and the development of beneficence). This, apart from other benefits, will strengthen the ideological and legal basis of the NGO's and international organisations that have been working for the public good on a global as well as a local basis.

CONCLUSION

We have seen above that it is possible to have a basis for the integration of the diverse cultures of the world. This integration involves the universalization of the potentially universalizable elements in every culture; such universalizable elements can be identified by their formal structure and their potential for beneficence and inclusiveness. We are thus advancing the idea of formal universalism on the grounds that any form of substantial universalism must take the form of a universal, and that such a formal or logical universal cannot ultimately support substantial incompatibility. This perspective thus creates the basis for the unity or convergence of cultures and, at the same time, tolerance and support of diversity in respect of cultural elements that are peculiar in so far as they are not in opposition to the universal foundations of a global ideology or culture.

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NOTES

[1] Vernon Pratt, *The Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1978), pp. 51- 61.

[2] Pratt, *The Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, pp. 51ff.

[3] W. H. Newton-Smith, *The Rationality of Science* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 36.

[4] Plamen Makariev, "Cultural Diversity and Philosophical Universalism", a paper presented at the International Conference,' *Philosophy Emerging From Culture'*, held at the Soongsil University, Seoul, South Korea, 27th – 28th July, 2008.

[5] See J. C. A .Agbakoba, "Philosophy and Development: Meta-theoretical and Methodological Considerations," in *UCHE,* vol. 11 (2005).

[6] Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), pp. 44-74.

[7] F.O.C. Njoku, *Essays in African Philosophy, Thought and Theology* (Owerri: Claretian Institute of Philosophy, 2002) pp. 128-129. Njoku's objection to Tempels' assertion that force is the supreme value in African thought is wrong. We only need to look the place of force(s) in the thoughts and works of the native doctors, who were the traditional philosophers and wise men, to see its centrality in traditional African thought.

[8] William S. Sahakian, *History of Philosophy* (New York: HarperCollins, Publishers, 1968), pp. 94-96.

[9] Ch. Perelman, *An Historical Introduction to Philosophical Thinking*, tr. K. A. Brown (New York: Random House, 1965), pp. 148-150.

[10] C. Okwechime, *Onitash-Ugbo Through the Centuries* (Lagos: Max-Henrie Associates, Ltd. 1994), pp. 65-73.

[11] J. C. A. Agbakoba, 'Globalization and Religious Ideologies and Conflict: A Critical Examination and Exploration of Alternatives' in *Contemporary Philosophy*, vol. XXVII, Nos. 1 and 2 (Jan/Feb & Mar/April 2006).

[12] Ben N. Chukwudebe, *Onitsha Quo Vadis* (Owerri: B.N. Chukwudebe, 2nd edition, 1986), pp. 3-6.

[13] J.C. Ekei, *Justice in Communalism* (Lagos: Realm Communications LTD, 2001), p. 142.

HOLISTIC POSTMODERNISM: A NEW PARADIGM FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THE ONE AND THE MANY

Warayuth Sriwarakuel

INTRODUCTION

The term "postmodern" is widely used in the world today, even in developing countries like Thailand. The *spectre* of the postmodern is haunting not only Europe but also almost every part of the world. This *spectre* has manifested itself in various forms in areas as diverse as art, architecture, literature, music, politics, the communications media, education, theology, history, and philosophy. It may even be seen as the "unhappy family member" of intellectual movements. For some people, postmodernism means a means of escape from the heritage of modern European epistemology and domination. To others, it refers to an attempt to undermine the achievements of Western civilization by a group of left-wing intellectuals. To yet others it means just the insignificant blatherings of a collection of obscurantist writers. All these reactions are misguided. As Cahoone puts it,

> Certainly the term "postmodern," like any slogan widely used, has been attached to so many different kinds of intellectual, social, and artistic phenomena that it can be subjected to easy ridicule as hopelessly ambiguous or empty. This shows only that it is a mistake to seek a single, essential meaning applicable to all the term's instances. As one of the inspirers of postmodernism would say, the members of the postmodern clan resemble each other in the overlapping way that family members do; two members may share the same eye color, one of these may have the same ears as a third, the third may have the same hair color as a fourth, and so on. More important than discovering an essential commonality is recognizing that there are some important new developments in the world that deserve examination, that "postmodern" labels some of them, and that there are some very important works, raising deep questions, that are likewise labeled.[1]

Still, when many philosophers use the term "postmodernism," they have in mind the "poststructuralist" movement, popular in France in the 1960s. They usually understand that:

> . . . this movement denies the possibility of 'realist' knowledge, objective knowledge of real world… "univocal" (single or primary) meaning of words and texts, the unity of the human self, even the very notion of truth, as well as the cogency of the distinctions

between rational inquiry and political action, literal and metaphorical meaning, and science and art. Simply put, they regard it as rejecting most of the fundamental intellectual pillars of modern Western civilization. They may further associate this rejection with political movements like multiculturalism, feminism, and the critique of Eurocentrism, which regard the rejected notions as the ideology of a privileged sexual, ethnic, and economic group, and aim to subvert their privilege in favour of the disenfranchised.[2]

Despite the different usages of "postmodern," Cahoone points out, we may find some common characteristics such as (1) "a recognition of the pluralism and indeterminacy in the world" that modern thought refused to acknowledge as it pursued simplicity, completeness, and certainty; (2) "a new focus on representations or images… or cultural signs as playing a dominant position in social life"; and (3) "an acceptance of play and fictionalization in cultural fields that earlier sought a realist truth."[3] Cahoone summarizes what postmodernism means in his own model. I will contrast his model with that of Klemm, before I discuss the three models of postmodernism from my own understanding.

CAHOONE'S UNDERSTANDING OF POSTMODERNISM

Cahoone holds that postmodernism focuses on five prominent themes: "presence or presentation (versus representation and construction), origin (versus phenomena), unity (versus plurality), transcendence of norms (versus their immanence), and constitutive otherness."[4]

"Presence" refers to

the quality of immediate experience and to the objects immediately 'presented." What is … immediately given in experience has traditionally been contrasted… with representation… and construction. … For example, … sensation or sense data have been considered as more reliable… than mental contents subsequently represented and modified by language and thought. … Postmodernism questions …this distinction. … Derrida denies that there is such a thing as "perception," which is an immediate, transparent reception of the given. … 'There is nothing outside the text." This need not mean that there is no real external world, but that we only encounter real referents through texts, representations, and mediation. We can never say what is independent of all saying.[5]

"Origin" refers to

"the source of whatever is under consideration." [A return to "origin"] … is often considered the aim of rational inquiry. Inquiry

into origins is an attempt to go behind or beyond phenomena in order to reach their ultimate foundation. For modern schools of thought about the self [such as psycho-analysis, phenomenology, and existentialism]…, the attempt to discover the origin of the self is the road to authenticity. Postmodernism denies the possibility of returning to, recapturing, or even representing the origin, source, or any deeper reality behind phenomena, and casts doubt on or even denies its existence. In a sense, postmodernism is intentionally superficial, not through eschewing rigorous analysis, but by regarding the surface of things, the phenomena, as not requiring a reference to anything deeper or more fundamental. Nietzsche's claim that the ancient Greeks were superficial "out of profundity" could be a postmodern slogan. The saying, "Every author is a dead author," is an example of the denial of origin, because it denies that the meaning of a text can be "authoritatively" revealed through reference to authorial intentions. An author's intentions are no more relevant to understanding the text than any other set of considerations; they are not the "origin" of the text and so have no 'privilege' over other factors.[6]

Postmodernism tries to show that what others have regarded as a "unity" is plural. All things, both words and entities, are constituted by relations to other elements.

Everything is constituted by relations to other things; hence, nothing is simple. … Since such relations are inevitably plural, the individual in question is plural as well. The human self is not a simple unity, hierarchically composed, solid, self-controlled; rather it is a multiplicity of forces or elements. It would be more true to say that I have *selves*, than a *self*.[7]

The denial of the "transcendence" of norms is crucial to postmodernism. Norms such as truth, goodness, beauty, rationality, are not regarded as absolute or independent of the processes they serve to govern or judge. [On the contrary], they are products of and immanent in those processes. For example, where many people might use the idea of justice to judge a social order, postmodernism regards that idea as itself the product of the social relations that it serves to judge: that is, the idea of justice was created at a certain time and place to serve certain interests, and it was dependent on a certain intellectual and social context.[8]

Cahoone later says,

It is in effect the rejection of idealism, and of any dualism which asserts that some things (e.g. norms) are independent of nature or semiosis (sign-production) or experience or social interests. The

concept "good" and the act of calling something good are not independent of things we want to call "good." This leads postmodernists to respond to the normative claims of others by displaying the processes of thought, writing, negotiation, and power which produced those very normative claims. It does not mean that postmodernists fail to make their own normative claims, but that they unleash a form of critical analysis which makes all normative claims problematic, including their own.[9]

Lastly, postmodernism typically offers an analysis of phenomena through "constitutive otherness." Postmodernists try

to use the idea of "constitutive otherness" in analyzing any cultural entity." They say that all cultural units [such as words, meanings, ideas, systems of thought, human beings, and social organizations] are maintained in their apparent unity only through an active process of opposition, exclusion and hierarchization. … [While the center] is privileged or favoured, the other is devalued in some way.[10]

As Cahoone puts it,

. . . in examining social systems characterized by class or ethnic division, postmodernists will discover that the privileged groups must actively produce and maintain their position by representing or picturing themselves – in thought, in literature, in law, in art – as not having the properties ascribed to the under-privileged groups, and must represent those groups as lacking the properties of the privileged groups…Postmodernists, especially in literary studies, turn their attention away from the well-known, openly announced themes in a text toward the seldom mentioned, the virtually absent, the implicitly or explicitly devalued. For presence is constituted by absence, the real is constituted by appearance, the ideal by the mundane. This applies not only to the stated message or theme of a text, but to its style as well.[11]

In summary, Cahoone tries to describe postmodernism according to five prominent themes. Four themes are objects of its criticism, and one constitutes its positive method.

KLEMM'S UNDERSTANDING OF POSTMODERNISM

Klemm depicts postmodernism through a contrastive method. He uses four elements in his contrast: center of the paradigm, world picture, system of thought, and self-world relation. First, Klemm points out that the premodern, the modern, and the postmodern have different centers to their paradigms. The center of the premodern paradigm is the *manifestation of*

the sacred, the center of modern paradigm is *rational self-assertion*, and the center of the postmodern is the *linguistic event of dialogue*. Klemm says,

> The life of conversation structures the postmodern paradigm. Whereas the premodern appearance of the sacred presents an objective reality to which the subject belongs, and the self-assertion of the modern paradigm presents a neutralized subject, whose projects transform the world, the event of dialogue in language cannot be located on the "objective" or "subjective" side of a subject-object model. Language is the middle and medium of the event of dialogue between a self and another.[12]

Second, Klemm points out that the picture of the world is different among the premodern, the modern, and the postmodern. The premodern picture of the world is that of the sacred cosmos, the modern picture of the world is that of infinite universe, whereas the postmodern picture of the world is neither the image of the sacred cosmos nor the loss of that image. Klemm says that the postmodern world picture:

> . . . is rather the image that there is no image of the whole of things. We imagine that we have no image of the universe in which we can see ourselves as intimately belonging or from which we see ourselves as ultimately excluded. If "Cartesian anxiety" is related to the loss of world in the modern period, the postmodern mode of existence is marked by acceptance of the erasure of the literal world picture. The imagelessness, and hence anonymity, of the world itself becomes a powerful symbol of the whole. For the postmodern, the whole is not represented as an image to vision or sight, but is disclosed in language or word. Indeed, the postmodern thinkers hold it as axiomatic that only through language do we have anything like a world.[13]

Third, Klemm points out that a system of thought is different among the three categories. The premodern holds a system of myth and ritual, whereas the modern and the postmodern hold epistemology and hermeneutics as their view of the world respectively. Klemm agrees with Richard Rorty who analyzes the postmodern system of thought as "hermeneutical and edifying" rather than "epistemological and systematic." Klemm says,

> For the postmodernist, epistemological theories of mental representation cannot hope ultimately to distinguish true from false pictures of objective reality. "Objective" reality is always already interpreted through linguistic, hence social, preconceptions. Heidegger formulated this postmodern insight as follows: everything that we understand, in word, text, gesture, or action, is approached

through anticipations (or preunderstanding). These anticipations direct our questions to the other. They make understanding of the other possible. They situate understanding within the horizon of anticipations that are historically effective here and now. Heidegger calls this phenomenon the hermeneutic circle. Because of it, all understanding is potentially and essentially a dialogue rather than a monological mirroring of reality.[14]

Finally, Klemm points out different views on self-world relation. The premodern self-world relation is of immediate openness to the sacred, whereas the modern self-world relation is of the subject-object split. The postmodern self-world relation is neither openness to the world, nor the separation of self and world. Klemm goes on to say,

> The postmodern thinker…focuses now on the content of symbolic understanding and now on the results of critical reflection. The back and forth movement between participation in meaning and objectifying critique can sometimes suggest new, "postcritical" interpretations. By virtue of being able to recall the direct meaning in light of the critical view, the postmodernist can mediate the symbolic consciousness through the critical. Ricoeur calls this relation the "second naiveté."[15]

In order to see Klemm's analysis clearly we may put his contrast in the following schema:

	Premodern	**Modern**	**Postmodern**
1. Center of the Paradigm	The Sacred	Rational Self	Dialogue
2. World Picture	Sacred Cosmos	Infinite Universe	Imagelessness
3. System of Thought	Myth/Ritual	Epistemology	Hermeneutics
4. Self-World Relation	Openness to the Sacred	Subject-Object Split	Dasein

At first glance, we may observe that Cahoone's understanding of postmodernism sounds like a "left-wing Heideggerianism" whereas Klemm's sounds like a "right-wing Heideggerianism." However, both thinkers have one thing in common. They both see postmodernism as reflecting an intersubjective linguistic turn.

DIFFERENT MODELS OF POSTMODERNISM

In our daily lives, when we are not satisfied with the status quo, we look for solutions and choose the best one. Life is problem-solving. Life is making choices. Suppose we are not happy with the situation in, let us say, the "Current Jerusalem." We have at least three choices: to return to find happiness in the "Old Jerusalem," to strive ahead to find happiness in a

utopian "New Jerusalem," or to try to adjust ourselves and live with the "Current Jerusalem."

When some people are dissatisfied with the current situation, they wish to return to the past. These people may hold that postmodernism, for them, means a romantic return to an ideal society in the past. Thus it is not surprising that the theologian Bernard Iddings Bell used the term "postmodern" in 1939 to mean the recognition of the failure of secular modernism and a return to religion. Some people may think that it is impossible to return to past ideals, both in principle and in practice. That is mistaken. In fact, we can return to some past ideals through our thought and imagination, and we can put them into practice in our present life through reenactment. Confucius is a good example of a scholar who yearned to return to the past. What is surprising is that what is considered as "postmodern" in one society may be "premodern" in the other. As David Hall puts it,

> In defense of my somewhat exotic thesis I want to call attention to the evidence for thinking that Confucianism and philosophical Taoism share something like the problematic of postmodernism insofar as it is shaped by the desire to find a means of thinking difference. In its strongest and most paradoxical form my argument amounts to the claim that classical China is in a very real sense *postmodern*.[16]

Whereas some people yearn for a romantic return to the past, others look ahead to the future. These people think that we cannot step back and find happiness in the past. We need instead to find a new model. It may be argued that it is impossible to find happiness in the future because the future is only potential and uncertain. This is also mistaken. Even though the future is uncertain and potential, it can influence our present actual life in terms of established goals. When we set our goals, no matter whether they are short, medium, or long term, they will, more or less, influence our life in one way or another. Thus, looking forward to finding happiness with the new model is always possible and accessible. As David Bohm puts it,

> Our entire world order has, in fact, been dissolving away for well over a century. This dissolution has tended further to erode all our basic values on which the stability of the world order must depend. Hence, we are now confronted with a world-wide breakdown which is self-evident not only at the political level but also in smaller groups and in the consciousness of the individual… I suggest that if we are to survive in a meaningful way in the face of this disintegration of the overall world order, a truly creative movement to a new kind of wholeness is needed, a movement that must ultimately give rise to a new order, in the consciousness of both the individual and society. This order will have to be as different from the modern order as was the modern from the medieval order. We cannot go back to a

premodern order. A postmodern world must come into being before the modern world destroys itself so thoroughly that little can be done for a long time to come.[17]

It is suggested by many psychologists and philosophers that we should live our lives only in the present, for yesterday is just like a dream and tomorrow may never come. Only today is real and belongs to us; therefore, we should live with it. We should understand the present world and learn how to adjust ourselves in order to live with it. When the philosopher John Dewey talks about education, he says that education is life, not preparation for life. It is true that John Dewey was a giant in philosophy and education in the 20th century – Charles Hartshorne wrote that "The most influential philosopher in this country is probably still John Dewey"[18] – but there is a weakness in this definition of education. His definition is just partly correct. His definition would be true only if life had only one dimension, namely, the present dimension. But since life has three dimensions, namely, past, present, and future, the definition of education should also include three dimensions. Education is not just life (at present), but also preparation for life (in the future) and retreat for life (in the past). Dewey uses 'either…or' logic, and does not recognize its limits.

Turning to the first two models, we will find that both of them are also based on 'either…or' logic. Postmodernism as a *return to the past* follows the following argument.

Either the present or the past.
Not the present.
_____
Therefore, the past.

Postmodernism as a *striving to the future* holds the following argument.

Either the present or the future.
Not the present.
_____
Therefore, the future.

We can see that neither model leaves space for the present because both employ 'either…or' logic and do not recognize its limits. Psychologists and philosophers who encourage people to *live only in the present*, also follow this 'either…or logic'. Their position includes the following arguments.

Either the present or the past.
Not the past.
_____
Therefore, the present.

And in addition:

>
> Either the present or the future.
> Not the future.
> _____
> Therefore, the present.

If philosophy has the only one function, namely, to understand the world, then philosophy is as poor as Marx used to claim. In fact, we should not only try to understand and adjust ourselves to the present world, but also try to evaluate and change it for the better. To do so, we need to recognize the limits of the 'either…or' logic, otherwise we cannot avoid "throwing the baby away with the bath-water." Thus in order to solve the problem, especially the problem of the one and the many, I would like to propose a third model which transcends the limits of 'either…or' logic. This logic may be called "both…and" logic, which can integrate the present, the past, and the future together. This integration does not include all things from the three dimensions of life, but it takes only some from each dimension after deep examination, evaluation and reflection. As David Ray Griffin says,

> A new worldview does seem to be emerging in our time. This worldview can be called postmodern, in that it preserves many modern beliefs, values, and practices but places them in a larger framework, in which many premodern truths and values can be recovered.[19]

Hans Küng is clear concerning the values from modernism and postmodernism as follows:

> The specific values of industrial modernity – diligence, rationality, order, thoroughness, punctuality, sobriety, achievement, efficiency – are not just to be done away with but to be reinterpreted in a new constellation and combined with the new values of postmodernity: with imagination, sensitivity, emotion, warmth, tenderness, humanity.[20]

The third model also includes premodern values such as humbleness, honesty, openness, respect for the Supreme One, and respect for nature. The model may be demonstrated using Venn diagrams as follows:
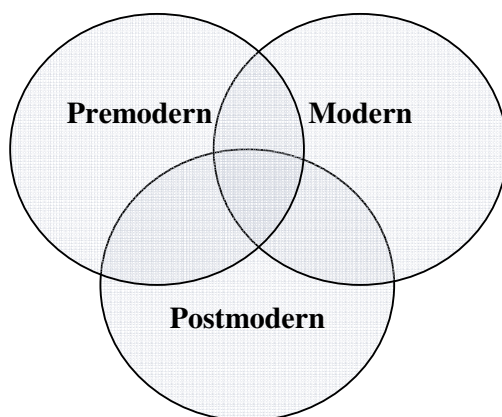
THE ONE AND THE MANY: A DEFEATED CLASSIC PROBLEM

The problem of the one and the many is as old as philosophy itself. Philosophers have long struggled to address this problem. But any attempt to do so with 'either…or' logic will always fail. It seems to me that only a "both… and" logic and a "neither… nor" logic can solve this problem – in other words, a logic of non-attachment. With this kind of logic, we may solve the problem through the following model.

> 1A
> 2 Bs
> 3 Cs
> 4 Ds

1A, 2Bs, and 3Cs are at the ontological level whereas 4Ds are at the epistemological level. 1A means that there is only one authenticity. The ultimate reality is the One, and we are all *from the One*. People may call the One different names, but in fact, it is the same One.

2Bs refer to two truths: (1) To be is to be *from others*, and (2) To be is to be *related to others*. First, we cannot have existence without others. In other words, others are always prior to our existence. Without our parents, how could we be born and have existence? Without our grandparents, how could our parents be born and have their existence? Alterity always precedes our existence. This is the truth that no one can argue against. What I mean by "others" includes not only human beings but also nature and the One. Second, once we have our own existence, we exist among others. No matter whether we like it or not, as soon as we come into existence, we are always related to others. All actual entities are relational beings. Human beings are no exception. This is another truth that no one can argue against.

Therefore, a human being has two choices: to be authentic or to be inauthentic. A person is authentic if and only if she or he recognizes the primacy of others and appreciates the relations with others.

3Cs refer to three qualities: *competency, character* and *care*. All people are given certain potentialities. All have a duty to actualize those given potentialities. We become authentic if and only if we actualize our potentialities *for the sake of others*. Competency is arrived at through skills, whereas character and care can be arrived at through virtues and love respectively.

4Ds refer to four ways of learning: *audit, dialogue, dialectic* and *doing*. Audit is the first step of learning. Babies take approximately one year to learn to listen. We learn to listen before we learn how to speak. As soon as we learn how to speak, we learn how to use dialogue. After we acquire language, we learn how to think. We can feel without language, but we cannot think without language. Throughout the history of Western philosophy, we have learned at least three meanings of dialectic – from Socrates, Kant, and Hegel, respectively. Dialectic from Socrates deals with questioning and answering. Questioning is very important for self-knowledge and all kinds of inquiry. For Kant, the dialectic implies that both of two opposite statements may be equally true. I think that this kind of dialectic is not something to be avoided, but something to be recognized and respected. When there is no way to judge the truth value of the opposite propositions or beliefs, we should respect the belief that is opposite to our own. For Hegel, the dialectic implies the synthesis between the thesis and the anti-thesis. In our life, we sometimes need to learn how to synthesize between the two opposites as proposed by Hegel. Sometimes we need to recognize the opposites as complementary as proposed by Taoism. Sometimes we need to go beyond or transcend the two opposites as proposed by Buddhism. After we learn how to think, we should learn how to put things into practice. We are what we do. We cannot survive without doing things. All four kinds of learning should lead our lives to authenticity. We become authentic if and only if we learn to recognize the primacy of the others and appreciate the relations with the others.

CONCLUSION

Holistic postmodernism seems to be more appropriate and more realistic in this age because it is based on both the "both…and" logic and the logic of detachment. On the one hand, with the "both…and" logic, we can solve the problem of the one and the many through either synthesis or complimentarity. With the "both… and" logic, we can see one in many and many in one. On the other hand, with the logic of detachment we can use any kind of logic to solve problems in life. For example, if a waiter at the restaurant asks, "Tea or coffee, sir?" We may say "tea," if we would like to have tea. We may say "coffee," if we would like to have coffee. This reflects Aristotelian logic. We may say "half tea and half coffee in the same

cup" This answer corresponds to Hegelian logic. We may say, "both tea and coffee in two different cups" if we would like to have both of them in two different cups. This corresponds to the Taoist logic. Or we may say, "neither" if we do not want to drink either. The Buddhist logic of detachment is flexible and applicable to all situations.

It is obvious that people in different cultures live in the same world. In this sense we may say that many is in One. Then how can we find the one in the many? As I note above, one is authenticity. If we would like to be authentic, we must recognize the primacy of others and appreciate the relations with others. In other words, to be authentic is to be grateful to others. In the Eastern civilizations, the virtue of gratitude has been both talked about and lived. In the Western civilizations, it has been lived rather than talked about. From the history of philosophy we learn that what Plato did should be emphasized as much as what he wrote. Socrates spoke a lot about the four cardinal virtues, but he also thoroughly practiced the other four important virtues. He talks about wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, while he observes self-knowledge, integrity, humbleness, and gratitude. All the four virtues practiced by Socrates are still very important in the global age. We need to have self-knowledge because "An unexamnined life is not worth living." We need to have integrity because it is the foundation of all other virtues. If we do not deceive ourselves, then we will not deceive others. If we do not deceive others, then we will have respect for others. We need to be humble because all our knowledge is essentially perspectival in character. Last but not least, we need to have gratitude because we are always indebted to and dependent upon the other in one way or another.

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NOTES

[1] Lawrence E. Cahoone, ed., *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 1.

[2] *From Modernism to Postmodernism*, pp. 1-2

[3] *From Modernism to Postmodernism*, p. 3..

[4] Lawrence E. Cahoone, "What Postmodernism Means," in K. Narayana Chandran, *Texts and Their Worlds II* (New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2005), p. 117.

[5] "What Postmodernism Means," p. 117

[6] "What Postmodernism Means," p. 118.

[7] "What Postmodernism Means," p. 118.

[8] "What Postmodernism Means," pp. 118-119.

[9] "What Postmodernism Means," p. 119.

[10] "What Postmodernism Means," p. 119.

[11] "What Postmodernism Means," pp. 119-120.

[12] David E. Klemm, ed., *Hermeneutical Inquiry, Volume I: The Interpretation of Texts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), p. 22.

[13] *The Interpretation of Texts*, p. 22.

[14] *The Interpretation of Texts*, pp. 22-23.

[15] *The Interpretation of Texts*, p. 23.

[16] David Hall, "Modern China and the Postmodern West" in Lawrence E. Cahoone, ed., *From Modernism to Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 701.

[17] David Bohm, "Postmodern Science and a Postmodern World" in Charles Jencks, ed., *The Post-Modern Reader* (London: Academy Editions, 1992), p. 384.

[18] Charles Hartshorne, *Reality as Social Process* (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1971), p. 182.

[19] David Ray Griffin, "Creativity and Postmodern Religion" in Charles Jencks, ed., *The Post-Modern Reader* (London: Academy Editions, 1992), p. 378.

[20] Hans Küng, "Why We Need a Global Ethic" in Charles Jencks, ed., *The Post-Modern Reader* (London: Academy Editions, 1992), p. 413.

REALITY THOUGHT, REALITY LIVED

Richard K. Khuri

INTRODUCTION

Is reality what is perceived? What is found? What is lived? These three questions define different philosophical approaches and *attitudes*. Within each approach, there are many variations. Thought about reality in ancient Greece came through lived reality. We could also say "participation in" reality, but the "in" suggests reality as also either perceived or found, and so it distorts the very awareness that sages like Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles were trying to express or communicate. Thus, in Plato, participation in reality at the highest level dissolves into something unsayable, much as we cannot look straight into the sun. In Aristotle, it dissolves into what makes reality as perceived and found possible in the first place (the movement of all movement, the logic of all logic, the thought of thought). There is tension in their philosophies between the different attitudes and approaches, which they try to resolve in hierarchical fashion. The higher the reality, the less it can be spoken of as perceived or found. Plotinus would make this explicit. Not so for the pre-Socratics. Theirs was reality entirely lived. The tension arising is ours. *We* want to judge whether, for example, Parmenides devalued appearance, as Plato clearly did afterwards. So another problem arises from one of our many dualisms: playing off appearance and reality against one another. As we go along, we shall examine such problems and how they are compounded.

RESOLVING BEING

The conception of reality as perceived arises naturally. Reality is readily associated or even identified with whatever fills our perceptual field under sound, normal conditions. In his attempt to come to terms with serious sceptical questions about the nature of reality posed by Hume, Kant wrought a sophisticated understanding of how our perceptual field, in technical terms, or our world, in lay non-philosophical terms, becomes differentiated. As Husserl and Wittgenstein would later lead us to affirm, much in the spirit of the Kantian philosophy, the conditions of life entail a world in which there are things that we handle in certain ways, among which is how we organize them as we learn how to live in larger and larger groups. Whether the resolution of an initially undifferentiated field into distinct objects related through definite concepts and categories is an eternal feature of the human mind, as Kant thought, or is the outcome of a long and complex evolutionary process, as much of the scientific community believes, or is the emergence (or "actualization") of a given potential under the right conditions, as Aristotle would imply when we adapt his philosophy

to recent intellectual developments, we do not know and need not decide as we consider and contemplate reality. An adequate understanding of the process by which we do resolve Being into a world with things in it related in certain ways will surely involve a subtle and complex integration of the foregoing three major views, possibly in combination with others. What is indisputable is our habit to resolve Being in that way. The habit of viewing ourselves as beings in a world with things in it leads us to conceive reality in precisely those terms. Reality is the world and everything in it. (Philosophers would call this naïve realism, but we shall try to avoid as many "isms" as we can in order to ensure that alert thinking is not surreptitiously replaced with intellectual or even academic habit.)

LEVELS OF REALITY

At some level, all mentally healthy human beings regard the world and everything in it as real. Just so, problems arise, which is why we can speak legitimately of *levels* of reality. Heraclitus, Parmenides, Chuang Tzu, and the ancient Hindus realized long ago that things are often not quite what they seem. The full moon rising behind steep mountains appears far larger than the setting sun. Dead ancestors talk to us in our dreams with a matter-of-factness that belies their passing. Deep thought within ourselves leads us to wonder who we are and whether the world around us might not veil another — or nothing at all. Eventually, we reason our way to the conclusion that the sun is far larger than the moon, and we learn to distinguish between different states of consciousness that determine how vivid things are or how profound. However, if we are able to reason our way to what the real is *really* like, is not reality then decided by reason rather than perception or biologically grounded habit? Plato asked this question long ago in the *Theaetetus*. And if we attained the awareness of the sage, who understands the *logos* or becomes attuned to the Dao, are not the world and everything in it illusion?

Hegel declared that the real is rational and the rational real. Immediately before him, Kant had faith enough in reason for him to seek the limits of knowledge through its means. Post-Kantians with a more scientific bent than Hegel took this as licence to limit reality to the knowable and thus the rational. Hegel's notions of the real and rational were broader, but to his mind rational all the same. But what about a farmer picking blueberries? A gaucho riding his horse? A musician playing her instrument? The warm body of a loved one? The velvet green of Roman pines in the gardens by the Villa Borghese on a cold sunny morning in February? Philosophers can prance all they wish about "pre-philosophical states", but these are all examples of reality, indeed of reality with greater power than that exuded when one reasons that the sun is far larger than the moon — or acknowledges that reasoning in the work of others. Here we are a little bit ahead of ourselves. For while reality in all five examples is surely perceived, it is also *lived*.

If we persist with mere perception and quietly pass over into reflection, before long what we perceive may begin to play tricks on us – or ask us questions we are unable to answer. Native Americans and other aboriginal tribes, as well as ancient Hindu thinkers and mythmakers, saw a world permeated with tricks and magic, a ruse by Coyote or a game played by the gods. The trickster was there west of the Mississippi and in China, as when a modern translator of Chuang Tzu wrote:

> … always listen out for the mocking laughter of Chuang Tzu. This can be heard most when you start to make grand schemes out of bits, or wondrous philosophies out of hints and jokes. For ultimately this is not one book but a variety of voices swapping stories and bouncing ideas off each other, with Chuang Tzu striding through the whole, joking, laughing, arguing and interrupting.[1]

Modernity, through educational structures and intellectual habits, inculcates in many of us the expectation of finding or discovering reality, of landing on some kind of grand and ultimate *terra firma*. It is ill prepared for elusiveness, for the vanishing of what it most craves, for the intolerable confusion between *terra firma* and *terra incognita*. In despair, it would rather negate the issue of reality altogether, perhaps as "meaningless", than adapt to what frequently appears to be persistent trickery. The realist and the sceptic are constant bedfellows. Both expect that kind of *terra firma*, the one always believing he has found it, the other that he never will. Both are consequently distanced from reality. Post-modern thinkers, in contrast, enjoy the trickery to the hilt, but they rarely recognize its true significance.

Trickery shows itself in humbler settings than those that lead toward large statements about the whole of reality. An oasis in a desert may be a mirage. A loved one eagerly awaited at a train station may assume the face and figure of many a passer-by before she finally shows up. The earth we walk on seems flat and still. Iron sulphide or pyrite shines like gold. Many plants and animals are masters of disguise. Pygmy initiates are secretly made to hear terrifying sounds in the rain forest in order to shock them into awareness of the beyond. The Chinese see a rabbit in the full moon, the Aztecs and Mayans a god, or a goddess, Diana, in ancient Greece. Sometimes we are mistaken. On closer examination, the oasis fades back into the desert, a face turns out not to belong to our loved one, Earth is roughly a sphere observed to rotate rapidly from outer space, and pyrite is gold only to fools. However, can we assert that someone is mistaken when they are deliberately led to another state of consciousness deep within the rain forest or when they divinize a distant heavenly body?

WITTGENSTEIN'S CONTRIBUTION

Wittgenstein has pointed out the real error of confusing the scientific with the magical, spiritual, or religious.[2] He does not believe that an explanation

of the sun's power and astrophysical relation to Earth would supplant the impression that the sun makes on people like the Incas still able to see it magically.[3] A Pygmy initiate is not disappointed on learning later from his elders that they had cleverly produced the mysterious sounds that raised his awareness. When children discover that Santa Claus does not exist, they do not accuse their parents of having lied to them but are, rather, sad that an important part of an enchanted world has been erased from their lives forever. The same reality can be seen with different attitudes, scientific, emotional, or magical. Scientists have a complete chemical profile of water at their disposal. Wanderers in the desert value it more than diamonds. Ancient peoples and a few stray poets who chance upon water in forests see it as a haven for nymphs. All have the rational ability to learn about water's chemical profile. Not all are equally alive in their sensibility, emotions, and spirituality:

> [M]uch too little is made of the fact that we count the words 'soul' and 'spirit' as part of our educated vocabulary. Compared with this, the fact that we do not believe that our soul eats and drinks is a trifling matter. *An entire mythology is stored within our language*.[4]

We cannot always attribute different perceptions of reality to our propensity for error. It is indeed an error to think of a stick refracted in water as bent or a mirror image as a person identical to ourselves approaching us as we walk towards it. But the desperate need for water in the desert or the longing for a loved one awaited at a train station are all too real, and while they lead to confusion in the physical world, they also lead respectively to a special appreciation of water and a person standing out emphatically in a crowd. The reality of water in a nomad's life transcends that of its chemical profile, as does that of the beloved's face its precise anatomy. This transformation of reality can extend to the sky, the heavenly bodies, and the entire universe. The dynamics and possibly the meaning of such transformation were largely missed by Plato, Aristotle, and the vast majority of their successors, a long wrong turn that has finally led philosophers, poets and other thinkers from Blake, Hölderlin, and Hegel onwards back to what had gone on before. If the received view has long rested on stories about the emergence of philosophy from myth, perhaps it is time for philosophy, if not to return to its womb, then at least for it to regain the verve and pulse of myth. Among other things, as we shall see, openness to myth and magic restores the balance between appearance and reality and may help deepen our understanding of their interrelationship. Water reduced to its chemical profile is a reality thought. Reality lived is when water is loved for what it is, above all where it is scarce or when the abundance springing forth wherever it is plentiful has a lush beauty that cannot fail to enchant.

HIERARCHICAL APPROACHES TO REALITY

How did Plato, Aristotle, and much later Kant and Hegel, approach reality? As different as they all were from each other, they all proceeded towards it in hierarchical fashion, beginning with some ordinary, everyday, perceptual, empirical, or "pre-self-conscious" attitude, and moving thence to one more "philosophical". Among them, however, only Aristotle preserved the dignity of the perceived, even as he saw the whole of reality perfecting itself at whatever level is appropriate to it through the eternally motivating vision of the "thought thinking itself". (Pure Actuality, in contrast with everything else, which is some potential actualizing itself.) Otherwise, all appearance fades before the Ideas or Forms (Plato), is transcendentally ideal (Kant), or is the stage on which Spirit realizes itself through History (Hegel).

Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Hegel will always be regarded as great philosophers in part because they have understood and expressed systematically and synthetically the increased depth with which we come to know reality. In doing so, however, they have turned reality more into something thought than into something that is. This is self-evident in Book XII of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and in Book X of his *Nicomachean Ethics*. In addition to the conception of God as a "thought thinking itself", the superiority of intellectual to moral virtue is argued for and affirmed. Ever since, we have been saddled with what has come to be known as the "philosopher's God", as theologians working within the Abrahamic faiths point out with alacrity. To be fair, Aristotle might have been struggling with the notion of the self-subsistent self-generative aspect of Reality, of what in Plotinus' understanding might be termed 'the Power to Be'. Aristotle might have been limited by the language and method to which he had been committed, so that 'thought' and 'intellect' do not say all that he had wanted to express. We are certain that 'thought' and 'intellect' meant far more to Aristotle than they do in contemporary usage. Nevertheless, even were we to instil Plotinian mysticism into the Aristotelian edifice, following the happy accident that had led al-Farabi and Ibn Sina along that path, for all the radiance with which all things are shot through as the One projects Itself outwards, appearances remain downgraded just as they had been in the philosophy of Plato. They are nothing without the One and its first two emanations, Intellect and World Soul. Reality is shrivelled. After all, as Porphyry reported, Plotinus was ashamed of his body.

PLATO

In Plato, we can see how the problem arises in the steps he outlines in the *Republic*, Book VII, and, somewhat less explicitly with regard to the highest level, in the *Theaetetus.* Like all other mortals, we initially take reality to be what we perceive. In various ways, we come to realize that our perceptions deceive us, are illusions. As we advance philosophically, we begin to see that whatever reality the perceived world has is owed to a higher reality.

This advancement is not merely rational, but involves intuition, insight, and intellect of the highest order. This higher Platonic reality is outwardly contradictory and impossible to articulate without all sorts of logical conundra, for it pertains at once to each particular phenomenon in the world, be it animate or not, moral or not, as does it pertain to everything as a whole – "The Sun", metaphorically, or "The Form of the Good", still somewhat metaphorically.

It is significant that whenever Plato touches on reality as such, he resorts to simile, allegory, or myth. We need not disagree with Plotinus' mystical reading of Plato. Whenever Plato's philosophy peaks, it is not so difficult to behold something mystical – and mythical – about where we have arrived. When, against all odds in an extremely noisy world full of unprecedented distraction and ideologically motivated cultural hostility, we somehow pass from ratiocination to contemplation, when in a flash we become aware of reality in its fullness, radiance, and power and are momentarily entirely at its disposal, words fail us. We are moreover unable to pin down that reality in any way. It flickers, dissolves, vanishes. If we strain to compress it within our rational understanding, it may even frighten us. And we lack the mythopoetic sensibility that would instinctively find a symbolic and narrative home for what we have risen to.

Plato lived in just that sort of environment in Athens. He had to justify what he had risen to, whether genuinely or vicariously through Pythagoras, Parmenides and others it does not matter. He had to find an intellectual, argumentative, systematic, pedagogically viable structure for his overall vision of reality, which he would then apply to every level of reality he could conceive. And so reality was split apart, the bulk of it downgraded and disfigured.

ARISTOTLE

Aristotle restored the dignity of what we encounter in the world in our ordinary, non-philosophical mode. He heeded the phenomena, the *given*, and worked himself slowly and relentlessly towards the ultimate source of all movement in nature and the universe, while recognizing the sovereignty of each individual thing (or "substance") as it actualises its own potential. The Greek words for 'potentiality' and 'actuality', respectively *dynamis* and *energeia*, immediately suggest to us through their English transpositions a dynamic order constantly in motion. As *energeia*, actuality is not as static as the English word suggests, but is rather an active state through which something maintains itself in the neighbourhood of whatever is perfect for it, exactly as a living organism does. This becomes abundantly clear when Aristotle expounds upon a human being's ethical fulfilment. A life fulfilled means a life engaged actively and persistently with whatever pursuit demands the complete and undivided attention of the mind, which for Aristotle is the divine aspect of humanity. A human life actualised is constant activity at the highest level.

While Aristotle's philosophy of nature is strangely static from a historical perspective – for, despite Anaximander's awareness of something akin to evolutionary change more than two centuries before Aristotle flourished, Aristotle froze the order of Being within a single slice of time – it was highly dynamic in two respects: Aristotle understood the movement of organisms through birth, growth, maturity, and death better than any of his predecessors; and the presence of nature's "inner movement" is never far from his scientific expositions. The biologist in him consistently saw finely tuned complex movements at the heart of the persistence of the phenomena. He needs no testimony on behalf of the subtlety and sophistication of his approach. However, just as the world as it is ordinarily lived fades before the blinding light of ultimate reality in the philosophy of Plato, in Aristotle, ultimate reality itself comes across as somewhat shrivelled, seemingly dry and lifeless. The reality of the world regains the splendour and vibrancy it had lost in Plato, but its meaning barely fords the *Lethe* of cold abstraction.

We shall never know whether it is only with hindsight that we can read Aristotle more sympathetically and encounter the depth and fullness of ultimate reality after all in the very splendour and vibrancy of the world that Aristotle accounts for with such unremitting conviction and cogency. What we do know is that when Muslim thinkers writing in Arabic, like al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, and Christian thinkers after they had rediscovered Aristotle through them, tried to restore the plenitude and majesty of ultimate reality by merging it explicitly with the Abrahamic divinity, the world of "appearances" again retreated into the darkness of Platonic demotion. It would take a mystic like St. Francis to find joy once more in Nature and recognize her just as she is. However, his was the proverbial exception that confirmed the rule.

REALITY'S PERENNIAL DILEMMA

The dilemma seems to be, at least so far as philosophy is concerned, a forceful portrayal of everyday reality with the reality beyond so far in the background as to be almost withdrawn, or ultimate reality full and resplendent in a world of shadows. The modern dualism of Descartes, refined by Kant, reinforces that dilemma. Kant would make great strides in articulating the intellectual and rational apparatus through which we organize and evaluate reality as it is given to us "in our consciousness", as Husserl would later make explicit. But the looming reality underwriting the very viability of the Kantian enterprise, urging us further in our knowledge, accounting for the ideals to which we "rationally" subscribe, filling nature and the world with purpose, lighting them up with beauty, awing us with the sublimeness of its presence – this becomes the noumenal world, of which nothing can be known and nothing said. In the offing, there was a retreat to the time when the Romans, prior to their epochal encounter with the Greeks,

had lacked the imagination to bring their gods to life. Their word *noumena* had encapsulated that hushed and stifled divine presence.

By the time the young Wittgenstein brazenly produced a compact outlook on the world, in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, so little could be said about the noumenal that no word was left in use to express it. So far had the meaning of the world been banished from the world that for many thinkers thereafter, there could be only silence. After a few generations of silence, oblivion followed.

Other philosophers, however, took stock when they realized how a contemplated reality appears even as it gives way to depth, awesome to the uninitiated, flickering, dissolving, disappearing – perhaps into the realm of myth. Romantic poetry and music in England and Germany, sudden advances in philology and anthropology, translations from Hindu and Buddhist writings – these would also not be lost on a thinker like Nietzsche, sometimes courtesy of Schopenhauer. What if the dilemma were not a dilemma at all? What if it arose from the habit of thinking in terms of appearances and the reality beyond, when in fact reality is always One, always appears, must appear and be perfectly itself in its appearances? What if the levels attributed to reality were in fact levels of thought, if a lived reality did not admit of levels, but were just there, itself and whole, everywhere the same, even as the world comes alive with such variety and change, as Parmenides had tried to tell us so long ago? What if the mess into which reality has been dragged through systematic thought were to become undone by paying to attention to different levels of being? What if it required another level of being for us to overcome the absurdity of the self-sameness of reality through all of "its" appearances?

NIETZSCHE'S CONTRIBUTION

Plato was right in his longing to account for the reality of every single thing. But we may question his conception of participation and, in its wake, the ensuing abyss between the participant and what it participates in. Among modern philosophers, it was Nietzsche who, like a Navajo shaman, would make appearances sing, shine, and dance once more. Whatever else he does, however he revels in existential brinkmanship and falls off cliffs time and again, he always invites us to rejoice in the world just as it is. If he savagely critiques certain cultural, intellectual, and spiritual developments, it is all the more to free human beings for the deepest possible embrace of Radiant Plenitude. If he sternly denies any notion of "things-in-themselves", it is only for surfaces to come out of their shadows and unveil anew the primordial luminosity of appearance. If he vigorously opposes any notion of agency, it is only because agency had shackled Reality alive with and within Appearance. Surely the man who said the following words never intended his celebration of surfaces and appearance as solace for the shallow and fake:

Sweet lyre! Sweet lyre! Your sound, your intoxicated ominous sound, delights me! - from how long ago, from how far away does your sound come to me, from a far distance, from the pools of love!

You ancient bell, you sweet lyre!

. . . An odour is secretly welling up,

a scent and odour of eternity, an odour of roseate bliss, a brown golden wine odour of ancient happiness,

of intoxicated midnight's dying happiness, which sings: The world is deep: deeper than day can comprehend![5]

The ancient, eternal music Nietzsche heard came from Greece. It could have come from many other places. It was the song of Parmenides' poem, as we now know. Nietzsche could not suspect this, for he was beholden to a long tradition of ascribing changelessness and some ultimate abstract reality quite literally to the man from Elea. He would have loved the denouement of a story he had helped unfold. Archaeology and philology have inspired a different interpretation of the words of Parmenides, a different vision of his life, which confirm what Nietzsche, Heidegger and others had bravely put forward, namely that pre-Socratic philosophy was more alive to the nature of Reality and Being than what would follow. In a new translation, these are some of the words of Parmenides, the same words that had frozen Reality for ages, words that will now help us understand precisely what Nietzsche had in mind when he speaks of that ancient happiness in its sensuous explosiveness and of a nocturnal depth deeper than day, far more than the common literal interpretation that thinks no further than of an ancient culture that has superficially passed away:

And what exists for thinking is the same as the cause of thought. For you won't find thinking without the being in which it is uttered. For there is nothing else and will be nothing else apart from being, because Fate has bound it to the whole; unmoving. Its name shall be everything – every single name that mortals have invented convinced that they are all true: birth and death, existence and non-existence, change of place, alteration of bright colour.[6]

PARMENIDES

Traditionally, it has been said that Parmenides attributed reality to Being alone, and banished all appearance to the realm of illusion. It turns out that a more careful (and less Platonic-Aristotelian) reading of the Greek text that heeds the cultural and spiritual background and expectations of Parmenides' audience, in conjunction with an expanded knowledge of the ancient language and an aptitude for what neither rationalism nor empiricism could possibly lead to (an aptitude not so mysterious, required as it is for any adequate performance of many works of music and so much else in our

involvement with poetry, literature, and the arts), yields the striking vision of all appearance as full of Being. As Heidegger had recognized without the full benefit of contemporary research and scholarship to back himself up, Being appears, always appears, and so it must be misleading to separate being from appearance in any way other than what pedagogy requires under certain conditions. Metaphysics, to the degree that it has identified itself with the being/appearance or reality/illusion duality, is radically erroneous and thus is condemned to die.

The very same Parmenides who had denied us the reality of the world is now seen to affirm it with the greatest possible emphasis. The world is Reality. Everything is real. We have been given back what we had lost. Reality does not move, not because it is some unimaginable stillness hidden deep within – or *away from* – our lived and encountered reality, but because its presence is everywhere, in everything, *with* everything. In the odours of our world, It manifests the odours of "eternity, roseate bliss, and ancient happiness", for they are the same, just differently understood. The sacredness of Reality lies in the reality of all things, properly lived and seen. All things "participate in" Reality and, thus, become real because Reality is alive with and within them. Reality participates in the world even as the world participates in It, the shift more a matter of perspective than metaphysics. With metaphysics, the shift turned into a rift.

THE DILEMMA PERSISTS

Confusion and much debate arise from the radical difference between the principal two perspectives we have on things. Our existence in the world sometimes gives off the effect of thrownness, as though we were moving further and further away from the Source, especially if It be eclipsed by certain modern attitudes and rhythms. Existential philosophy has emphasized this sense of loss, of moving away rapidly from a Center that, ritually denied, assumes first legendary and finally chimerical status. Nietzsche's madman imagined us to be hurtling through space in a startling passage that first appeared in the *Joyful Wisdom, 125*.[7] Camus repeatedly insisted that what we ultimately face is the Absurd. The contemporary imagery offered by astrophysics and cosmology evokes a rapidly expanding universe through which everything moves further away from the original Singularity. We know Earth spins at a speed faster than sound if measured in translation rather than rotation, a speed that would make us dizzy in a split second were it not balanced by the effects of gravity and atmospheric pressure, and our galaxy moves so rapidly through space we can barely imagine its motion, all the while still struggling to come to terms with Einstein's revelation that space is not really something that anything "moves through", but is cleared by the existence of "matter".

Even when we are not driven so far from the Source, emphasis on existence makes us regard Reality from a distance and try to make sense of it constructively, rationally, with a longing to belong, secret or open.

Distanced from the Source, we find ourselves as appearance among appearances having lost their reality, and so we either come to think of them as illusion or lead illusory lives when we become bound to them in this state. Fear of illusion makes it natural for us to look past – or beyond – appearances towards whatever, so very far away, makes them real, transcends them. Such was the motive of system builders from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Hegel with Ibn Sina, Aquinas, Newton, and Leibniz in between. Systems of the world were meant to make sense of the world and everything in it, unwittingly from the distance caused by the rift between Appearance and Reality. If, however, the rift itself is illusory, then all such systems also have an illusory aspect, in repetition of what Kingsley ascribes to Parmenides' goddess. Like Aphrodite, she loves and tricks us at the same time. Faced with Reality, the systems of the world in which we find comfort and safety give themselves away as elaborate ruses.

GABRIEL MARCEL'S CONTRIBUTION

However, from another perspective, that of depth, as expressed by Gabriel Marcel with great conviction in *Mystery of Being*[8], we suddenly find ourselves within the Center looking out at the world. Heidegger had a similar vision when struggling mightily with the inner meaning of Parmenides' poem.[9] Marcel brings depth forth as what makes our thought "debouch into a region beyond itself"[10], turns the distance we feel in the state of thrownness to an inner distance that is suddenly dissolved as we return to our "lost homeland"[11], and bridges past and future through the Eternal Now.[12] Depth, Marcel believes, is "the only valid way in which we can conceive the notion of essence, in the sense in which that notion is contrasted with existence."[13] The transformation of our perspective as we make the shift from existence to essence, from thrownness to depth, allows us to participate so thoroughly in Reality that "instead of you perceiving reality what in fact is happening is that reality is perceiving itself through you."[14]

Still expounding upon the poem of Parmenides, Kingsley also reminds us that the Eleatic healer and sage (which we now know him to have been, thanks to significant archaeological findings around Velia, the Italian name for Elea) wrote in the opening lines about being taken to a goddess who would reveal Reality to him in a long oracle put to words with unequalled dexterity. Among much else that she instigates according to Parmenides, she shows us

> that we are living in an illusion. But the only way for her to do this is by entering the illusion and creating an illusory structure in it that will help us to realize that we are surrounded by illusion. If we listen to what she is saying . . . we will gradually start to find ourselves inside that structure she has built – able to look out at the world we used to live in from the perspective of this structure rather than looking on at

what she is creating and desperately trying to understand it from our old, familiar point of view.[15]

The illusory structure or system is the world viewed through the lens of traditional metaphysics, divided into appearances variously distant from reality and then constructed according to the prevalent rationality, be it Platonic, Aristotelian, Kantian, or Hegelian. Only in Hegel do we witness a kind of continuity between appearance and Reality stronger than what we had seen in Aristotle, except that the reality of appearance is always partial and provisional, intensifying all the way to some point in the far future when it finally progresses to the point of embodying the Real completely. In Hegel, strictly speaking, the reality of appearance is deferred indefinitely. But he made the transition from existence to *essence*, and it is no accident that philosophers after Hegel would eventually find their way back to the full restoration of the reality of appearance irrespective of the particulars of history and culture.

The difference between Parmenides and metaphysicians from Plato onwards is that the "structure" he presented, once one is deep within it, not only preserves appearances but affirms their reality with a gigantic exclamation mark, the "yea-saying" so ardently sought by Nietzsche, but so tragically bogged down by intellectual encumbrances. It is a "structure" built to draw us in only to abolish itself just as we attain a clear inner vision.

Kingsley argues throughout his book that so entrenched is the habit of reading Parmenides with the lens of systematic metaphysics that we fail to see the cunning with which a statement is transformed into its opposite. He seems to be saying that nothing is real, except for what has been taken to be a still, frozen, cold, unmoving oneness far removed from everything and certainly leaving us unmoved. However, he only seems to be saying so in order to assert that everything is real. It is the same reality we see as real or unreal. What changes is what we see, how we see. The poem is an initiatory incantation intended to transform our relationship with reality. It is a poem inspired by what Parmenides had lived.

LIGHT FROM THE DEPTHS

From those depths, within the self-absorbing "structure", looking out at the world, we are able to equate what exists for thinking with the cause of thought. Appearance, when we relate to it from the standpoint of existence, exists for thinking. From the perspective of thrownness, our distance, not to say our alienation, impels us towards the systematic reconstruction of appearances according to what is thought to be their meaning. But as Appearance, or more truthfully as Reality coming forth necessarily as Appearance (for how else would it come forth?), we are also invited, instigated to place our trust in a process, to follow a way that will lead us to the standpoint of essence. From the perspective of depth, our thought originates from within Reality, hence the same cause for thought as for all

appearance. In the mythical terms so dear to Nietzsche, we find ourselves tasting the ambrosia feasted on by the gods. This is "the blissful odour of eternity" he celebrates, pouring through the beauty and sensuous delights of this world:

> Everything we see or hear is reality, but the only problem is that we have not yet learned to see or hear it. Every movement we are aware of is simply the imperfect perception of something quite motionless and still – motionless not because it's static and lifeless but because it contains all movement inside it. Every desire, every sense of any lack, is nothing but the experience of a reality too whole for us, with our fragmented minds, to hold together; too powerful and too full for us to bear.[16]

From northern Siberia to Tierra del Fuego, from Iceland to New Zealand, initiation ceremonies overseen by shamen transformed boys into men for whom reality became not "too powerful and too full to bear". Mysticism East and West would preserve that transformation, with varyingly explicit religious content. In contemporary Japan and China, where Zen originated, enlightenment is partly characterized by the awareness that reality is there in everything, however humble:

> The idea that reality itself has no name because every single name we ever use is only a name for it – this is as outrageously paradoxical as it happens to be beautiful.[17]

ZEN

In Zen, what is outrageous from our rational perspective is completely natural. They come to the same vision as Parmenides without the incantation. Their predilection is for enigma, paradox, and understatement, if not silence. And they, like the Daoists, have no name for reality. The Dao is everywhere, and just so, "it" cannot be named. Styles may differ, but the transformation in how we see our world is the same:

> Go to the window and look outside. Look at the sky and the trees; and listen. All the intellectual and mystical journeys end here, where they began. For in spite of our blindness and deafness we are surrounded at every moment by completeness.[18]

Philosophy begins and ends with this sense of completeness. However far it strays, it moves along the perfect circle of Reality beloved by the ancient Greeks. And so the Aristotelian science according to which the shape and movements of heavenly bodies are perfectly circular is symbolic, taken literally only by later generations for whom science had ceased to be sacred. If we understood that in Aristotle, traces of Reality as

once "visited" by Parmenides remained, we could read his descriptions of nature as movements in the ambit of the Real. The problem is to restore philosophy to its authentic movement, and thus to Reality.   Again, Heidegger played a pioneering role, goaded by Nietzsche's bold but crude groping for fateful cultural errors. One such decisive error, according to Heidegger, resulted from the spontaneous need philosophers and others had felt to communicate their visions of Reality.[19]. So long as communication remains true to what one means to express, all is well with philosophy. Once the logic of communication takes over, combined with other factors we need not dwell on here, philosophy becomes alienated from Reality. An obvious result is the appearance/reality dualism, which Nietzsche radically denied.   Earlier, Hegel had identified the condition of alienation and so unleashed a variegated creative outburst that would bring about a renewed awareness of philosophy's visionary origins.

It is not necessary to practice Zen or be transported to mystical heights in order to appreciate the completeness of which Kingsley writes in his learned and passionate encounter with the poem of Parmenides. So far as philosophy is concerned, one may follow what has happened since Hegel opened so many doors, through Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Kingsley himself. One may remember that philosophy began as a way of life and so look at what life itself teaches even as one tries to account for Reality philosophically, perhaps with the help of whatever art one has the knack and skill for. Any moment out of time can serve as a window for what is in itself beyond time, an eternal now. What remains is to find an adequate way to communicate without losing touch with what motivates the communication.

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

The timeless moments we are gifted with unveil the "other side", however vaguely and briefly. The ancients regarded the totality of the Other Side as the world of the dead. For them, death was simultaneously the end of life among appearances in our modern sense, and the beginning of dwelling within Reality.   Many initiation ceremonies were therefore believed to transport initiates to the Other Side before they returned to this world with a full awakening to its significance.   Navajo mythology and Eleusinean ceremonies told of the mysteries of visits to the world beyond or underworld.   The journey was called *katabasis* in ancient Greece, and Kingsley has produced compelling evidence that Parmenides was engaged with that practice. Something like *katabasis* reverberates near the end of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, as he calls up "the midnight darkness deeper (and brighter) than day", a darkness that itself sings the Reality of the world. Crucially, in his poetic expression of what sings, Nietzsche affirms the dissolution of temporal boundaries. Reality sings through the individual who is fully absorbed by it. Just as flowers and birds emerge respectively from the darkness of seeds submerged and nested eggs, just as the fertile

soils sustaining the unequalled lushness of Javan fields were once lava and volcanic ash, so is there a "darkness" on the other side of existence (in space and time) that gives birth to, sustains, and illuminates all things.   The unimaginable brightness and fullness are lived through the mystery of looking out from within, which our deepest lived moments and much of our best art give flashes of.   It is how millions of Chinese and Japanese find peace and stillness amid the most intense and frenzied and often mindless conurbations.

One of the more astonishing developments in recent decades has been the manner in which natural science, relentlessly driven by a material realism focused single-mindedly on Appearance in its illusory guise, has collided with the immaterial.   The analysis of matter with the help of gigantic particle accelerators has dissolved it into an as yet undefined reality resistant to ordinary physical categories.[20]   More than two decades ago, Bernard d'Espagnat, a quantum physicist, has argued that physics will once more need the language of myth in order to describe reality.[21]   At the same time, changes in our environment are forcing us to recognize what effectively is the sacredness of Earth. However, it would be wise not to be tempted by the other extreme and submerge everything in Reality.   As human beings, much of our experience will always have a non-mystical, profane side.   There is a dignity to our existence that is compromised if we turn too severely towards Reality.   The only way for us is to recognize Reality in Appearance without negating either.

Once we awaken to Reality, it is understandable that we seek to communicate what we have awakened to.   Communication becomes more articulate along with our social and cultural growth.   When the articulation assumes a life and logic of its own, Reality recedes.   There seems to be an inevitable rationale by which the rules and context of articulation gradually take precedence over what was supposed to have been articulated in the first place.   Our thought and our existence both become uprooted.   For more than two hundred years, this has been acknowledged as a fundamental problem with modernity by various thinkers from Hegel and Kierkegaard to Marcel and Heidegger. Yet when we go too far in returning to Reality, our existence becomes smothered. It would be strange indeed if life only became full and radiant when viewed from the world of the dead.

We live Reality and we think about it.   Parmenides recognized this when he said that, as the old translation rendered it, "thinking and being are the same."   But our reality is suspended, neither submerged in its origins in effective denial of our existence, nor severed from them in effective denial of our essence.   Our lot is the long dance of enchantment with longing.   It is to taste depth more or less as we wander in the vast spaces of thrownness.

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NOTES

[1] Chuang Tzu, *The Book of Chuang Tzu, t*r. Palmer, Breuilly, Ming, and Ramsay (London: Penguin Books, 2006), p. xx.

[2] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Frazer's* Golden Bough, *Philosophical Occasions.* Ed. J. Klagge and A. Nordmann (Indianapolis, IN and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 1993), p. 125.

[3] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions*, p. 129.

[4] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions*, p. 133.

[5] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* Tr. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 329-330.

[6] Peter Kingsley, *Reality* (Inverness, CA: The Golden Sufi Center, 2003), pp. 190-1.

[7] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, pp. 14-5.

[8] Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being: Reflection and Mystery.* Tr. G. S. Fraser. (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2001), pp. 191-6.

[9] Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides.* Tr. Schuwer and Rojcewicz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 99-104.

[10] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, p. 192.

[11] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, p. 193.

[12] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, p. 194.

[13] Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, p. 195.

[14] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 187

[15] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 161.

[16] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 197.

[17] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 198.

[18] Kingsley, *Reality*, p. 199.

[19] Heidegger, *Parmenides*, pp. 64-83.

[20] Robert Nadeau, and Menas Kafatos, *The Non-Local Universe: the New Physics and Matters of the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[21] Bernard D'Espagnat, *In Search of Reality* (Berlin: Springer, 1983).

FACING THE GLOBAL CRISIS:
THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY IN CHALLENGING ECONOMIC POWERS[*]

Silja Graupe

INTRODUCTION

When attending the opening ceremony of the XXII World Congress of Philosophy at Seoul National University, I was struck by the welcoming words of Peter Kemp, President of the Congress:

> To rethink philosophy today is to apply our philosophical capacities to the current situation of humanity. One often forgets that the economical, technological and military powers do not possess the monopoly of power in the world. Philosophical argumentation and reflection constitute a power through the word that is capable of challenging the other powers, exposing the lies and the illusions and proposing a better world as the habitation of humanity. In this sense true philosophy is cosmopolitan, it is a fight to create a world citizenship and make a new world order.[1]

When Kemp spoke these words, the world stood at the brink of an economic crisis almost unprecedented in scope and scale. Financial turmoil was about to emerge from the United States and make itself felt in almost every corner of our planet, causing stock markets to crash and banks to go bankrupt so as to leave many without a job, a home, savings or a pension. But even before the crisis hit, many people surely anticipated the potential damage that such economic powers, of which Peter Kemp spoke, could inflict upon the world. I suggest that the root cause of such anxiety lies in an immense lack of understanding; we do not yet truly know the economic powers we currently face. This is especially so because the scientific, economic knowledge, into which many people formerly put their trust, comes to increasingly lose its explanatory power. A *New York Times* article recently stated that the recent crisis exposed severe flaws in how present day economics sees an ever more complicated world. It turns out that, as long as we remain bound to the latter's simplistic methodological framework, we are going to remain unable to deal with the inherent dynamics of today's interdependent global markets. Given this, Kemp was surely right in demanding philosophy to apply its capacities to the current economic situation. We need to nurture the latter's reflective power so that it can challenge economic powers by first and foremost revealing their true nature. Though it seems clear to me that philosophy cannot be said to be in the possession of any ready-made answers, I am confident that the world's philosophers can work together so as to advise humanity on finding the answers and solutions needed for

dealing with today's economic problems. Above all, philosophy is to use, by means of intense intercultural and interreligious dialogue, its whole transformative potential so as to oppose the present day's most common (i.e., mainly Western capitalist) modes of economic thought. For this, it has to combine the power of its various schools and traditions so that they together can render possible new insights into the mostly forgotten presuppositions and background assumptions of economics, as well as to break through the limitations those presuppositions and assumptions set to our human creative understanding.

The challenge here does not simply lie in abandoning mainstream economics as if we could easily do away with it. Rather, we are to critically engage it so as to overcome its most pervasive modes of thought from without and especially from deeply within. Philosophy is to explore the *thinking* of economics so as to better understand the pervasive, albeit often implicit, influence it has in shaping how we have come to see the world and ourselves, especially in the West. More specifically, philosophy is to assist humanity in (a) encountering the implicit, yet very powerful modes of limitation that economics creates with respect to our own self-understanding, and in (b) developing the mental skills needed to break through these modes of limitation. It is to unleash a power of innovation, not for controlling the world in yet better or more efficient ways, but for exploring new paths of *self*-transformation. During the World Congress of Philosophy in Seoul, much progress was made in taking up these challenges. Being an economist, I was astonished at how many presentations and round table discussions and conversations proved enormously helpful in clarifying my understanding of my own subject, even when they did not explicitly deal with economic issues. This paper is an attempt to indirectly pay tribute to the events of the World Congress by reflecting upon the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of economic powers in their light. More specifically, this paper seeks to gradually deepen the understanding of these powers by exploring their objectives and their subjective nature in order to better elucidate the experiential, creative and dynamic nature of these powers. In the conclusion, I point to some cognitive barriers of modern individualism currently preventing us from fully appropriating this latter dynamic nature. Thus, I turn attention to one further philosophical task Peter Kemp mentioned: the task of critically exposing those hidden lies and illusions about our human nature that stifle the kind of creativity necessary to propose a better model of the world – a vision of the world as a genuine human habitation.

MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS

During the World Congress, I noticed how many presentations, especially those dealing with the philosophy of economics directly, remained involuntarily bound to the objectivist metaphysics that has been the hallmark of Western mainstream economics for more than a century.[2] I am

speaking of an objectivist metaphysics, here, insofar as this mainstream mostly views the economy as an aggregation of absolute facts *only*, existing independently from all mental states (feelings, wishes, desires) etc. of humans.[3] In its attempts to develop into a 'real science,' from the nineteenth century onward, economics mainly sought to conceptualize the world from the perspective of a purely objective, detached observer and attempted to fully emulate the methods of the natural sciences or, more precisely speaking, those of mechanics.[4] Above all, it applied mathematical and statistical methods, which had shown such magnificent results in the natural sciences, to the social world in general and to the economy specifically. Because economists generally assume "that the phenomena of economic life are governed according to strict laws, like those of nature,"[5] they are convinced that "we have to research the laws of social cooperation as physicists research the laws of mechanics."[6] As a result, economists generally perceive the economy as mere outer reality, which works according to quasi-mechanical laws independent from any subjective perceptions. Once we buy into this conception, we come to view the economy as nothing but an aggregation of things and events firmly standing over and against us, consisting solely of entities such as markets, institutions, and goods, which are interrelated according to fixed principles and totally unconnected to our inner subjectivity. We think of the economy as the physical or material world only and, consequently, of economic powers as inexorable and ineluctable forces which no human ideals or aspirations can possibly alter. These powers seem to be thrust upon us by an anonymous source – the invisible hand of the market place, to use Adam Smith's famous expression – while our own human creativity is viewed as being essentially reactive. Borrowing a deistic metaphor from classical economics, it seems as if economic powers could essentially be attributed to a "Great Mechanic," who guides and controls economic events from the outside without being influenced by them in turn.[7] Thus is the economy likened to a machine as in the following metaphor used by Adam Smith:

> The wheels of the watch are all admirably adjusted to the end for which it was made, the pointing of the hour. All their various motions conspire in the nicest manner to produce this effect. If they were endowed with a desire and intention to produce it, they could not do it better. Yet we never ascribe any such desire or intention to them, but to the watch-maker, and we know that they are put into motion by a spring, which intends the effect is produces as little as they do.[8]

Such a conception of economic powers denies the existence of any distinctively human powers within the economy. It effectively reduces human beings to simple "molecules" or "atoms" of the economic system.[9] Even in the face of a severe crisis, we appear to be condemned to passively watch the market run its course and to trust in its self-healing powers. There

remains little else to do than to simply believe it will effectively guide us to the best possible state of affairs.[10]

My point here is that belief in God as the sole creator of economic powers, a belief which the early liberal economists held, is still widespread today. Moreover, economic policy often holds implicitly the idea of the economy being ultimately governed by outside forces utterly beyond human control, that is to say, by pure and wholly anonymous mechanisms of the market.[11] It seems that many politicians, especially in the West, and particularly those who lean towards the liberal tradition, still believe that "mankind is not free to choose. . .Things economic and social move by their own momentum and the ensuing situations compel individuals and groups to behave in certain ways."[12] This does not mean that such momentum necessarily victimizes everyone. Rather, some people might be successful at letting it work in their favor. In the same way that humankind learned to utilize physical forces for its own advantages, it might also try to do so in the case of economic powers. However, from an objectivist perspective, we can never imagine ourselves as acting to truly change the character of such powers. It is true that we might attempt to command them, but only by obeying them.[13]

THE DOMINANCE OF OBJECTIVIST METAPHYSICS IN ECONOMICS

The problem I am primarily concerned with is not whether the broader public in general, or even the majority of economists in particular, openly subscribe to objectivist metaphysics. It is, rather, that we allow such metaphysics to tacitly frame our most common modes of economic thought. Flying 'below the radar' of our attention, it is extremely powerful, not only within economics departments and business schools all over the world, but also within political economy and, even more importantly, within the modes of our daily reasoning. Consider, for example, the fact that most mathematical and statistical data, upon which we tend to base our factual knowledge about the economy, are gathered by means of models and theories that still remain firmly rooted in the paradigm of a one-dimensional causally-ordered world, though we do not usually recognize this. Consequently, a large number of our management and policy tools still remain under the sway of the very same paradigm, insofar as they uncritically utilize such knowledge, mistakenly believing it to accurately reflect the whole of reality. In uncritically utilizing these tools for our daily purposes, we invariably distance ourselves from the consequences of our own economic activity. We deny being responsible for economic choices, and incorrectly think of these choices as already determined by mechanical market forces, as if by blind fate. We consider ourselves to simply be responding to brute economic facts, thereby not responsible for the often disastrous consequences such responses may have on our fellow human beings. Unfortunately, such behavior is abundant. A well known example is

when corporate managers point to 'material constraints' of global markets to justify the lay-off of thousands of workers, assuming that such 'constraints' are simply the results of the inevitable functioning of deterministic market forces. We may also think of governments which try to convince us to accept the necessity of lowering social and environmental standards for the purpose of national survival in global competitive markets. But even in our day to day lives, we feel more and more bound to conform to the so-called inevitable consequences of the 'objective' values of economic goods, money, shares and derivatives. And have we, at least from time to time, not put our trust credulously in the 'hard facts' presented by economic charts, figures and calculations offered to us by the media, politicians and bankers? Rarely, it seems, do we openly question the metaphysical basis upon which such facts are continually conceived and produced. It seems that many of us have silently shared the economist's dream of an economy made up of absolute facts and driven by powers beyond our reach. In many ways, it appears to be much easier to build our lives upon that dream, rather than trying to actively see through its illusionary foundation and work creatively to change that foundation. Thus, there is surely a need for philosophical dialogue in order to explore more deeply the metaphysical basis upon which present day objective economic arguments rest. The challenge here is not simply to find a better model or formula to predict and control things economic, as some scholars proposed during the World Congress. The real challenge is for philosophers and economists to work together in order to better understand the essence of the economic powers at play. The problem with a purely objectivist understanding of economic powers lies, among others, in urging us to obtain something like a 'God's Eye frame of references.' Such a frame does not only affect our view of the economy, but also our own modes of self-understanding. This frame aids in creating a highly contradictory self-understanding, for we see ourselves as outside spectators ultimately sitting in judgment over things economic as well as over other economic agents, and deem ourselves capable of predicting and governing their behavior. However, as outside spectators, we continually distance ourselves from affecting the way things actually work. This is partially explained by Nishitani Keiji, a modern Japanese philosopher, who argues that if one sees not only human beings, but all 'things' in terms of being mechanically manipulable and pliable, then there is necessarily an absence of any face-to-face resistance. That means the subject finds no material object outside of himself, no being in itself, no being that resists him, or to which he could attach himself. Moreover, this subject lacks any real relation to another, no sense of the other thou. Everything is in the third person, is an 'it' that may even cease being an it when it is reduced to force or energy. We are dealing with a frame of reference here, which grants the isolated I an extraordinary and absolute power with no power outside this I to offer resistance. In a world in which everything is reduced to force and energy, everything is fundamentally arranged so as to be freely managed; and everything can be

arbitrarily manipulated. In a certain sense, what we have here is the standpoint of a subject who has reached the peak of his development.[14] Once we entirely exploit everything around based upon the premise of mere functionality, we are equally endangered to reduce our own self to nothing but a function as well. We ourselves begin to feel victimized by the anonymous forces of the market economy; forces over which we do not sit in judgment any longer, but which are inflicted upon us. Nishitani states:

> In the same gesture [in which the subject achieves his peak - S.G.] subjectivity loses any meaning and the person is dehumanized. When there is no longer any thou offering resistance to the I, to the point where any thou simply vanishes – so, to, vanishes the position of the 'I.' The I is now just the force that governs the forces of the world. The sovereignty of humankind is nothing more than the force which leads the world of forces. It becomes a mechanical force guiding mechanical processes. If everything is transformed into an 'it' and things exist merely for control and manipulation, then subjectivity itself slips away from us, who have fallen into the state of being mere mechanics. Under the influence of technology, the self-consciousness of the subject runs the danger of collapsing by and by.[15]

It is obvious that these two forms of self-understanding, self-attachment and self-estrangement,[16] are not merely incompatible, they are also incommensurable, and cause deep division within one's personality.[17] Nevertheless, they are intimately entwined because they emanate as the two extremes of the very same objectivist worldview. In this situation, philosophy is to explore yet other modes of self-understanding by fundamentally altering this worldview itself. It is to make us aware of the fact that even though an objectivist metaphysics does in fact generate powerful modes of self-understanding, especially in Western peoples; it prevents other modes of self-understanding, that is to say, subjectivist modes, which can release subjective powers. These powers can affect the economy.

THE SUBJECTIVIST TURN

In many ways, it seems to me that the 'subjectivist turn', which was topical in many presentations and discussions during the World Congress, can help to overcome the theoretical bottleneck of the objectivist metaphysics of economics. The task is to carefully apply important insights of such a turn specifically to economics, rather than simply encountering it as a general development in philosophy. We must carefully consider why subjectivist economic powers, if recognized by economists at all, have so far been overwhelmingly framed in terms of mere egoistic self-interest – an interest epitomized, above all, by the fictitious figure of *homo oeconomicus*.[18]

As explained above, most economic experts until recently have firmly believed global markets to work according to some fixed, predetermined principles. In order to predict future developments and best utilize them, they sought to better understand those principles by means of ever more complicated models and statistical methods. But it never appeared to occur to them that that the search for such principles could turn out to be illusory as such. However, this precisely seems to be the lesson that we ought to have learned from the recent financial turmoil. There are economic situations – possibly more than we are yet willing to admit – in which our search for any causal rules underlying change is simply of no avail, not because we will still lack the right means for understanding such rules, but because the economic development does not follow any causal or mechanical pattern at all. Why is this so? Both in scientific and everyday discourse, we often overlook that every mechanistic account of the economic world has to presuppose the givenness of some data. More generally speaking, any principle of causality necessarily presupposes some conservational principle, which is no more than a special case of the more sweeping postulate of the identity of things in time: within the flow of change, there has to remain something unchanging, something that remains identical with itself, unaffected by the course of events itself. Change remains, so to speak, *a priori* confined to change by invariance. In the case of stock markets, for example, most economic models have simply assumed that share prices, in one miraculous way or the other, change against the stable background of some 'true value', say that of real corporations. Such assumptions, albeit only implicitly, remain firmly rooted in the larger framework of a substance theory of value.[19] There is, however, no compelling reason to believe that such a framework is accurate. This is because there are no constant data that we could safely consider as remaining unaffected by economic interrelationships *a priori*. As the ancient philosophical saying goes, *everything* is in constant flux; "there are no such things as given data in the historical world. 'Given' here means formed."[20] Mainstream economics goes fundamentally wrong in trying to emulate classical physics, because it thereby ignores the fact that hardly any invariants simply exist 'out there' in the economy as they do in nature. Facts of the economy are, rather, constantly shaped and remodeled, including those whose uniformity economic models take for granted.

> Since a strict uniformity is nowhere to be observed at first hand in the phenomena with which the investigator is occupied, it has to be found *by laborious interpretation* of the phenomena and a *diligent abstraction* …. In this work of *interpretation and expurgation* the investigation proceeds on a *conviction* of the orderliness of natural sequence.[21]

As human beings, we are free to create the foundations upon which objective economic powers can reign or, more importantly, are equally free

to offset those conditions. Prior to any mechanical functioning of the economy, we are at work as creative agents, our subjective powers being capable of reshaping or even entirely altering the economy's objective appearance. Entrepreneurs, for example, often act so as to change the fundamental data of the economic system by inventing new products and processes. Thus, they transform the whole future course of economic events in ways impossible to predict in principle by means of any objective conceptualizations.[22]

In a similar manner, even our most common subjective decisions often powerfully offset any conservation principle and, as such, negate the possibility of objective powers to reign over us in the first place. It is plainly wrong to believe that we are simply condemned to obey and, at best, utilize objective economic powers. To the contrary, as human beings, we are also able to rebel against their exclusive authority, as it were, from their foundations 'below.' Our creative potential can in fact substantially alter the course of the economy, not so much from the position of a distant observer but by shaping it in truly new and unforeseeable ways from within. Once we do so, the economy becomes characterized to some measure by indeterminacy, which is impossible to determine within an objectivist framework. This is to say that knowing the future in all its details becomes utterly impossible, because it is not bound to emerge from the present in any predictable way. Creative individual activity severs any rigid connection between the present and the future because of its capability of truly changing a future situation inferred from the present. 'True change' here means that change does not occur against the background of pregiven laws, but includes a variance of those laws themselves. It thus lacks any kind of mechanical accuracy as tacitly presupposed by economic objectivism.[23]

THE POSSIBLE DANGERS OF SUBJECTIVISM

Unfortunately, today we are prone to conceive such true change in negative terms only. This is because it appears to be driven by subjective economic powers defined merely in terms of both insatiable greed and a ruthless reckoning for one's personal advantage. At least such a conception still serves as the point of reference for many economists of the subjective tradition who do not seriously investigate the infinitely varied activities of subjects, but simply take as the "first principle of economics that every agent is actuated only by self-interest."[24] Thus, economics remains stuck in the preconception of norms and laws imposing invariants upon the economic system. The difference here is that such invariants are not located in the external world, as is the case in objectivism, but within individual consciousness. "Invariants are not to be seriously found 'out there'; in a real sense they are 'in here'. … Our very livelihoods, in the broadest possible sense, are predicated upon invariants whose existence cannot be proven but whose instrumentality renders our actions coherent."[25] In buying into this conception, we become susceptible to conceiving both ourselves and our

fellow human beings in terms of a mere 'mechanics of self-interest', wherein we see ourselves as 'pleasure machines', who mechanically work towards nothing but our own betterment.[26] Simply put, the danger of such a conception is that subjective economic powers are invariably considered to be determined by certain inner traits, above all by egoistic feelings and desires, that happen to befall us, but which we do not control in turn. Economic forces, in a rather strange fashion, thus appear to be at work deeply within us. They seem to hold sway over all acts of our consciousness, as if the voice of some lawgiver was speaking within ourselves. Put differently, we come to believe that there exists "something below the barrier of consciousness, upon which it depends, that we do not govern and that is in as much foreign to us as is the outer nature."[27]

While egoism and solipsism are indeed realities that cannot be denied, my main point is that these are not inevitable, and thus should not be considered as indubitable first principles in economic theory. This is surely what has occurred, not only in methodological individualism but also in those powerful images of individual freedom that are common to the West, say, those associated with modern consumerism. Again, I am not denying that egoism plays a leading role in modern market economies; there is ample evidence to suggest that it does. Nor am I saying that methodological individualism does not describe an important trait of our individual nature as we live and work in modern economies; in fact, it does – but it mistakenly conflates it with the whole of our human nature. According to the operative assumptions in such a method, there is nothing people can do about behaving in solely egoistic ways. They might be free to choose between goods in the world according to their presumably inborn desires, but they remain utterly unfree when it comes to changing those desires themselves. They do not have "the choice, when it comes down to it, over the rules by which they make their choices."[28] Those rules are seen as being fixed *a priori* by our invariant and inborn nature. They are the basis upon which humans act, but which cannot be acted upon in turn.

I consider such a narrow perspective problematic for many reasons, the least of which is its theoretical irrelevance in the economic sphere. Indeed, in the political sphere it erodes confidence in people's power to change themselves so as to make the world a better place. And this holds true not only for advocates of free market capitalism but also for proponents of state intervention. This is because both groups usually agree, albeit tacitly, with the assumption that people cannot overcome their self-imposed limitations and narrow perspectives by means of their own creativity. While proponents of state intervention do not usually share the capitalist conviction that such an 'overcoming' is normatively undesirable, they nevertheless share the conviction that it is, in any case, impossible. They seek rather simply to keep the disastrous consequences of individualism in check by means of ever more complicated systems of incentives, stimuli and punishments. What they thereby attempt to do is to

alter some of the terms of the equations each man makes when he is calculating his most profitable course of action. But this need not affect the mainspring of the system, which is that men do calculate their most profitable course and do employ labor, skill and resources as that calculation dictated. … The state may, so to speak, move the hurdles in advantage of some kinds of competitors, or may change the handicaps, without discouraging racing.[29]

THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY

In the present situation, when politicians search for new and more efficient control of financial markets, I wonder whether philosophers should be questioning if such a search is illusory as such. Might we not eventually come to the conclusion that subjective economic powers can never be fully controlled by either market or legal forces because human beings will always find ways to manipulate the rules of the game for their own personal advantage? Can we, more generally put, ever be successful in wisely utilizing egoism to create order? In Germany, there is compelling evidence that this is not far from happening. This is because commercial egoism is threatening to determine what the law is supposed to mean in the first place. The interests of big business, for example, are today often seen as facts that are not to be controlled anymore by law, but rather form the law:

> The law should grasp and normativize that which in commerce, technology and science corresponds to our human sense of right. But this is rarely the case. Looking at decisions regarding fraud in commerce, we have to concede that the state of the law's decisions corresponds only to the views of the commercial class. Literally. It is said that only that can be subjected to legal norms which does not endanger the 'functioning of business.' We could cite a pile of similar formulations. The law is hardly a gadfly. . .We must admit that technology and commerce actually determine the law, and not vice versa.[30]

The saying of the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, seems to apply here: "The more rules and regulations, the more robbers and thieves."[31] Moreover,

> reliance upon the application of law, far from being a means of realizing human dignity, is fundamentally dehumanizing, impoverishing as it does, the possibilities of mutual accommodation, and compromising our particular responsibility to define what would be appropriate conduct.[32]

This is not to suggest that we should forsake, all at once, our efforts to establish a better legal framework for global markets. But it seems to me

that philosophy is nevertheless able to critically investigate the fundamental limitations of such efforts, limitations of which especially we in the West might not have yet fully grown aware of.[33] At least, it should bring awareness to the fact that we need to perfect the law; a task that cannot be achieved simply by mechanical replication, restricting humans to the passive reaction to outside stimuli as if they were constructed like unconscious automatons. It is to unleash the powers that can bring about such perfection, eventually allowing us to more fruitfully deal with the distress of egoism, rather than simply to seek ever better and more refined control. What we need to discover here is, above all, a transformative potential, enabling us to creatively change our individualistic attitudes; this may not be achieved by moral appeals to the individual alone. During the World Congress I noticed how often philosophers spoke about the need to develop a more reflective consciousness, but without considering if, and if so, how, individuals might or could bring about such a change. More specifically, it seems that we all too often and easily overburden ourselves by demanding transformation to occur simply from within our own interiority. While many moral appeals of our present times do indeed avoid falling into the major trap of methodological individualism – namely, that of confining individuality to only certain traits of human nature – they might still remain crippled in its other important premise, namely, the fiction of an isolated person. This is to say that they still implicitly consider each person as the sole creator of his or her own personality – a personality that only subsequently enters into relationships – rather than a personality that is created by relationships. As result, the assumption – false in my judgment – is that the ability to generate change can and should first take place solely within our individual nature, prior to affecting any proper change in the world around us.

One insight gained from the World Congress was that both Western and non-Western philosophies offer still different understandings of our subjectivity; understandings that truly break through the confines of methodological individualism and a subjective freedom all too narrowly defined in egoistic or solipsistic terms. Whether we discuss 'new challenging directions in philosophy,' 'the deep rationality of religions', or 'the future tasks of philosophy in East Asia' – to name but a few titles of certain sub-conferences at the World Congress – we explored alternative modes of subjectivity that are surely of great relevance for economics, though we might not always have explicitly acknowledged this. I am speaking of alternative modes here insofar as they essentially go 'beyond' both the conception of a pre-ordered objective world order and the conception of a fixed individual nature so as to make us aware of the vast richness of our lived experience, of our living in community. Especially in the light of the world's religious traditions, as they were insightfully presented by many scholars during the World Congress, it became clear that simply 'fighting' individual subjectivity, as if to enchain it in an ever more tightened system of incentives, rules and punishments, is not the only road

open to humanity. The more promising path, rather, is to further deepen such subjectivity, so as to explore right below or beneath it, a yet hidden field of lived human encounter, opening up as the true locus of human's creative power. In what follows, I will try to shed some light on this by turning to Japanese and Chinese philosophy.

JAPANESE AND CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

In his seminal book on ethics (*rinrigaku*), the Japanese philosopher Watsuji Tetsuro fundamentally challenges the liberal assumption of the modern solipsistic ego having grown completely independent from social relationships. He also denies that the former can exist prior to the latter, involuntarily eliciting it through its individualistic activities.[34] For Watsuji, exactly the reverse is the case: society is not established by the accidental contact of previously isolated individuals. Rather, harmonious interaction serves as the tacit foundation of all individual action, including even the most egotistical and distrustful. He writes:

> Incidentally. . . all human relations involve trust to some extent. It is not correct … that the Gesellschaft-oriented relationship is originally based on distrust. It is certain that it lacks the trust relationship peculiar to Gemeinschaft. But a trust relationship peculiar to Gesellschaft exists. Otherwise, no business relationship could arise. Therefore, we are allowed to insist that, in any human relationship whatsoever, *makoto* [intimacy, truthfulness - SG] takes place in accordance with them. … It is always at some place and on some occasion in the complex and inexhaustible interconnections of acts that truthfulness does not occur. … However countless these places and occasions may be, *they cannot arise except that truthfulness takes place at bottom.*[35]

Until quite recently, many of us might have assumed that we could safely ground our individual economic activity upon hard economic facts, that is, upon the objective value of money. However, as I have argued above, today's crisis finally reveals that this belief is illusory. When trading in money, we neither simply put our faith in pieces of paper, nor even in authorities such as central banks. Rather, we put our faith in others, in a delicately woven net of interrelationships with people we do not even personally know. Prior to any specific economic transaction, mostly below the radar of our attention, there exists the two necessarily manifold cultures of truth and trust; these are ways of 'human encountering' that we take for granted prior to going about our daily business of earning or spending money, shopping for the necessities of life, and saving for our retirement or the future of our children. More generally said, ego's grasping, be it in the form of individual desires or of rational choice, tacitly presupposes nondualistic experiences of interconnectedness. When I go to a supermarket

in Germany and buy groceries from nearby fields, coffee from Kenya, a CD-player from Japan, and a shirt made in China, I inevitably find myself connected to myriads of people as well as to the natural surroundings of even the most remote corner of the world. Without necessarily being aware of it, my choices are influenced by their lives and existence, while my choices invariably influence them in turn. Even if I were to relentlessly strive for individual profit only, in doing so I would still tacitly presuppose that I can put my trust in others, as well as that others can put their trust in me. It is this power of trust that we are to count as being the most fundamental in our economic lives. If we intentionally, or unintentionally, kill that power, we would not only sacrifice the richness of communal life, but also the self-actualizing potential of the modern individual, including that which we in the West all too hastily conflate with inborn human nature. Metaphorically speaking we could say:

> Just as a fist can only form out of the natural basis of an open hand, the grasping of ego can only assert itself out of non-ego, out of nongrasping awareness. Without this neutral nongrasping ground to arise from and return to, ego's activity could not occur.[36]

To rephrase it: it is nothing but an illusion to think of ourselves as existing in isolation from others. The betweenness of person and person, as the Japanese psychiatrist Kimura Bin once put it, does not simply signify a relationship between two individuals, existing first in isolation and then subsequently in relationship to one another. The betweenness of person and person is, rather, the locus functioning as the source from out of which both others and I arise.[37] Right below the subjective powers of egoism there is hiding an even richer economic power: that of our original spontaneity to live within a nexus of experiential interrelationships. It is, as I have just termed it, the power of trust or, more generally speaking, that of a practical wisdom allowing us to spontaneously interact with the whole of things and our fellow human beings. Only out of the tacit relatedness to our fellow human beings can all the potential to enrich, change and intensify the self-actualizing potential of individuals arise. This holds true even in modern market societies.

   The problem with modern individualism, in both its practical and theoretical variants, is not simply that it seeks to free people from their relatedness to others, but that it totally blinds people to discovering their very own communal sources, insisting upon the fact that no one can become aware of anything beyond the narrow confines of his or her individual subjectivity. Taking the 'I' as indubitable fact, an impermeable barrier to consciousness, it can at best make us aware of the fact that we are tacitly governed by certain primordial relationships. But it seems we can never explicitly account for such domination; its effects remain utterly unintentional. For example Friedrich von Hayek, a Nobel Laureate in economics widely known for his defence of classical liberalism and free

market capitalism, openly claims that modern individualism does in fact presuppose rigid rules of communal behaviour – rules which every market participant regardless of culture, tradition, or religion is to blindly accept. We learn, says Hayek, such rules "from each other … by example and imitation (or 'by analogy'), although neither those who set the examples nor those who learn from them may be consciously aware of the existence of the rules which they nevertheless strictly observe."[38] Buying into this conception, we cannot possibly make entirely fruitful the original spontaneity of each human encounter so as to allow it to mutually transform our personalities. We cannot come to each new situation with openness to the other – a readiness to be transformed. Neither are we willing to work together with others so as to actively shape the rules according to which we all are to live. Rather, we expect both ourselves and others to forever remain imprisoned in a solipsistic mode of awareness, silently building our lives on a common fund of experience that we all accept as nothing but blind fate.[39] We allow our personality to be passively shaped by the power of customs, rules and regulations dictated to us by the modes of daily living in capitalist societies. We take the laws of action as being "independent of the human will, they are primarily ontological facts rigidly restricting man's power to act. . . [A]ny doubt of their suitableness is supererogatory and vain. They are what they are and take care of themselves."[40] We accept, in a word, "the necessity… of the individual submitting itself to the anonymous and seemingly irrational forces of society."[41] Once more, economic powers are conceived here as something given to humanity; something which we are shaped and created by, but cannot shape or create in turn. And again, to repeat once more, in order to counter such overtly static and passive conceptions of economic powers, we must fortify the world's rich philosophical insights. What is needed here is an entirely new understanding of ourselves as unique economic agents – a uniqueness that is different from the notion of an autonomous individuality that only attends the isolation of the soul from other souls and from the outer world of things and events. According to the Chinese tradition, for example, such uniqueness is to be framed in irreducibly social terms, expressed in terms of one's ever changing roles for, and one's finely-nuanced relationships to, community.[42]

> A presupposition of Daoist cosmology is that we are not passive participants in our experience. The energy of transformation lies within the world itself as an integral characteristic of the events that constitute it. There is no appeal to some external efficient cause: no Creator God or primordial determinative principle. In the absence of any preordained design associated with such an external cause, this energy of transformation is evidenced in the mutual accommodation and co-creativity that is expressed in the relations that obtain among things.[43]

Here it becomes obvious that we should no longer presuppose the living world of human interrelatedness as something merely given.[43] The point here is to discontinue the tradition of blindly acting according to fixed customs and habits, since this only amplifies the danger of a "mechanization of the Self, and the death of the species. We must be creative, from hour to hour."[44]

> Mere causal necessity does not deny our soul; it must be a kind of necessity, which penetrates into the depth of our personal Self, as "historical past." It must be a necessity, which moves us from the depth of our soul. That which confronts us in intuition as historical past from the standpoint of acting intuition, denies our Self, from the depth of our life. This is what is truly given to us. That, which is given to our personal Self in acting-intuition, is neither material, nor does it merely deny us; it must be something that penetrates us demonically. It is something that spurns us with abstract logic, and deceives us under the mask of truth. In opposition to this absolute past, pressing our personal Self in its depth, we ourselves take the standpoint of the absolute future. We are acting-reflecting, and thoroughly forming. We are thoroughly creative, as forming factors of the creative world which forms itself."[45]

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by urging philosophers around the world, each in his or her own language, culture and tradition, to clearly expose, along similar lines, the lies and illusions that reduce the varied and rich powers of our common economic life to nothing but mere causal necessity. Let us, in Kemp's own words, fight to create a world citizenship and a new world by resisting any economic ideology that explicitly and implicitly demands such a limitation. Philosophers should seek to be free to develop a wider awareness of the deepest economic forces so as to unleash the creative potentials of our practical wisdom. Let us actively encounter the dynamic economic powers that are truly ours: the powers arising out of our being immanent and embedded within a ceaseless and dynamic process of social, cultural and natural changes; a power that we can, and in fact do, continually mold and create while allowing ourselves to be molded and created by them in turn. By means of sustained dialogue between the world's cultures and religions, philosophers are to further understand how such powers neither simply substitute for the objective and subjective economic powers nor simply resist them. In grounding them, rather, they unlock the potential to truly alter the conditions upon which they are received.

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NOTES

[1] Peter Kemp, as quoted from the program of the XXII World Congress of Philosophy, Seoul, Korea, 2008.

[2] I use the term *mainstream economics* here in order to refer to economics as it is usually taught in prominent – and even in not so prominent – universities around the world. It is, in this sense, closely associated with neoclassical economics and other schools that conform to the mainstream language of mathematical models.

[3] Among the proponents of capitalism, Ayn Rand has worked out such a metaphysics explicitly. Cp. Ayn Rand, *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal* (New York: Signet, 1967). Here, however, I am rather concerned with its implicit forms. For a more detailed analysis, see my *The Basho of Economics: An Intercultural Analysis of the Process of Economics* (Heustenstamm: Ontos, 2005), especially pp. 36-81.

[4] An excellent summary of this development can be found in Philip Mirowski. *More Heat than Light: Economics as Social Physics, Physics as Nature's Economics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[5] Carl Menger, *Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre* (Wien, 1871), p. viii

[6] Ludwig von Mises, *Nationalökonomie: Theorie des Handelns und Wirtschaftens* (Genf, 1940), p. 2.

[7] Within the liberal tradition, deistic explanations of economic powers play an important role. See, for example, the often quoted passage from C.F. Bastiat: "I would like to show the harmony of the divine laws ruling human society. . . I believe that he who created the material order of the cosmos has not denied his attention to the social world order. I believe that he combined the free force and set it in harmonic movement, like the lifeless molecules…. I believe that nothing is more necessary to the gradual and peaceful development of mankind than that we do not cross these tendencies and don't disturb their free motion." C.F. Bastiat, *Harmonies Economiques* (Paris, 1855), citation in German in John Maynard Keynes, *Das Ende des Laisser-faire* (München, 1926), p. 20.

[8] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2000), p. 126.

[9] Paul A. Samuelson, "Maximum Principles in Analytical Economics." In *The Collected Scientific Papers of Paul A. Samuelson*, ed. R.C. Merton, Vol. III (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1972), pp. 2-17.

[10] See the following quotation from Adam Smith: "God himself is the

immediate administrator and director. If he ["man"–SG] is deeply impressed with the habitual and thorough conviction that this benevolent and all-wise Being can admit into the system of his government no partial evil which is not necessary for the universal good, he must consider all the misfortunes which may befall himself, his friends, his society, or his country, as necessary for the prosperity of the universe, and, therefore, as what he ought not only submit to with resignation, but as what he himself, if he had known all the connections and dependencies of things, ought sincerely and devoutly to have wished for." Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 346.

[11] The omnipresent use of mechanical metaphors in economics is brilliantly analyzed in K.-H. Brodbeck, *Die fragwürdigen Grundlagen der Ökonomie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft Darmstadt, 2000).

[12] Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1976), p. 129.

[13] Leon Walras, *Elements of Pure Economics* (New York: Kelly, 1969), p. 69.

[14] K. Nishitani, "Modernisierung und Tradition in Japan," in *Japan und der Westen*, ed/ K. Wehrhahn-Mees, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1986), p. 194.

[15] Nishitani, "Modernisierung und Tradition in Japan," pp. 194-95.

[16] Masao Abe, "The Problem of Self-Centeredness as the Root-source of Human Suffering," *Japanese Religions*, vol. 15 (1989), p. 17.

[17] Alasdair MacIntyre, "Individual and Social Morality in Japan and the United States: Rival Conceptions of the Self," *Philosophy East & West*, vol. 40 (1990), pp. 489-497.

[18] Here, I am referring to subjective and behavioral economics in general and, more specifically, to the methodological individualism underlying them.

[19] Philip Mirowski, *More Heat than Light* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), chapter 4.

[20] Kitarō Nishida, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness*, tr. Robert Schinzinger (Tokyo: Maruzen, 1958), p. 184.

[21] Thorstein Veblen, *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization* (New York: Viking, 1969), p. 162. Emphasis added.

[22] Frank H. Knight, *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit* (Mineola: Dover Publications 2006), pp. 13-21.

[23] Knight, *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit*, pp. 313-17.

[24] Francis Y. Edgeworth, *Mathematical Psychics. An Essay on the Application of Mathematics to the Moral Science* (London: Kegan Paul, 1881), p. 16.

[25] Mirowski, *More Heat than Light*, p. 138.

[26] Edgeworth, *Mathematical Psychics*, p. 15.

[27] Friedrich von Wieser, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Tübingen: Mohr 1929), p. 18.

[28] M. Baurmann, *Der Markt der Tugend: Recht und Moral in der liberalen Gesellschaf: Eine soziologische Untersuchung.* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), p. 325.

[29] C.B. MacPherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 58.

[30] A. Baruzzi, *Freiheit, Recht und Gemeinwohl*, *Grundfragen einer Rechtsphilosophie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), pp. 205-206.

[31] Lao Tsu, *Tao Te Ching*, chapter 57.

[32] David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Thinking from the Han: Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998), p. 284.

[33] Graupe, *The Basho of Economics*, pp. 246-251.

[34] This, however, is precisely the credo of liberalism.

[35] Tetsuro Watsuji, *Watsuji Tetsuro's Rinrigaku, Ethics in Japan*, tr. S. Yamamoto and R.E. Carter (New York: SUNY Press, 1996), pp. 276 and 281. Emphasis added.

[36] Ken Wilber quoted in Joan Stambaugh, *The Formless Self* (New York: SUNY 1999), p. 93.

[37] Bin Kimura, *Zwischen Mensch und Mensch: Strukturen japanischer Subjektivität* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002).

[38] Friedrich A. Hayek, *Recht, Gesetzgebung und Freiheit*: *Regeln und Ordnung* (München: Verlag Moderne Industrie, 1980), pp. 35-36.

[39] Ludwig von Mises, *The Ultimate Foundation of Economic Science* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006).

[40] Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action. A Treatise on Economics* (London: Hodge, 1949), pp. 755-46.

[41] Friedrich A. Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), p. 24.

[42] Hall and Ames, *Thinking from the Han*, p. 25.

[43] Nishida, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness*, p. 176.

[44] Nishida, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness*, p. 208.

[45] Nishida, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness*, p. 223.

REHABILITATING VALUE: QUESTIONS OF MEANING AND ADEQUACY

Karim Crow

It is indispensable that man's attention move from the meaning (*al-ma'nā*) to the wording (*al-lafẓ*) more than it move from the term to the meaning, for in reality the wording does not evince the meaning save by the mediation of the 'form' of that meaning in the 'heart' (*illā bi-wāsiṭati ṣūrati dhālika l-ma'nā fī l-qalb*); when the form of the meaning is not ascertained in the heart, the meaning can never be grasped through the wording

[al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (11th cent.), *al-Dharī'ah*, ed. Abū Zayd al-'Ajamī, p. 124]

Spirit in the body is like Meaning in the word
al-rūḥ fī l-jasad ka-l-ma'nā fī l-lafẓ.
– 'Alī (7th cent.)
[Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī, *Sharḥ Lāmiyah al-'Ajam* (Cairo: 1290 H) II p. 133]

INTRODUCTION

How the language of Scripture and Tradition embedded in revealed texts or sacred writings, and in the foundational narratives supporting pre-modern world-views, may be understood and applied today remains a major issue for the world religions. Traditional articulations of religious conceptions and past modes of discourse now appear inadequate for meeting sweeping global challenges facing most human societies. Increasingly, thinking people of faith seek to re-awaken and re-appropriate essential religious teachings through creatively transformative understandings yielding more *meaningful* ways of addressing problems raised by our global reality — in relation to pervasive material and cultural conditions. The axis around which these attempts revolve is twofold: First: recovering primary values of universal true validity, and recognizing which disciplines and individuals really possess the authority to enunciate application of such values in the context of specific conditions prevailing within our societies. Secondly: recovering the deep essential intelligibility of Knowledge and Virtue at the heart of the endeavour to more fully realize our humanity. These two efforts are intertwined and should not be pursued separately.

Such awakened awareness involves a creative adjustment and appreciation of new modes and applications of knowledge in our age — without doing violence to the genuine modes of knowing and being that provided strength and versatility in the past and which potentially offer resources that may aid us now. This mode of self-awareness involves training the imagination to *live* the creative process received from within our own traditions of learning, practice, and organization so as to see and to grasp what is most adequate to our task, discriminating what remains 'moist' and viable from what has dried out becoming 'brittle' and no longer adequate or needing to be discarded or archived.

Approaches embedded in past models may be contrasted with those arising from specific cultural and political realities of our modern age — an era posing unprecedented changes signalling a rupture from the past. We shall take as our model of pre-modern (traditional) experience the Islamic intellectual and spiritual teaching·discipline,[1] and seek to draw out its relevance for peoples and cultures when searching for more *adequate* ways of invoking religious teachings in response to contemporary needs. Ideally we would pursue a double path by first invoking instructive models from the past, and then demonstrating in what manner such previous efforts achieved more adequate modes of conceptualization and application during their particular eras, thereby pointing to modes of activity required for us to accomplish a parallel task. An example of such a model might be the work of Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazāli (d. 1111 CE). Here we only have space to briefly suggest these tasks, and our remarks resemble more of a partial skeleton than a full bodied entity.

The promise inherent in comprehending past modes of conceptualization and application may assist efforts by individuals and leading circles for awakening a fuller adequacy of traditional ideas and values. Such awakening has the potential to facilitate wise solutions to personal, societal, regional and international problems, and to meet the challenge of inhabiting our individual and communal humanity more fully. However, this potential is conditioned by the manner with which permanent values are grasped and brought to life within individuals and by extension throughout their societies and polities.

VALUE

Values are essential for revitalizing the universal rather than the national or particular (exclusivist) side of religious identity. Values are critical for nurturing a faith-commitment that affirms the unity and dignity of the fullness of human life. The primary values upheld, for example, by leading Muslim exponents in their experiential teachings embrace: Oneness of The Real /*tawḥīd;* Security and Peace, Justice, Knowledge (with its hierarchy of knowers and their authority), and Integrity and Purity of Soul ['virtue'] through cultivating and practicing praiseworthy character traits — with

these values embodied in the psychic and intellective substance of individuals [Soul], radiating through their community and beyond into the world.

By 'values' we mean those ethical attitudes and immaterial ideals that sincere conviction implants into humans through their family upbringing, training, education, and life experiences – attitudes and ideals which may grow into interior motivating impulses expressed through actions. Values possess a practical force operating deep within the human at the level of conscience and will. Values operate first and foremost by the inner willing of conscience, and are manifested outwardly in praiseworthy character traits and admirable models for behavior. This practical dimension of ethical endeavor and moral·volition is termed the faculty of *conation* (that is to say, volition and will-power). Ethics (in Arabic: the *Akhlāq* or *Maḥāsin* /'virtuous character-traits') is the domain of Practical Reason or 'prudential mind' (*'aql 'amalī* in Islamic terminology) involving the faculty or power of conation. Conative power denotes the impulse or striving to change one's behavior and act in accordance with both the *directives of inner conscience* arising from within the innate constitution of the created person, as well as of *outer guidance* or revealed imperatives received from without.

Furthermore, the human attitudes and ideals prompting actions, and which are mediated by values, possess an intellectual or *cognitive* power shaping the worldview and discourse of humans collectively forming a cultural community functioning for a definite purpose within the created order. For Islam, these two related aspects of values are bound together through *Knowledge:* the *conative* faith-induced dimension of knowledge yielding conviction and moral-volition through the operation of human intelligence embedded in conscience, being intimately joined with the *cognitive* or perceiving or knowing dimension operated by our intelligence. A closely related pair of Islamic notions expressing these two dimensions is the joining of *Righteous Action* (*al-'amal al-ṣāliḥ*) with *Beneficial Knowledge* (*al-'ilm al-nāfi'*)**:** knowledge and practice must go hand in hand for values to become truly operative and effective in human experience. Here is an example of what we have just stated concerning the conative and cognitive dimensions of value. In an utterance by the Shī'ite imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765), the term 'understanding or cognition' /*ma'rifah* is employed in conjunction with 'activity or practice' / *'amal* :

> God accepts (a person's) practice only (if performed) with 'cognizance'/*illā bi-ma'rifat*^in^, and (God accepts a person's) cognition only (if accompanied) by practice. Whomever knows/*'arafa*, the cognition directs them to the practice; and whomever does not practice, that person has no *ma'rifah* /cognition…[2]

Islam teaches that the true origin of universal human values mirrors or reflects the transcendent source of all that is 'valuable', that the permanent enduring values safeguarding our true humanity are sourced in the divine. The highest human values possess true value only because they spring from a transcendent source and help to draw us closer to the ultimate source of Being, Existence, and Value. A well-known tradition of the Prophet Muḥammad (Ṣ) counsels us to "*Adorn yourself with the virtuous character traits of God /takhalluq bi-akhlāqi llāhi*" as the chief path to authentic service and inner realization. This fundamental insight insists that the transcendent source of values is the true reason why they are deemed universal and permanent, and objectively to be sought and practiced by all humans. Another way of stating this is to affirm the complementarity of right thought and right activity, or intellectual perfection and moral perfection, or awakened intelligence and ethical action. But here we simply say that cognition and conation are integral to actualising the fullness of human nature, and that realization of value requires their conjoined functioning.

The universal values upheld and taught should be clearly evident and displayed in the lived practice of their practitioners, their exemplars or living examples. Otherwise, one is dealing with hypocrisy, with hollow words lacking any conative force failing to touch and move us from within, thereby failing to manifest outwardly in any substantive change of behavior. Contemporary Scientism [physicalism] universalized by Euro-American inspired modernity is deficient in both the quantity and quality of the bond that arranges universal values into an authoritative hierarchy.

ANTHROPOCOSMIC AND ANTHROPOSOPHIC

In general, the traditional (pre-modern) worldviews embedded in religious cultures with elaborated intellectual and spiritual disciplines were concerned with realizing knowledge in four domains: metaphysics – or apprehension of The One Real [Being, First Principle, Absolute, God]; cosmology; spiritual psychology; and ethics.[3] These are four complementary domains: investigation of the cosmos yields insight into the interior world of spiritual psychology, while apprehension of metaphysics and cosmology leads to grasping the true nature of the human 'soul', and proper prehension of 'soul science' returns the Self to the ground of Being.

We may also invoke the venerable conviction of the uterine inter-relatedness of the celestial, cosmic, and human orders. And as most of us know, the modern heedlessness or ignorance over understanding the Self as a 'unified field' for energy-activity-awareness conjoining cosmos and soul as both object and subject at once, has led humans to falsify the relations between self, people, and nature.

In order to avoid the traps of exclusivist parochial dogmatism and of the ideology[4] characteristic of our modernities, we must each individually recover for ourselves a proper understanding of our own nature. William Chittick states:

> …in order to know the proper way of acting in the world and living out our human embodiment, we must know what the world signifies to us. In order to know the significance of things, we must know our own nature and our own proper destiny. In order to know our own nature, we must know the self that knows.[5]

What is knowledge for? What is the proper role and qualitative context of human thought? There is a very real discrimination between two fundamental modes of knowing involving distinct faculties or energies:

First, we can speak of transmitted knowledge employing instrumental rationality [viz., the 'brain'], viewing the world as a collection of objects, which understands knowledge as the means to control nature, society, and the body; thus, humans seek control and power over creation by means of the technological application of knowledge and exclusive reliance on instrumental reason.

Second, there is direct unmediated knowledge which transpires by awakening and actualizing human innate intelligence ['heart' and 'spirit'… light: Arabic *'aql, qalb* & *rūḥ … nūr*] forming the peculiarly special perceptive·understanding power of our interior self [soul or mind]. Such prehension is termed 'realization' /*taḥqīq* in Islamic teaching – in contrast to the 'imitative' mode of transmitted knowledge termed *taqlīd*. Philosophy with its metaphysic of 'soul-science' was particularly interested in ways of activating the human potential for realized intelligence or 'heart'; ontemporary Euro-American 'philosophy' does not know of, or admit, this reality anymore, but speaks of neurophysiological cognition in terms of measurable physical events. To say more about this might mislead and confuse meaning, so I let another speak for me: "Only what is known in the depths of the soul without intermediary is intellectual in the proper sense of the word … the only locus of intellectual knowledge is the knowing self."[6] Nor should we forget that transmitted knowledge, since it exists embedded in a specific cultural matrix conditioned by habits of mind solidified within its own 'priesthoods' molded by socio-political factors and self-interested needs, frequently becomes a veil preventing attempts to actualize true realized intelligence. A fine example of this is the description provided by the 11th century authority al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), in his analysis of the famous tradition that seventy thousand veils of light and darkness separate God from His creatures.[7]

'Realized Intelligence' exploits both the critical powers of reason and employs the imagination through envisioning 'things' as signs and symbols of The One Real (seeing the 'Face of God' everywhere and in everything, as the Qur'ān states). Intelligence may be rationalist and symbolist together, and it may resuscitate the mythic imagination by restoring the creative power of symbolic and mythic discourse which lies at the heart of traditional religious language (profoundly imbued with anthropomorphic imagery). This mode of trans-rational apprehension vehiculed by the human soul when actualized as 'realized intelligence' enables one to erase the boundary between the literal and figurative meanings of sacred texts, and go beyond this by affirming a reality for the imaginal realm as an intermediate domain partaking of the qualities of the corporeal as well as the purely immaterial. In Islamic experience, this affirmation of an imaginal reality has a long history until our own time, and is particularly associated with the Andalusian saint buried in Damascus, the *Greatest Shaykh* Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240), whose understanding of the 'World of Imagination' / *'Ālam al-Khayāl* combining qualities of spirit and body was so influential.[8] Ibn 'Arabī integrated the achievments of the philosopher Avicenna (d. 1037) as well as of al-Ghazālī in his own grand synthesis; and centuries later the Iranian sages including Ṣadr al-Dīn Shirāzī (d. 1640) elaborated upon this in a profound manner which invites serious attention today.[9]

Do not misunderstand my meaning: there is no going back, no return to the dogmatic literalism of traditionalist anthropomorphism when apprehending sacred texts. Yet there remains the possibility for us to expand our horizons, to embrace the truths affirmed by intelligence informed through faith-cognition and thereby to awaken the dormant potential of our humanity. Teachings of the order just mentioned offer us a model of a mode of experience and activity to accomplish a parallel task and thus rehabilitate a living intellectual tradition. But it will be ours, not that of the past. Furthermore, we must be especially wary of ill-conceived exploitations of powerful ideas that might yield great harm and generate much falsehood. Is not the energy contained in the human imaginal faculty increasingly being abused in our era by all manner of delectations and temptations facilitated by technological advances (television, electronic media, computers)? Are we even aware of its possible deletrious effects? Here is an area of psycho-somatic research that will have to start from the data already amassed by advertising organizations for decades in their dedicated efforts to persuade consumers and amass wealth.

Every knowledge makes ethical demands upon the knower. Realized Intelligence becomes actualized within oneself through a lengthy process of cognitive training and inner purification, of disciplining the mind and the soul. Achieving correct understanding of the Absolute, cosmos, and soul by grasping an authentic vision of reality demands the actualization of

the pristine human character and cultivation of virtue – the corresponding activity of self-understanding and self-realization in conformity with such direct knowledge. The cognition calls out for its complementary conative practice; knowledge necessitates virtue. Chittick observes: "…correct activity – ethical, moral, and virtuous action – depends upon correct knowledge of the world, and correct knowledge of the world depends upon knowing the contingent and convergent reality of soul and cosmos."[10] This entails healing the split between subject and object upon which the prevailing modern scientific worldview is grounded.

There is another issue related to the illumination that awakened intelligence and direct experiencing may shed today on re-thinking values and virtues on the path to becoming more fully human. This involves language, with its organic aptitude for sharing and communicating experiences and ideas within one linguistic family. Language may also bridge across different linguistic groups through fostering unitive disclosures of meaning, allowing over-arching understanding of more universalizing values dressed in various conceptual and linguistic guises specific to different cultural matrices. In conjunction with this, the barriers between social groups and cultural blocks fostered by linguistic differentiation may under the right conditions operate as filters selectively admitting congenial elements while blocking others.[11] We may observe this operating within the two most significant translation movements in human history: the 8th–10th century movement of Hellenic sciences and philosophy from Greek into Arabic, and the 12th–14th century transposition of sciences, philosophy, and spirituality from Arabic into Hebrew and Latin in Europe.[12]

Perhaps the most instructive example of the operation of language as a congruent unitary force is the 'lingua franca' phenomenon whereby one tongue serves as a 'vehicular language' for communication and exchange between many other local vernaculars, reflecting the military, mercantile or cultural dominance of the vehicular language group. Currently the recognized dominance of spoken English with its Latin script [341 million] is rivaled by written standard Chinese and standard spoken Mandarin in East Asia [ca. 1.2 billion persons], spoken Arabic vernaculars [ca. 422 million], Hindi in S. Asia [366 million] and spoken Spanish in the Americas [322 million].[13] Today Arabic vernaculars form the second largest spoken language after standard Chinese, while the Arabic script – the language of the Qur'ān – remains after Latin the second most widely used alphabetic system in the world.[14]

It is well known that few cultures placed more emphasis on their language as a unifying factor than have the Arabs; yet the unprecedented diffusion of Arabic linguistic and conceptual presence from sub-Saharan and East Africa, the Iberian peninsula, through to Central and South Asia, China and to South East Asia was due as much to religious and cultural grounds than to commerce or politics. Within various Muslim cultural

regions historically, a number of other languages adopting Arabic script also served vehicular functions such as Persian (lingua franca of India, before the British conquest), Turkish, Azeri, Urdu, Swahili, and Jawi [Melayu]. This displays the integrating unitive effect of Islam over far flung territories, previously separated by geographical barriers and racial–cultural divides. Subjectivities tend to exclusion and conflict, disclosure of meaning tends to inclusion and harmonious awareness.

LANGUAGE AND MEANING

Language, comprising speech and narrative (e.g. text) and poetry, is rightly taken as a key index of the human faculty for grasping and communicating meaning, and is intimately involved in rationality and critical apprehension. A significant aspect of speech and its accompanying seizure of meaning is the conjunction of symbol and the reality it points to, namely the meaning disclosed through its apprehension; or, to express this relationship another way: the Word and the Meaning which it discloses. Restoration of the imaginal power of symbolic and mythic discourse at the basis of religious language centers on apprehending the 'efficacy' of Names in their qualitative depth, not merely their quantitative flatness.[15]

We can only refer briefly to one aspect of the relation between word and meaning. The word is a tangible sensory form conveying meaning; language points to meaning and discloses significance – thus, Arabic calligraphy became Islam's pre-eminent art form and mode of symbolic representation. But such disclosure requires the minds and hearts of humans to be prepared and capable to conceive and grasp meaning, to heed the indications or pointers words provide and thereby penetrate to their intended significances. The identity or non-identity of name and thing-named was intensively discussed among Muslim speculative theologians, while the legalist-oriented traditionalists avoided the topic as a reprehensible innovation. This issue was often cast in the polarity of *'ism* and *ma'nā* / 'name' and 'concept', where proper comprehension elevates the 'concept‧meaning' above its 'name'. The gist is captured in an utterance by the reputable early thinker Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765):

> …the name is other than what-is-named, so whomever worships the name disregarding the concept/*ma'nā* commits unfaith (*kufr*) and he worships nothing, and whomever worships the name and the concept commits unfaith by worshipping Two, and whomever worships the concept disregarding the name – now that is true 'oneness'/*tawḥīd*.[16]

Two things must be borne in mind: a) the same meaning may be pointed to by more than one term or phrase within the same language, as well as by several words across several languages; and b) without the meaning already being present, or sufficiently evoked and indicated, within our

understanding intellective faculty, the proper apprehension of the Word is difficult or the Word itself fails to convey the intended Meaning and may even be taken in a 'wrong' meaning (e.g. confining the term to merely one restricted surface sense while ignoring its deeper symbolic or mythic significance).

Confirmation of this would be our common experience of first having apprehended the meaning of a term in an 'ordinary' sense as a young person, then later, with increased knowledge and insight, achieving a deeper more significant sense. Furthermore, significances may be 'flat' (figurative or rhetorical), or may possess 'depth,' opening out onto a hierarchy of related meanings and apprehensions. Poetry, as well as prophecy, frequently operates in this latter mode of symbolic significance. Incorporation of fresh meanings through borrowing or influence from another language or culture represents a particular case of expansion of meaning, and frequently induces new values or new ways of looking within the worldview of the host culture. The phenomenon of bilingualism (whose many dimensions we leave untouched here[17]) underlines the importance of cross-cultural penetration, and demonstrates that successful bilingualism and becoming bi-cultural require intelligence as well as proper attitudes toward the other group(s) and motivation. Similarly with translation between languages, where the competence of the translator in rendering the meaning requires more than linguistic expertise, but also conceptual and cognitive insight into other cultural patterns of thought and experience and the critical intelligence informing particular disciplines. This reminds us of: the complementary operation of a barrier acting simultaneously and selectively as a filter; as well as: the requirement that meaning already be present in the mind or heart in order that Word may function as disclosing symbol. (The notion of 'disclosure' is useful here.)

Meaning – the ability or facility to elicit or to evoke over-arching correspondences and confluences, or contrasting points of complementarity, bridging separately expressed meaning [discourse, imagery] embedded within distinct cultural matrices – is capable of prompting a *unitary sense of value* or significance wherein each specific culture with its unique manner of discourse and symbol may come to be seen in some degree as simultaneously both a light and a veil. This is not a matter of doctrines or of dogma, for the Christian Trinity remains a stumbling block for Muslims and Jews, while the personal Creator of prophetic monotheism may appear alien to the Ineffable Principle of Buddhism. And even within one religious culture there are varying conceptions of origination: thus Islamic thinkers spoke variously of temporal creation /*khalq* & *ḥudūth*, or of divine fiat (creative imperative: *kalimah* & *amr*), or of timeless existentiation /*ibdā'*, or the continual emanation /*fayḍ* of the Peripatetics (all but the last of these terms are drawn from the Qur'ān).

Rather, tapping the unitary sense is a matter of essence and the congruence flowing from it, grounded above all on the reality that the human species is not only biologically but ontologically one and the same. This reality facilitates the openness of religious texts, imagery and symbols to a *hierarchy of readings* and *seizures of meaning* – in accordance with the *hierarchy of knowers* who plumb their depths and hold them up as lenses through which to apprehend metaphysics, the cosmos, and the horizons within the human soul.   *Knowledge is hierarchical along with gradations of the knowers who seize meanings.*

FINAL REMARKS

Restoration of the imaginal noetic power of symbolic and mythic discourse at the ground of religious language must be guided by the recognition that the qualitative power of words [*Names*] affords a more real and effective mode of insight and meaning for bridging across cultures. What is truly being asked of us is to *learn new languages of the spirit and heart*, to experience fresh thoughts and grasp the knowledge joining our inmost self to the whole and the source.   Therefore, cultural *multi*-lingualism should be one of our means for soliciting the desired *unitary sense of value*. We all must work as *translators* from the limiting cultural constraints given us at birth, into the unutterable fullness of being which is our veritable human birthright. This might be the best work of translation – to render the Self back into its essential meaning. It is certainly a more adequate response to the global conflicts and cognitive chaos that threaten conscious life on earth.

<div align="right">

Name is a veil over Essence
– Muḥammad al-Niffarī (10th cent.)

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NOTES

[1] The purpose of language is to convey meaning, so we shall use Arabic–Islamic terms sparingly in order to spare those unfamiliar with this tradition from confusion. Nevertheless, in terms of transforming inter-cultural misunderstanding, there is a great benefit to be derived from clarifying the key terms and notions of specific cultures, so as to foster apprehending shared meanings. (See our remarks on the utility of *cultural bi-lingualism* below.) However, this clarification has to begin with an *intra*-cultural effort, given that most 'moderns' are now estranged from the deep roots of their own particular intellectual–cultural heritage. Actually, the most pressing concern today may be the dialogue within one culture between its traditional components and its own mode of modernity – this

is certainly true of Islam. Remember: *there is more than one way to be modern.*

² al-Kulaynī, *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, ed. al-Ghaffārī (3ʳᵈ ed., Tehran: 1388) I *kitāb faḍl al-'ilm, bāb isti'māl al-'ilm* p. 44 §2.

³ Consult e.g., Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* (Boulder: Shambala, 1978).

⁴ We intend by *ideology* the secularist socio-political programs deemed rational and scientific, including the varieties of politicized religious-ethno nationalism termed 'fundamentalism'.

⁵ Chittick, *Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul: The Pertinence of Islamic Cosmology in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007) p. 73. He also asserts: "Cosmos and soul are not two separate realities, but two sides of the same coin…" (p. 132).

⁶ Chittick, *Cosmos* pp. 136, 138.

⁷ Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *The Niche of Lights*, tr. D. Buchman (Provo, UT: 1998); and see Hermann Landolt, "Ghazālī and 'Religionswissenschaft': some notes on the *Mishkāt al-Anwār…*," *Asiatische Studien* 45 (1991).

⁸ See in particular: Ibn al-'Arabī, *The Meccan Revelations* vol. I, ed. M. Chodkiewicz, trans. W. C. Chittick & J. W. Morris (New York: Pir Press, 2002) index s.v. *khayāl* ; W. C. Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-'Arabī's Cosmology* (Albany: SUNY, 1998) –The Imaginal *Barzakh* p. 331–370; W. C. Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity* (Albany: SUNY, 1994) p. 67–119; and Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn 'Arabī* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁹ See preceding note; and our contribution to the international syposiuim *Ibn 'Arabi and Modern Era* (Istanbul & Damascus, May 23–28, 2008), "Ibn 'Arabi and Imagination: The Background," forthcoming.

¹⁰ Chittick, *Cosmos*, p. 136.

¹¹ See especially Norman Daniel, *The Cultural Barrier* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1975) for an extended meditation on obstacles to knowing other cultures by a long time observer of Islam. I take this notion of 'filter' from Daniel.

¹² Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture. The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbāsid Society* (*2ⁿᵈ–4ᵗʰ/8ᵗʰ– 10ᵗʰ centuries*), (London & New York: Routledge, 1998). For a survey of the translations, scholars and institutions involved, see Gerhard Endress, "Die wissenschaftliche Literatur" ['Scientific Literature'], in *Grundriss der*

Arabischen Philologie, vol. II: *Literaturwissenschaft*, ed. H. Gätje (Wiesbaden: 1987) §8.1–8.5, pp. 400–506 (esp. pp. 416–31), and *Supplementband* (1992) pp. 3–152; and the ongoing compilation edited by G. Endress & D. Gutas, *A Greek and Arabic Lexicon: material for a dictionary of the mediaeval translations from Greek into Arabic* (Leiden: Brill, 1992-).

[13] "Languages Spoken by More Than 10 Million People", *Microsoft Encarta* 2008. Retrieved June 21, 2008.

[14] Even after Turkish, Azeri, Swahili, Malay /Brunei /Indonesian, and Uyghur switched to Latin script.

[15] Chittick, *Cosmos*, pp. 96–101 for the notion of qualitative *efficacy* of Names; also Paul-A. Hardy, "Epistemology and Divine Discourse," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge University Press, 2008) pp. 288–307, treating al-Ghazālī's important contribution to this theme.

[16] al-Kulaynī, *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, I *k. al-Tawḥīd, bāb al-ma'būd* p. 87 §2. This utterance is also assigned to 'Alī in other sources.

[17] For an approach between psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, see W. E. Lambert (in colloboration with Elizabeth Peal), "The Relation of Bilingualism to Intelligence," in *Language, Psychology and Culture. Essays by Wallace E. Lambert* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972) pp. 111–159. Lambert's work shows "that a person can comfortably become bilingual and bi-cultural, that one's attitudes toward the other group whose language is being learnt play an important role in language acquisition and that such attitudes both affect and are affected by one's motivation to learn the other language… ." (p. xiii).

WHAT REMAINS OF MODERNITY?
PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE IN THE TRANSITION TO A GLOBAL ERA

William Sweet

INTRODUCTION

A view often attributed to many of the major thinkers of the modern period, such as Descartes, Hobbes, and Kant, is that philosophy goes beyond particular cultural or historical or contingent concerns – that it seeks to provide arguments that all rational beings, regardless of their culture or tradition, can recognize as sound, and that it proposes to arrive at certain, universal, timeless and absolute truths. On this 'modern' view, then, while philosophy may emerge from cultures, it seeks to leave cultural specificity behind, and to abstract itself from the particularities of these cultures.

This view of philosophy has been challenged, especially since the early nineteenth century and the development of hermeneutics – and it has come increasingly under fire during the late twentieth century, largely as a result of an increasing global awareness and the recognition of the diversities in ethical practice and in ways of knowing. How conclusive are these challenges to modernity and to 'modern' approaches to philosophy? Is there anything characteristic of modernity that remains in philosophy after the contemporary critique?

In this paper, I wish to focus principally on issues related to this latter question, namely, What, if anything, remains of modernity in philosophical thinking in the global era? To respond to this question, I begin by explaining what it means to say that philosophy emerges from culture. Next, I outline what is generally considered to be the contrary view – one that is allegedly characteristic of 'modernity' – and explain why philosophy's relation to culture has been described as merely incidental and contingent, and as telling us nothing about the philosophical enterprise itself; I give a brief illustration of this view drawn from ethical theory. I then present a critique of this account and give a constructive alternative, taken from the perspective of 'postmodern' thought – showing how one might conclude that philosophy not only emerges from culture but can never separate itself from it. Again, I illustrate this by an example from ethical theory. Finally, I note some criticisms of this postmodern approach, and offer another constructive alternative to both the modern and the postmodern views which allows us to say that philosophy emerges from culture and yet retains many of the characteristics of modern thought – an alternative which has an affinity with philosophical 'idealism.'

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR PHILOSOPHY TO 'EMERGE FROM CULTURE'?

One finds today a thesis that philosophy emerges from culture, and can never free itself from it. This thesis is not universally accepted, but it is nevertheless widely held.

But before one can assess this thesis as a whole, one needs to consider the first part of it – i.e., what it means to say that philosophy emerges from culture – and what evidence we have for thinking so.

I think that this can be understood in a number of ways.[1]

At the most mundane level, one can say that philosophy emerges from culture in the sense that culture is part of, or influences, the material environment in which philosophical questions are raised; for example, culture determines the opportunities for and character of leisure, and it is generally only where people are freed from constant effort to obtain what they need to live that they have leisure time in which philosophy can be done.

One may go further and say that cultures set up the specific sorts of problems and questions that philosophers pursue. For example, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the West – where we have an increasing individualism, where science and technology made traditional forms of labour obsolete, and where there was not simply a search for more resources, but a search to expand markets – we find philosophical enquiries concerning human nature, the rights of the individual, political order, and conceptions of the good.

Perhaps, more controversially, one may say that culture seems to determine, as well, what counts as philosophy (as distinct from literature, science, history, or religion), and how to distinguish philosophy from the religious, scientific, axiological, and literary elements of one's culture. For a number of years, in the West, the writings of figures such as Laozi, Confucius, or Sankara, or the traditions of thought in Asia or Africa or of American aboriginal tribes, were regarded by many as not being philosophy, but matters of religion or 'social practice.' Such an emphasis on the influence of culture has affected how even some western authors are regarded today. There is certainly debate whether Nietzsche or, in our day, Judith Butler, is a philosopher, and opinions may shift over time; Paracelsus (Phillip von Hohenheim; 1493-1541) was regarded as a philosopher in his time, but today almost certainly would not be.

Further, and more concretely, some have argued that culture influences in what 'language' philosophical questions are expressed and answered – and what counts as a satisfactory answer.[2] For example, by establishing norms of reason or emphasising values (such as the value of the individual, the common good, and the good of communities such as the nation, the church, humanity, and the biosphere), a culture provides a 'language' that puts limits on the kinds of philosophical questions that can meaningfully be asked.

And finally, more broadly, some may say further that 'philosophy emerges from culture' in the sense that culture provides – or imposes – the conceptual framework in which philosophical enquiry takes place.

In short, to say that philosophy emerges from culture can mean many different things – and some would say that it means all of the above; that culture determines the very possibility of philosophy.[3]

ARGUMENTS FOR PHILOSOPHY EMERGING FROM CULTURE

What is the evidence for such a view – i.e., that culture determines the very possibility of philosophy? Interestingly, there are several arguments that might lead us to this conclusion, but today the most influential of them come from followers of postmodern hermeneutics. (It is also a claim of philosophical idealism – a point that I will return to, later.)

The argument here is primarily a negative one – that the view of the relation between philosophy and culture that is typical of modernity (though also typical of much of Western philosophy from the time of Plato), and which holds that philosophical work is independent of or transcends culture, is defective. And so, the argument goes, the opposite position must be true – i.e., that philosophy not only emerges from, but can never free itself from, culture.

To see how strong this argument is, a brief survey of the modern view will be helpful.

The Modern View

How do critics of the modern view understand modernity?

Modernity has generally been described as reflecting a number of basic principles.[4]

> 1. It rejects tradition and custom as *a priori* authoritative; everything must be subject to rational criticism.
> 2. It seeks objective truth and knowledge – ideally, absolute, law-like, ahistorical principles that can be known by reason, employing a formal, rational method.
> 3. Modernity is, therefore, rationalist at least in a broad sense, meaning that all reasonable beliefs and claims to knowledge must have 'sufficient evidence' for them. This evidence is, ideally, provided using demonstrative deductive arguments that start from self-evident or indubitable premises. In this sense, it is usually foundationalist in its epistemology.
> 4. It acknowledges that the conditions of knowledge are, in some way, determined by the capacities of the knowing subject; we have, then, a 'turn to the subject,' and epistemology has a priority over metaphysics.

5. This priority of the subject is also reflected in an emphasis on the value of the individual over that of the community.

6. According to Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, modernity sees reason as 'instrumental' – that is, as a tool to be used, not only to understand, but to master or control, the world.[5]

7. Modernity is, however, 'optimistic' – it suggests that knowledge is 'progressive' and 'emancipatory,' and that the knowing subject is (self) perfectible.

As a result, then, contingent matters of tradition or history or culture are not of fundamental importance – at least, not to philosophy.

Broadly construed, philosophical 'modernism' is said to have begun in the early seventeenth century (e.g., around the time of Descartes), and to have had its most complete statement in the work of the eighteenth-century enlightenment philosophers and, principally, Kant. These philosophers rejected having culture or context or tradition play a determining role in knowledge, seeking instead law-like, absolute, foundationalist principles, and ahistorical, timeless, objective truths.

As an illustration here, consider the 'principle based' (deontological) ethics of Kant.[6] Kant, as we know, rejected any ethics based on custom or tradition or past practice, or any external sanction. For there to be a genuine 'moral philosophy,' it must be law-like – that is, it must be *a priori*. Kant's approach is not to look at culture or context or tradition – doing this would be sociology, not philosophy – but to ask what a rational being, reflecting on what one ought to do, would discover and 'assent to.'

His answer, as we know, is 'Law' – something that can be rationally grasped and recognised as true (and obligatory) by all rational beings, not just human beings. Autonomy is simply assenting to or giving this law to oneself.

The moral law which Kant seeks is, *qua* law, objective, universal and absolute – it is *a priori* and without exception. It is 'recognized' and enacted by reason alone – specifically, the reason of each individual agent – hence, it is (though only in this sense) subjective. It does not matter if people like it, agree to it, or not; it does not – indeed, it cannot – depend on an external lawgiver. Neither does morality depend on consequences or results; only on conformity to reason.

It is clear, then, that the moral law is what it is, independent of any contingencies of culture, history, or tradition. Indeed, it is for this reason that it applies to all rational beings *qua* rational beings, and not just to human beings.

The very point of modernism, then is that one had to put all claims of culture, custom and tradition under the light of reason and, if they are found wanting, reject them. Thus, there was no significant relation between philosophy and culture – or, what relation there was, was purely incidental.

Criticism of the Modern View

Critics of the modern approach to philosophy – and those employing a hermeneutical method here have played a key role – have argued that there are several problems with this view:

1. To begin with, these critics challenge the view that there are any absolute, universal, ahistorical, objective truths or principles – or, at the very least, they deny that we could ever know them.

2. There are no neutral, unprejudiced 'subjects' who can make objective judgements, independent of their interests. Indeed, there can be no privileging of the human subject because, really, there are no 'subjects' – and, in any event, there is no reason to prefer the human subject over any other being. In fact, the modern privileging of the subject (anthropocentrism) is itself the source of a wide range of contemporary problems – philosophical, political, social and economic.

3. The modern ideal of rationality is problematic; there is no neutral, formal method of arriving at objective truth. Reason or rationalism is not independent of tradition and culture; it is just another tradition. Empirical observation and history reveal that there are many different models of rationality, each rooted in distinct historical periods and each reflecting different social and cultural conditions —and there is no means of establishing any one as ultimately preferable. In other words, there is no single model of rationality in terms of which one could show that anything is 'true' or can be 'known.' Reason is contextual. As Richard Rorty has argued, there can be no 'grounding' — no 'foundation'— outside of a context or (what Wittgenstein called) a 'form of life'.[7]

4. Epistemological foundationalism is, therefore, arbitrary. Indeed, the principle of foundationalism is not only arbitrary but self-defeating. It is arbitrary because there is no reason for believing that it is true, and there are other, equally plausible models of 'knowledge' that are available. (In fact, few, if any, of our knowledge claims could ever satisfy this standard.) It is self-refuting because it cannot measure up to the standard that it sets – i.e., it is neither derivable from principles we know independently to be true, nor is it self-evident. In short, there is (and there can be) no 'ground' for our common-sense beliefs or knowledge claims.

5. (Therefore) There is no objectivity; there simply are no impartial, objective absolute truths or principles upon which all informed, mature, intellectually competent individuals can or must agree.

6. We cannot know nature or reality as it is 'in itself'; indeed, such an ideal is illusory. Thus, truth cannot be the correspondence of statements to the world (since, at the very least, we can never make sense of such a 'correspondence'). All that we can have are

interpretations of texts or (more broadly) interpretations of experience.

7. There is, therefore, no essence or 'nature' or natural law of anything, including any human nature.

Thus, these critics claim, we need to reject the modern tradition altogether – or, at least, to recognise that modernity (and its accompanying rationalism and dismissive attitude towards culture and tradition) are simply part of another tradition. Philosophy can never be separated from tradition and culture.

But if the modern approach fails, what is the alternative?

Postmodern Views

Some philosophers offer what we may call the 'postmodern' response, which draws extensively on the insights of the hermeneutical movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Postmodernism describes, and even celebrates, the disintegration of the cultural, political, and philosophical views typical of modernity. Philosophers as Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous, Michel Foucault, and Richard Rorty challenge the 'modern' view that there is a community of discourse or an epistemological model that allows for rational and objective knowledge. In the words of another of its principal representatives, Jean-François Lyotard, postmodernism is an "incredulity towards metanarratives"[8] – an incredulity towards the claim that there is or can be 'one story' into which all truth or knowledge can be placed. More specifically, within Anglo-American and German philosophy, postmodernism is considered to be anti-foundationalist, anti-realist, anti-essentialist, highly pluralistic and pragmatist.

What does philosophy look like 'after modernity'? What is its relation to culture? One suggestion is provided by the late Richard Rorty, who proposed a postmodern approach to (modern) philosophy.

In a recent tribute to Rorty by Raymond Geuss – a tribute widely circulated on the Internet[9] – Geuss mentions a pet project of Rorty's. Rorty apparently was long interested in giving an undergraduate course that would be called "An Alternative History of Modern Philosophy," starting with the end of the Middle Ages and proceeding up to the beginning of the twentieth century. It would focus, not on the major canonical figures, but on some of the lesser known – though, from Rorty's perspective, equally or more philosophically powerful – figures.

Rorty may have had a number of reasons for proposing such an 'alternative approach.' But Geuss conjectures that one in particular reflects Rorty's view of the activity of philosophy.[10] Geuss notes that Rorty held that what some people called 'philosophy' at certain times in history, was, at other times, not regarded as philosophy at all. Geuss writes that, according to Rorty:

There is no such thing as a universal set of philosophical questions or issues; Paracelsus wasn't remotely interested in asking or answering questions like those we find "philosophical," still lots of people at the time thought his work a paradigm of what a philosopher should be doing. The assumption here would be that the longer and more deeply one reflected on this fact, the more one would see that "philosophy" at different times and places referred to different clusters of intellectual activities, none of which formed a natural kind and none of which had any "inherent" claim to a monopoly on the "proper" use of the term "philosophy." Doing a history in which Paracelsus figured centrally but not Descartes, could be seen as a part of trying to give a history, not so much of philosophy, as of historically differing conceptions of what philosophy was.[11]

For the 'postmodern' philosopher like Rorty, then, philosophy is clearly a product of culture, and what philosophy is, is also a matter of culture. There is no one model or one approach into which all philosophical knowledge can be placed or to which all philosophical knowledge aspires.

But the position of the postmodernist, such as Rorty, is not just that there is no transhistorical or ahistorical conception of philosophy, or that there are no essences or natures outside of cultures and contexts which philosophy should seek. It is also the case that, if philosophy is contextually determined, then what counts as 'reasonable,' or 'reason,' or 'a good argument,' is also contextually determined; there are no universal standards of rationality. Terms like 'objectivity' and 'true' do not mean what the moderns took them to mean. 'Objectivity' does not mean "corresponding to what there is"[12], but "a property of theories which, having been thoroughly discussed, are chosen by a consensus of rational discussants."[13] 'Truth' is not a correspondence between a statement and reality, but is the product of the widest consensus or agreement within our set of social practices. (Thus, for Rorty, we cannot provide proofs, only explanations and narratives.)

According to Rorty, then, we are fools if we spend our time looking for some neutral, universal conception of reason, or of truth, or of human nature, or essences.

This critique seems to be particularly corrosive of ethical theory.[14] For example, Rorty finds the language of universal human rights at best question begging, and at worst incapable of any clear justification; it is simply an ideological approach that appeals to those, like him, who are liberals living in the West. There is no 'external' justification of rights or argument or proof requiring the equal consideration of others. Instead, Rorty says that we need "sentimental education"[15] – an education of the sentiments – so that people come to see the world less in terms of 'us' and 'them' or, at least, so that they are willing to enlarge the sphere of 'us,' and thus extend their moral communities. The aim of ethics is not to construct a theory of the good or the right, but to promote 'solidarity.' Instead of

seeking argument and proof in ethics, then, we should try to 'awaken' or 'educate' the sentiments. To the extent that we do so, Rorty writes, there is moral progress.

If the postmodern view is correct in its critique of modern philosophy and in its recognition of the place of historicity, context, and interpretation, then the modern claim that philosophy somehow transcends its origins and is not essentially a product of the culture in which it arises, simply fails. This, postmoderns would note, is simply to inject humility and perspective into the juggernaut that the modern view has been. Philosophy emerges from culture. We should henceforth focus on 'philosophies' rather than 'Philosophy,' so that our philosophical investigations will be more modest, but also more respectful, of other cultures and traditions outside our own cultures of origin.

CRITICISMS OF POSTMODERN VIEWS

Is this generic postmodern view plausible? There is of course a great danger in talking of '*the*' postmodern view, since the accounts that one finds in Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, Cixous, Foucault, Rorty and others vary widely indeed. Still, it is fair to say that there are two parts to this approach: its critique of modernity, and its own 'positive' view.

Clearly, postmodern views have their advantages. They draw our attention to problems in modern thought, such as the emphasis on the powers of human reason and the exclusion of any role for the sentiments in knowledge. Moreover, by focusing on particulars rather than universal principles, postmodernism reminds us that certain features of 'reality' have been long marginalized or overlooked (e.g., the experience of non-western cultures, of women, and of propertyless classes). Postmodernists such as Rorty are oriented towards practice and the practical. Moreover, because of its attention to particulars, to difference, and to the marginalized, postmodernism seeks to be open to diversity, whereas modern philosophies – which seem to focus on a totalizing or a reductionist approach – presumably were not.

But postmodernism has been severely and extensively criticized itself. In general, its arguments against modernity have been challenged for being inconclusive, inconsistent, or based on over-generalizations.

Thus when we look at Rorty's views on ethics and human rights, for example, we find that his own positive account seems to be at least as problematic as the views he challenges.

For example, it is certainly true that philosophical demonstrations are far from the most effective tools to address 'front line' (ethical) conflict. But this does not mean that they have no role. And while Rorty's appeal to sentimental education is not without its benefits, it is far from an adequate alternative.

An ethical response cannot be just a feeling that what we are doing is appropriate to the situation; we must believe that we *must do* something

in this situation – and this requires justification, argument, and proof. By itself, nothing follows from 'feeling'; one might show compassion in a particular case, but one might just as well (depending on one's sentiments) show indifference. Besides, the feeling of compassion can be acted out in different ways; some people focus on the immediate needs of the suffering individual, others may try to address what caused the suffering, and so on. And if what is central is *one's own* 'feeling' or sentiment, then how can we call on others to take an ethical position – to be in solidarity? Such a postmodern approach results in emotivism and in ethical confusion.[16]

There also seems to be a deep-rooted inconsistency in Rorty's ethics. Presumably, the aim of sentimental education is to make us *more* aware, not just *differently* aware. If Rorty's 'sentimental education' is indeed an 'education', then there must 'better' and 'worse' ways of understanding the world for which reasons need to be given. Rorty does not, however, seem to recognize this. (And, as we will see below, there is no inconsistency in promoting sentimental education and yet also insisting on giving reasons and proof.)

Though Rorty rejects the charge, there do seem to be grounds for saying that his position is relativistic – and some would hold that postmodernism as a whole is not only relativistic, but, as a result of this, fundamentally conservative, because it can provide no clear argument to challenge cultural norms or the status quo.

The preceding criticisms are, of course, at a very high level of generality, and there have been responses to them. Nevertheless, at the very least, it seems plausible to say that the postmodern approach is problematic. Even if a postmodern philosopher can respond to these criticisms, one might still argue that there are arguments for both modernism and postmodernism; that there are reasons for and against the notion of philosophy as embedded in, and emerging from, culture; and that 'modernism' and 'postmodernism', as philosophical approaches, are on a par.

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW: RECOVERING MODERNITY

Are we, then, at a stalemate?

I would argue that there is another critical approach to modernism that avoids at least some of the challenges to postmodernism and yet retains several of modernism's central principles. In this way, we can speak of philosophy as emerging from culture and never being separate from it and, at the same time, of modernism still having an important place and still being able to make an important contribution in a world where we recognize the pluralistic character of philosophy.

The Model of Critical History

At approximately the same time as hermeneutics was being developed by thinkers such as Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Alexander von

Humboldt (1769–1859), and Friedrich Ast (1778-1841), we find significant critical reflection on history by British 'idealist' philosophers. For example, in his *Presuppositions of Critical History* (1874), F.H. Bradley (1846-1924) raised a number of fundamental questions about history and the role of the historian. No doubt influenced by German Biblical scholarship and criticism (and perhaps, indirectly, by Biblical hermeneutics), Bradley argued that (historical) texts do not stand on their own, but must be interpreted and evaluated from the perspective of the historian. History, then, must be 'critical' – it cannot pretend just to seek to provide a 'copy' or 'mirror' of what happened in the past. The historian must select from the available data and, in the process, must also be aware of the presuppositions of the approach she or he brings to the selection process or historical enquiry. Bradley argued that it is the historian – and the historian's judgement — that is the basis for history; "The historian ... is the real criterion."[17] Bradley does not deny that there are facts; he simply rejects the view that these facts exist independently of the historian and are there for scholars just to 'collect' and repeat. While Bradley's position is not (narrowly) historicist, it recognises the importance of understanding historical events within their contexts, and that the historian is engaging in a normative, and not just a descriptive, activity.

Bradley's contemporary, Bernard Bosanquet (1848-1923) took an even more cautious and sceptical view. When confronted with 'mechanistic' accounts of history or accounts that emphasized the fundamental role of "great individuals," Bosanquet was struck by their "fragmentary" and dead quality. He was suspicious of any history *qua* narrative or *qua* chronicle of the contingent events of the past, which proposed to give a "total explanation"[18] — and he was also suspicious of the view of the historian as one who provides an explanation of "the minds and natures of great men as if he was God's spy."[19]

We see this 'critical' approach to history in R.G. Collingwood (1889–1943) as well. Influenced by Bradley[20], Benedetto Croce[21] (though he rejected many of Croce's views[22]) and, later in life, by Wilhelm Dilthey, Collingwood is best known for his *The Idea of History* (posthumously published in 1946). Here, Collingwood develops some of the insights of the idealist tradition by insisting that historians focus on thought – that is, on what was going through the minds of the historical actors at the time. Collingwood argued that "All history is the history of thought ... and therefore all history, is the re-enactment of past thought in the historian's own mind"[23]; "the scientific historian … reenacts the evidence making the thoughts of his subject [i.e., the historical actor] his own"[24] and, thereby, comes not merely to understand the reasons for, but knows, what happened. Collingwood also argued for a closer relation between history and philosophy than was generally held, and insisted that philosophy must understand itself as a historical discipline. Philosophy's task was to articulate the 'absolute presuppositions' characteristic of each age or way of

thinking, and the truth and falsity of philosophical claims can and must be determined only be understanding them in their original context.

Collingwood provides another important methodological insight – claiming that philosophy rests on a "logic of question and answer."[25] (It is interesting that Hans-Georg Gadamer sees a link between Collingwood's view and Gadamer's own logic of question and answer, which he develops in *Wahrheit und Methode* [*Truth and Method*].[26]) Thus, in order to understand what exactly a philosopher said or meant, we need to see the question that she or he sought to answer. Collingwood writes that "Every statement that anybody ever makes is made in answer to a question"[27], and that "In order to find out [a philosopher's] meaning you must also know what the question was . . . to which the thing he [or she] has said or written was meant as an answer."[28] (This also suggests that genuine disagreement may be less common that we might think, for "two propositions do not contradict each other unless they are answers to the same question."[29]) Collingwood's method is, in a sense, backward looking (and hence reflects a kind of hermeneutics), but it is also forward looking, for it provides a way of pursuing future enquiries on a topic. And this, together with the theory of re-enactment, shows us the importance and the role of context and culture in historical knowledge that is nevertheless consistent with a rejection of relativism, subjectivism, and historicism.[30]

I have outlined here what has been called "critical history," but this approach is not idiosyncratic or *sui generis*, and it is particularly congenial with doing the history of philosophy. With elements of both empiricism and rationalism, and of both objectivity and subjectivity, this "critical" view is also quite 'modern.' Yet it anticipates and addresses many of the criticisms later raised by postmodernists against modernism.

Lessons from Critical History

How does the preceding model of critical history help to see the place of modernity in contemporary philosophy?

In the first instance, this model recognises that certain elements of modernism are problematic. It rejects attempts to understand history – and, in light of Collingwood's remarks on the relation of philosophy to history, philosophy – in abstraction from specific, concrete concerns; historical truth is not 'out there' in the world, waiting to be discovered by the scholar. Critical history insists on knowing the particular situation and understanding the underlying issues in order to make sense of historical and philosophical claims. It is, like many postmodern views, an approach that is sensitive to context – taking account of the perspective of the person carrying out the investigation, and the situation in which it is being carried out. The logic (or 'dialectic') of question and answer is based upon just this insight.

But there is more to critical history than this. While it does not see tradition and custom as providing a 'last word,' critical history does hold

that they provide essential insights, and it sees them as containing truths that need to be recognized in arriving at a more complete account of an event.

Critical history would certainly challenge the 'foundationalist' model of reason and argument – that knowledge can be had only by starting from self-evident or indubitable premises and using deductive modes of argument. Hence, its employment of 'question and answer' and re-enactment. It also sees investigation and analysis as collective processes – as social practices. Thus, it would reject the view that, in our knowledge of the world or of what is of value, the individual historian – or his or her subject – is central. Proponents of critical history challenge modern tendencies to individualism and atomism. In these ways, then, a critical history – and, by extension, a critical philosophy – would call into question some of the key assumptions of modernism.

Yet a theory of critical history satisfies many of the principles of modernism.

Critical history holds that there is objective truth and knowledge – though it may be more of a challenge to arrive at them than many moderns have assumed. It is through the model of 're-enactment' and the method of 'question and answer' that critical history enables one to reach truth. Consequently, in critical history, the historian looks at the particulars and attempts to rethink the thoughts of the historical actors – and, by doing so, achieves a (more comprehensive) view of reality.

Thus, while critical history is attentive to context and contingency, and is aware of the role of the particular interests of the historian, it is not obviously historicist (as postmodern views tend to be), for it does not reduce truth claims to statements about what is true '*in* a context.' Indeed, while there is no single method across the disciplines that can be used to arrive at objective truth, critical history does hold that there are arguments whose validity is not limited to the cultures, traditions and practices in which they first arise. There can be absolute, universal truths – but the critical historian (and the critical philosopher) recognise that these are not easily reached and, indeed, can only be reached once we have a comprehensive grasp of reality. And, underlying its method, there is a commitment to reason, coherence, evidence, and argument, and to the claim that there are truths that all *should* see, even if some *do* not.

There is an important place for the subject in this view – though, again, it is reducible neither to the purely modern view nor to a postmodern view. Instead, it is a view that sees individuals as ultimately intelligible only when in relation to other individuals – i.e., when seen as being what some have called 'the concrete universal.'

Finally, this view is broadly optimistic. Admittedly, it does not claim that history is essentially and inevitably progressive from moment to moment, and it rejects the view that individuals can be passive and unengaged in the world, comfortable in the knowledge that all will gradually, and inevitably, improve. Nevertheless, it does hold that, overall, there is progress, and that the elimination of incompleteness or conflict in

ideas leads increasingly to a more rational conception – and development – of the world.

The approach adopted by critical history – one which we may describe as a broadly idealist approach – acknowledges that modernity fails in certain respects. But idealism also affirms that these failures are just what we should expect – that coherence and consistency are goals to be achieved, not simply features of the world as it is. The solution to this incoherence and inconsistency, so to speak, is not to abandon the modern view, but to recover it by addressing its tensions and contradictions, thereby arriving at a more comprehensive and complete understanding of the world that reflects unity amid diversity. For such a result to be attained, then, there needs to be a recognition of diversity and cultures, and a recognition that philosophy itself is a product of culture that can, in turn, inform and challenge culture.

What would this approach imply, for example, for ethics? How could an ethics retain characteristics of modernism and yet also be seen as emerging from, and being dependent on, culture?

Consider the view of the idealist, Bosanquet. Bosanquet – like many of the British idealists, though not all – wrote little on ethical theory, focusing more on questions of practical ethics and particularly on questions of social and public policy and of education. Bosanquet held that what was needed most in the contemporary world was concrete moral action – i.e., practice and conduct that focussed on specific moral, social, cultural, and political issues – and the development of the moral character of the individual moral agent. Thus, he emphasised moral training and education, and he repeatedly wrote on and spoke of the importance of 'being adequate to the situation.'[31] He would have had little hesitation in endorsing a kind of sentimental education, for feelings as well as reason are relevant to moral action. As Bosanquet's teacher Edward Caird wrote: "if, in order that reason may rule, all such impulses have to be driven out, reason will rule in an empty house."[32]

Yet Bosanquet did not reject moral theory – he simply recognised that its place was not to address concrete issues directly and immediately. And while Bosanquet, in his applied philosophy, focussed on the specifics of situations, he in no way rejected moral objectivism. Underlying his views on moral education and moral action, Bosanquet held that there is a moral theory which focuses on human flourishing, and which has both deontological and teleological elements. It has, moreover, basic principles concerning human nature, for culture and tradition, the value of the individual and its ends, the existence of a common good, a recognition of the role of reason, and criteria for moral progress. He acknowledged, however, that our knowledge of such principles is, as it were, in progress. These principles were manifest in traditions and culture and, hence, one *ought* to be aware of them; indeed, Bosanquet insisted that tradition and culture often serve as important indicators of these principles at the various stages of moral development.

Like the modern philosophers, then, Bosanquet held that there were moral principles and proof of them – that moral action was rational action and that what is right or good is something that all rational beings can come to recognise. But Bosanquet would not claim that any particular articulation of a (moral) 'law' could be absolute and applied to all rational beings at all times. Again, the value of the individual was not to be found in that being as distinct and separate from others, but through – though not necessarily in – one's relations to them.

Like postmodern philosophers, then, Bosanquet had an expansive view concerning what is relevant to and appropriate in ethics, and he was critical of abstract models of how people should act. Moreover, our standards of rationality, argument, and proof clearly reflect our histories and cultures; not surprisingly, then, he was also critical of a correspondence theory of truth and of justification. We can also find in his work reasons for why we should enlarge our moral communities and why we should 'awaken' and educate the sentiments.

Unlike the postmoderns, however, Bosanquet would insist on the existence of standards of rationality and on a robust account of objectivity and truth, and hold that there are proofs and principles in ethics – and, of course, in epistemology and metaphysics – that are more than consensus. He admits that, when it comes to ethics, proofs – i.e., moral theory – cannot settle many concrete moral conflicts; one cannot stop evil just by arguing against it. Nevertheless, if one is going to try to stop evil, one needs to know what the nature and goal and purpose of morality is, and why it is important.[33]

Bosanquet held that one can, in short, adopt many of the principles of modernism as goals to be achieved while, at the same time, recognise that much needs to be done to realise them, and that, in the meantime, we can rightly be 'satisfied' with less.

The preceding model – which I have called the model of critical history – has had its critics. Nevertheless, it acknowledges the challenges to modernism – especially the relation of philosophy to culture and tradition – while, at the same time, recognises the positive elements in it. It reminds us, then, that modernism has features that are necessary for any view – even the postmodern view – to be plausible, and it shows us how modernity has a place as we negotiate the transition to a global era.

CONCLUSION

In a world in which there is an increasing global awareness, as well as a growing recognition of different ways of knowing and ways of living, the paradigmatic 'modern' approaches to philosophy no longer seem appropriate to the task. There is, moreover, good reason to believe that philosophy emerges from culture – that philosophy's relation to culture is not a merely incidental and contingent matter. The culture or tradition from which we come tells us about both the meaning of the questions that we

raise and seek to answer, and the methods or ways in which we seek to answer them.

Does anything, then, remain of modernity in the transition to a global era? I have claimed that a critique of modernity does not entail the validity of 'postmodern' approaches – for example, that while each philosophy emerges from a particular culture, it can never separate itself from it, and that there is no objectivity or truth. To show this, I have drawn on some of the insights characteristic of critical history and, more broadly, of late nineteenth century British idealism. Such a view challenges some of the key theses of modernity while, at the same time, embraces others. Thus, philosophy can be recognised as emerging from culture and yet, because of the possibility of going beyond the particular and local, can seek to satisfy some of the goals of modernity. In the current transition to a global era, such a model of philosophy may well provide a way of allowing us to draw on the resources provided by various cultures and traditions while, at the same time, giving assurance that all cultures can and ought to form a common cause. Only in so doing will humanity be adequately prepared to address the many challenges arising in an increasingly pluralistic world.

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NOTES

[1] For more on this, see "Culture and Pluralism in Philosophy," my Introduction to *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism* (Aylmer, QC: Editions du scribe, 2002), especially pp. x-xii.

[2] Some would insist, for example, that political philosophy in the United States frequently reflects assumptions and principles that are virtually uniquely American.

[3] Of course, such claims about how philosophy emerges from and is affected by culture are quite consistent with claims about how philosophy affects *culture*. For a discussion of this, see my *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism*, pp. viii-ix.

[4] What follows is a generic view of what 'modernity' has been commonly understood to involve. It does not claim that all modern philosophers – or, indeed, any – held all of these principles, although the more of them one adopts, the more plausibly one is what many call a 'modern.'

[5] See their *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* [1944], tr. John Cumming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

[6] Another modern (enlightenment) theory which is alleged to be paradigmatically rationalistic is the natural law theory of John Locke. Locke writes: "The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges

every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it …" *Two Treatises of Government*, Second Treatise, section 6.

[7] See Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979). See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, section 19: "To imagine a language means to imagine a form of life."

[8] Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Minuit, 1979) [*The Postmodern Condition*, tr. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. xxiv].

[9] Raymond Geuss, "Richard Rorty at Princeton: Personal Recollections," *Arion,* 15 (2008); internet text at http://www.bu.edu/arion/Geuss.htm

[10] For more on this point, Geuss refers us to Rorty's 1984 paper, "The Historiography of Philosophy" [in *Philosophy in History: Essays in the Historiography of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984)].

[11] Geuss, "Richard Rorty at Princeton: Personal Recollections."

[12] Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, p. 339.

[13] Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, p. 338.

[14] In his 1981 *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press), Alasdair MacIntyre draws on some of this criticism: he writes that a demand for proof in ethics is odd, if not impossible; that modern ethics combines many cultural traditions and norms – and leads to relativism or emotivism or skepticism; and proposes that we should focus on moral practices, the traditions in which they appear, and on people of practical wisdom. (This is the basis for MacIntyre's 'resurrection' of Aristotelian 'virtue ethics.')

[15] Rorty, "Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality," in *On Human Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures*, ed. S. Shute and S. Hurley (New York: Basic Books, 1993), pp. 111-134. See also Rorty's "Solidarity or Objectivity," in his *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 21-34.

[16] For a development of this criticism, see my "Solidarity and Human Rights," in *Philosophical Theory and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights*, ed. William Sweet (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2003), pp. 213-231.

[17] F.H. Bradley, *The Presuppositions of Critical History,* ed. with introduction and commentary by Lionel Rubinoff (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), p. 78.

[18] See Bernard Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value* (London, Macmillan, 1912). While Bosanquet was somewhat skeptical of the discipline of history – that history was "the doubtful story of successive events [which] cannot amalgamate with the complete interpretation of social mind, of art, or of religion" (p. 79) – his objection was not that history could not be done. It was that histories – when they are understood simply as a series of contingent events in a narrative – ignore the general; they are not a concrete universal. And so Bosanquet proposes that, rather than concern ourselves with histories that focus on listing events, we turn to art and religion, which bring together the particular and the general. Thus, he could write a history of aesthetic – of the development of aesthetic consciousness in and through particular works of art – without being interested in a history of art itself.

[19] Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 79.

[20] Bradley's view, R.G. Collingwood later wrote, was a "Copernican revolution in the theory of historical knowledge." See Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 240.

[21] Croce, *Teoria e stòria della storiografia* (*Theory and History of Historiography*), tr. Douglas Ainslie (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1921).

[22] See "Croce's Philosophy of History," *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 19 (1921), pp. 263-278.

[23] Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, p. 215.

[24] David Boucher, "The Significance of R. G. Collingwood's 'Principles of History'," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (1997), pp. 309-330, at p. 326.

[25] Collingwood, *The New Leviathan or Man, Society, Civilization, and Barbarism* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1942), p. 74.

[26] *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzuge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Tubingen: JCB Mohr Verlag [Paul Siebeck], 1960); See the English translation, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 333.

[27] Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 23.

[28] Collingwood, *Autobiography*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), p. 31.

[29] Collingwood, *Autobiography*, p. 33

[30] For claims that Collingwood is adopting a form, of historicism, see Leo Strauss, "On Collingwood's Philosophy of History," *Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 5 (1952), pp. 559-586; Louis O. Mink, "Collingwood's Historicism: A

Dialectic of Process," and "Collingwood's Dialectic of History," in Louis O. Mink, *Historical Understanding*, ed. Brian Fay, Eugene O. Golob, and Richard T. Vann (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 223-45, 246-85.

[31] See Bernard Bosanquet, *Some Suggestions in Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1918), p. 146.

[32] See Edward Caird, *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers,* 2 vols. (Glasgow: J. MacLehose, 1904), Vol. 2, p. 125. (Caird is here discussing Stoicism, in comparison with Kantian ethics.)

[33] For a more extensive discussion here, see my "Social Policy and Bosanquet's Moral Philosophy," in *Collingwood Studies*, Vol. VI (1999), pp. 127-146.

RETHINKING PHILOSOPHY IN AN ORIENTAL WAY

Gholamreza Aavani

The theme "Rethinking Philosophy" is of utmost importance, because it concerns directly or indirectly the destiny of philosophy itself and consequently the destiny of humankind, particularly at this present critical juncture.

"Rethinking" is embedded and inherent in the very nature of philosophy if it is not to turn into a fragile and stereotyped dogma. But the way or the method of rethinking is particularly important. As a matter of fact, it is all that matters. So the all important question is: How should we rethink philosophy? My solution is that we can rethink philosophy in an oriental way. In my view, this is the only way, or at least, the best way that can save us from the blind alley that Western philosophy is confronted with and which as philosophy the West has always ignored.

It is almost a platitude to say that philosophy is a Greek term meaning the love of Sophia or Wisdom. But the etymological derivation of this word has come to signify that philosophy is Greek, not only in nomenclature, but also by birthright. This is what most books on the history of western philosophy inculcate. The idea perhaps might be traced back to Aristotle, who sought the origin of every philosophical issue in his Greek predecessors, whom he considered as crude and presumptuous *physilogoi* and estimated himself as the culmination of the philosophical enterprise in his days. Non-Greeks or Berbers were moreover regarded as below the dignity of being considered as philosophers. This has been more or less the attitude of Westerners with regard to philosophy, at least in academic philosophical circles. Hegel, the father of modem philosophical historiography and the analogue of Aristotle in our age, could be quoted as an example. Surveying the whole gamut and vista of philosophy over the millennia in the eastern lands, whether China, India or Persia, he was not able to spot a single philosopher, even of a diminutive stature.

The Islamic civilization was the intellectual heir of Greek culture and civilization. In an unprecedented translation movement, nearly all the great Greek philosophical and scientific works, together with all their major commentaries, were translated into Arabic mainly in a famous institution called Baytal Hikmah or 'the House of Wisdom'. To give but one single instance of the extent of this translation movement, suffice it here to mention that all the works of Aristotle (with the possible exception of the *Politics*) were translated into Arabic for the first time, and Muslims, in possession of this vast intellectual treasury, together with the cultural and intellectual bequest of other civilizations, started to rethink philosophy in a fresh way. They did not take the philosophical presuppositions of Greek philosophers for granted or as self-evident. Rethinking Greek philosophy

profoundly, they came out with new solutions to which we allude for exemplification to certain instances.

Avicenna (980-1037 CE), one of the great Muslim sage-philosophers – unlike Averroes, known in the Latin West and also by Dante in his *Divine Comedy* as "the Commentator" – did not consider Aristotle as the culmination and the last word in philosophy, although he paid deep respect to him. He envisaged an alternative system of philosophy, one other than the Aristotelian, while he was composing his magnum opus *Kitab ash-shifa* (translated into Latin as *Sufficientia*) at the age of forty. In the prologue of this book, Avicenna makes it clear that he has compiled this work according to the principles laid down in Peripatetic philosophy. But at the same time he mentions that he has expounded philosophy

> in a manner more consonant with human nature and as dictated by my express judgment, in which I have not taken into consideration the views of my partners in this art (i.e., Peripatetic philosophers). Unlike my other books, I have not been afraid to oppose them. I mean the book I have written entitled "the oriental philosophy". As to the present book, it is more detailed and elaborate and I have tried to corroborate the views of my partners in Peripatetic philosophy. But he who desires to know the truth without any taint and blemish should consult my other book.

From Avicenna's statement, it is evident that he had already, in his maturity, devised another framework for philosophy which he had designated as "Oriental Philosophy," and had complied a work under the said appellation. The book is no longer extant but, fortunately, the first part of the book (which comprises the introduction) has been recently recovered and published. In the introduction, again Avicenna complains about the bigotry of those who study philosophy with the eye of fanaticism, desire, habit, and attachment. He has no hesitation to divulge his differences with the people instructed in Greek books: "We have no fear if we reveal to the philosophers something other than what we have written for the common people – the common people who have been enamored of the Peripatetic philosophy and who think that no one has enjoyed the Divine Mercy except them."

Of course, Avicenna admits that Aristotle had discovered many things that his teachers and predecessors did not know: he distinguished between various sciences, he arranged sciences in a better manner than before, he discovered the truth of many subjects – he was superior to those who came before him; but those who came after him should have brought to order the confusion in his thought, and should have mended whatever cracks they found in his structure. Those who came after him could not, however, transcend what they had inherited from him. "Bigotry over whatever he had not found became a shield, so that they remained bound to

the past and found no opportunity to make use of their intellects". Avicenna again stresses the point that:

> And often we gained knowledge from non-Greek sources. . .. Under these conditions we longed to write a book containing the important aspects of real knowledge. Only the person who has thought much, has meditated deeply and is not devoid of the excellence of intellectual intuition can make deductions from it. We have composed this book for ourselves that is for those who are like ourselves. As for the commoners who have to do with philosophy, we have provided in the Kitab al-Shifa more than they need ... soon in the supplement we shall present whatever is suitable for them beyond that which they have seen up to this time. And in all conditions we seek the assistance of the Unique God.

Fantastic guesswork has been done by good orientalists who were not as good philosophers about identifying the nature and substance of Avicenna's "Oriental Philosophy". L. Gauthier, identifies it with *Tassawuf* (Sufism) which he calls "la tendance mystique de l'orient". A.M. Goichon identifies it with the medical school of Gundishapur and its connection with experimental tendencies. L. Gardet considers it a more Pythagorean Platonic, Plotinian and less Aristotleian strand in Avicenna's philosophy. Pines, more justly pinpoints the arbitration of Avicenna between the oriental and occidental philosophers in his non-extant work *Kitab al-Insaf* (*The Book of Equitable Arbitration*), which was pillaged among other works of Avicenna during the sack of Isfahan by the Ghaznavid emperor Mahmud, and which concerned adjudication regarding thousands of philosophical issues at odds between orientals and the occidentals.

Henry Corbin and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, more aptly consider the word "Oriental" to be a symbolic term signifying the realm of light rather than just a geographical designation. The orient (*Sharq*) symbolically alludes, and is etymologically related, to *Ishraq* (illumination) and hence signifies "the orient of light". It means a fleeing away from the prison of sense and matter, of the journeying toward the realm of the spirit and the Divine. A close study of the later works of Avicenna corroborates this view and reveals that "oriental philosophy" is not a ratiocinative, abstract thinking, but it is more bolstered by a sort of enlightenment, unveiling or intellectual intuition, akin to what we find in Eastern traditions.

A more glorious instance is Suhrawardi (1153-1191 CE), the founder of the famous school of Illumination (Hikmah al-Ishraq) which, as we said, is symbolically connected with the east or the orient of light, just as the West, where the sun sets, is symbol of spiritual darkness. Suhrawardi has written many works and treatises in which he has expounded both the essentials and the details of the oriental philosophy both in Arabic and in Persian, his mother tongue. His most famous book in oriental philosophy is *The Philosophy of Illumination* (*Hikmah al-Ishraq*), which can also be

rendered as *The Philosophy of Orientals*, which might be considered a continuation and the culmination of Avicenna's "oriental philosophy". Here we shall point out some of the most essential features of the illuminationist school of Suhrawardi as laid down in his *Hikmah al-Ishraq*. The first point to be mentioned with regard to Suhrewardi's conception of *Hikmah* (translated as 'philosophy,' but also meaning 'sagacity' and 'wisdom,' and equivalent of the Greek 'Sophia') is that it surpasses the bounds of apace and time. As against the Aristotelian conception, it is neither Eastern nor Western. Each seeker after truth has a share in the Divine light which is *Hikmah*. Everyone who exerts himself to attain it, shall have a taste of it. It is not the monopoly of a single race, nation or community, otherwise the gate of the Divine Mercy would be closed. God, the bestower of knowledge and wisdom is not so stingy as to deprive certain people of His eternal bounty. The worst age is the one in which "the itinerary of thoughts has been cut off and the gate of revelations has been closed."

Suhrawardi again has a new theory with regard to the development of the history of philosophy which itself reveals another aspect of his *Ishraqi* (illuminationist) wisdom. Philosophy was revealed by God to mankind through the prophet Hermes (identified with the prophet Enoch in Judaism and Christianity and with the prophet Idris in Islam). This wisdom was then divided into two branches: one going to Persia and the East and the other was bequeathed to Egypt and thence to the Greece and the West. These two sources – that is the East and the West exemplified by Greece and Persia – finally merged together in the Islamic philosophy. Among the Western sages he mentions Hermes, Agathedemon (Seth), Asclepius, Pythagoras, some of the pre-Socratics, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Among the Eastern sages he names certain Persian priest-kings such as Kayumarth, Furaydun, Kai Khusraw, and, strangely enough, the Buddha. Among the Muslim sages he classifies the well-known philosophers such as Farabi and Avicenna who occupy a secondary rank compared to such great mystics as Bayazid Bastami, Hallaj, Junayd and Abu Sahl Tustari.

A second feature of illuminationist philosophy is its emphasis on symbolism. The truth cannot be conveyed except through signs and symbols (*ramz*). Symbolism is the language of being itself. *Ramz* can also be construed as an allusion. "The procedure of the master of philosophy and the Imam of wisdom, the Divine Plato, was the same and the sages who preceded him like Hermes, the father of philosophy, followed the same path. Since the sages of the past, because of the ignorance of the masses expressed their sayings in secret symbols and the refutations made against them have concerned the exterior of these sayings, not their real intentions."

Suhrawardi vehemently reprimands Aristotle for not comprehending the real significance of these symbols and for having reduced them to their literal and outward meaning.

A third feature of illuminationist philosophy is the construal of being as light. According to Suhrawardi, all reality is nothing but light

which possesses various degrees of intensity. It needs no definition, for to define is to explicate the less evident by the more evident and nothing is more evident than light. "light is evident by itself and by manifesting makes every thing evident". Needless to say the ontology of light is a true phenomenology and evades such abstract concepts as the secondary intelligibles. According to Suhrawardi, the phenomenology of light had been at the core of the sacred doctrines of the ancient sages.

Another main feature of Suhrawardi's oriental philosophy is that it has vertical and longitudinal rather than horizontal and latitudinal dimensions. In other words, it is hierarchical in the sense that some kinds of philosophy are superior in worth and dignity than others. The best kind of philosophy is the one based on direct intellectual intuition or sapiential wisdom based on the formal training of the soul. It is founded on direct intellectual vision, contemplation and spiritual illumination; hence it cannot be destroyed by the doubts of skeptics.

Following Plato, he calls this sapiential wisdom *theosis* (*Ta'alluh*) and the possessor of such wisdom a theosopher (*Hakim muta'lliha*), He, moreover, includes all the eastern sages and most of the Presocratics in this category, but also the semimythical ancient Persian kings such as Jamasp, Farshaushtar, Buzurgmehr and others. But strangely enough his list comprises all the great sufi saints of Islam which means that for Suhrawardi authentic Sufism, which is based on direct intellectual vision of reality and on purification of the soul and ultimate illumination and union, is a pure oriental metaphysics.

Next in the hierarchy of philosophers are the adherents of Peripatetic philosophy. Peripateticism is a kind of discursive philosophy, based on ratiocination and conceptual abstraction and on deductive inference. It is not based on direct intellectual vision. The master of this kind of discursive philosophy is Aristotle, and his followers in Islam Farabi and Avicenna. Suhrawardi blames Aristotle for having reduced the sapiential *theosis* of his master Plato to pure ratiocination and discursive philosophy. For Suhrawardi, the philosopher *par excellence* is Plato who has merged into a unique synthesis both the intuitive and the discursive philosophy. He claims that he has done the same synthesis in Islamic philosophy.

This latter distinction between the intuitive (à la Suhrawardi) and the discursive is very significant for rethinking philosophy in an oriental manner. The sapiential wisdom is not based on ratiocination and conceptualization alone, but it is primarily based on spiritual realization, direct inner intellectual disclosure. If philosophy is the search after truth, it should ultimately end in the realization of the truth – and that is what is underlined in all traditional schools of oriental philosophy. But we should at the same time bear in mind that, for Suhrawardi, this "oriental" philosophy does not merely have geographical significance. We should not forget that Plato for him was the master of oriental philosophy.

If Aristotle and Hegel deprived the non-Greeks and Easterners from

having tasted the flavor of philosophy, this would mean that they have had a very narrow conception of philosophy and have reduced philosophy to its discursive connotation. But if we take the sapiential philosophy based on direct intellectual intuition and spiritual illumination and the science of realization, then we can see all its luminaries in the East: in China, in India, in Japan, in Korea, in Persia. But if we take philosophy in the pure deductive, syllogistic, discursive and ratiocinative sense, then we could say it started in Greece and continued in its cultural inheritor, that is Europe. Discursive philosophy, if not bolstered by the sapiential wisdom, will end in skepticism. Moreover knowledge of the deeper realities, such as knowledge of the Self, of the ultimate reality, knowledge of the universal principles, of the Absolute, of the Atma, is only possible through sapiential wisdom; Discursive philosophy only roams far aroud them, but is never able to attain.

Islamic philosophy continued the path delineated by Suhrawardi, and its illustrious career could boast of such great sage philosophers as Mulla Sadra, whose philosophical system called *al-Hikmah-aIMuta 'aliyah* was the culmination of the unique synthesis between the ratiocinative and sapiential philosophy.

The lesson which Suhrawardi has to teach us is a total revision in our conception of philosophy. The history of philosophy in the West has been a gradual distancing from the sapiential wisdom even in its Greek phase. We see this decline even in one generation and its total denigration by the Sophists. One might see certain glimpses of philosophy in the medieval sages, but had Suhrawardi been alive to see the flourishing of modem philosophy, he would have seen the correctness of his hypothesis that philosophy not propped by sapiential wisdom would end in skepticism and in nihilism. He would have seen most of the great achievements of modem philosophy as trivial, not being based on the search and the realization of the truth.

We saw Suhrawardi mentioning the Buddha among the great sages of oriental wisdom. Had he lived longer – he was martyred at the age of 37 – to study the Indian and Chinese classics such as the Upanishads and the Tao Te Ching, he would again have been much amazed at the depth, plenitude and richness of their sapiential wisdom and he would be more confirmed in his hypothesis that true sapiential wisdom has been and – if not harassed by the torrential skepticism of the West – is still oriental.

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ORDINARY LANGUAGE ANALYSIS AND AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY: SOME COMMENTS ON METHOD

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The systematic analysis of ordinary, everyday language use in culture can significantly consolidate and enlarge philosophical traditions. This is universalizable to all cultures of the world; it is not applicable to just "non-Western, particularly, African cultures."[1]

Since language is acknowledged as a vehicle of culture, and philosophy is definable as the systematic critique of cultures, the analysis of language use in a culture will provide a philosophically valuable means of examining the wisdom and life of the people in that culture. It will also make it possible to describe a distinctive philosophical tradition for that culture, especially where it is a 'traditional' culture. This is moreso when it is realized that a people's languages, beliefs, practices and institutions are invariably intertwined into what is known as their culture (that is, their comprehensive design for living).

There is no doubt, therefore, that through a systematic analysis of a people's language, we may come to have a critical understanding of their culture. However, there is a strong need to be cautious in using this method as it could be inappropriately employed in specific contexts. The comments in this paper are not on the method in itself, but on its operational prospects and difficulties in particular cultures, using the Yorùbá culture as an example. The main objective of this paper is to clear some of the obstacles in the way of an optimally productive use of Barry Hallen's proposed linguistic approach, and indicate – as he himself proposes – a line of future research.[2]

In *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft* and in *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautifu*l,[3] Barry Hallen's consistent interest is in 'intercultural studies', especially intercultural translation[4]. Hence, he makes a concerted effort to find a pattern for making a distinction between 'mò' and 'gbàgbó' in Yorùbá language discourse along the lines of a distinction between 'know' and 'believe' in English language discourse.[5] In this, and in many other issues, the contributions of Hallen are immensely valuable. It is in view of these contributions that Hallen, though an American citizen, is an eminent African philosopher, in the strictest sense of that label.[6]

Hallen has, also consistently, sought to use the phenomenological approach in the philosophical study of the Yorùbá culture[7]. The 'ordinary language' method, which he has used in the two works cited above, is a species of the phenomenological approach. It is important, however, to recall that Anglophone 'ordinary language' philosophers have always had a vast repertoire of centuries-old theories of professional academic (and practical) philosophers as well as long traditions of commentaries on those theories and philosophers against and within which they sought to practice

their kind of analysis. The problems and issues considered philosophically significant in Anglophone cultures have been extensively mapped out and discussed from various perspectives over several centuries. There was therefore never a need for any of the analysts to go outside the universe of academic philosophy for generating problems or distinctions to treat. Also, the Anglophone 'ordinary language' philosophers never needed to consult an 'established translation manual' ('etm')[8] or some alleged 'sages'[9] of the cultures that they chose to analyse. Rather, they depended on their personal mastery of the English language and individual analytical competence, such as "Austin's elevated insights into the nature of certain forms of expression" in the English language.[10] This was not what Hallen did or could have done with respect to the materials for analysis in the Yorùbá language culture.

Given the nascence of academic Yoruba philosophy, Hallen could not have had the luxury of an armchair or 'on-campus' conceptual analyst in his application of the analytic method to Yorùbá concepts. Hence, he had to go the extra phenomenological length to interrogate the culture in order to discover some of what it contains. Hallen chose the '*oníṣègùn*' as his point of cultural interrogation on the concepts of knowledge and value in Yorùbá culture. This choice constitutes a major part of the operational issues about which to be cautious.

If Hallen were to undertake a similar study on the concepts of knowledge and value in English language culture, he will certainly not make the medical professionals (as he did with the '*oníṣègùn*' – Yorùbá traditional healers, "'masters of medicine', herbalists, or (today) alternative medical doctors"[11] his target group or primary (nay, sole) source of information about the *ordinary* uses of those concepts. It is also noteworthy that Austin and other English ordinary language philosophers did not have recourse to interpreters or translators in their analysis of philosophical concepts in *ordinary* English usage. Similarly, they did not have to go to some illiterate English-speaking villagers to learn how words were used, or were to be used, in English. On the other hand, Ludwig Wittgenstein – although he lived virtually all 'his university life' in Britain (as Hallen almost did in Nigeria), and practiced conceptual analysis there – did not seek the services of English interpreters or sages to facilitate his work. Rather, he worked with his native German language and culture, aided by the competence that he had acquired in English language and culture. In that way, he did not need an interpreter either, and he also did not require the intervention of any group or groups of German, Austrian, or English, sages to facilitate his work. The upshot of this is that the ideal use of the method of ordinary language analysis requires that the analyst belong to the culture and be a regular, conscious and competent primary user of the language concerned, in the way that African professional philosophers use either English or French language, and have become immersed in the corresponding culture. Hallen's use of the method of ordinary language analysis in the works under reference cannot be said to have satisfied these minimum requirements. The use of an interpreter reinforces the feeling that

Sodipo, Hallen's Yorùbá co-author of *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, either did not participate in the fieldwork[12] or did not wish to claim sufficient competence in his own language as he claimed of English. Otherwise, the research would have been less problematically conducted in his dialect area of Yorùbá land, where the researchers would not have needed an interpreter.

The use of an interpreter, rather than help, could only have complicated matters for Hallen in his bid to get to the mind of his Yorùbá discussants.

In ordinary Yorùbá language usage, the problematic epistemological "know-believe" distinction probably does not exist as such. In most cases, where '*gbàgbó*' or '*ìgbàgbó*' is correctly used, '*mò*' or '*ìmò*' is either uncalled for as contrast, or will come to mean the same (and so be superfluous), or will become extra-ordinary. This is why for a person "supremely fluent in the Yoruba language", Hallen's questions to the onísègùn "were not the sort of questions he could have asked and expected to have been taken seriously"[13]. His use of the method, as he had done, will undoubtedly be appropriate and productive if we were concerned with special (technical, extra-ordinary) usages of the language such as in divination *(Ifá)*, folk science *(òògùn)*, religious worship *(èsìn)* and ritual *(ètùtù)*. In these cases, there are identifiable acknowledged specialists and masters of the appropriate language use and practices who have to be consulted for education and information in their respective fields. These are *babaláwo* (diviners/Ifá priests), *olóògùn* (folk scientists, including herbalists and native doctors *(onísègùn)*), *olóòsà* (deity devotees) and *elégbé* (cultists), respectively. Apart from their alleged professional knowledge in their fields, the *onísègùn* do not possess any special training, knowledge or wisdom as a class to qualify them for the privileged role of philosophical discussants and informants of the race on correct ordinary language usage such as Hallen has given to them. Outside their occupational or professional settings, the *onísègùn* are not specialists in the Yoruba language relative to other Yoruba persons or groups of them, such as to qualify them to be regarded as "colleagues", 'wise men', and "satisfactory equivalents of the academic philosopher."[14] The reason why the local people in Hallen's area of research[15] recommended the *onísègùn* was precisely because they mistakenly believed that Hallen was after the 'special knowledge' of the *onísègùn* (to wit, *òògùn*).[16] Also, if ordinary language is ordinary language, Hallen would certainly have done a more analytic experiment if he had sought information about correct usage in everyday discourse from ordinary folk in everyday contexts and walks of life. What he went to the village to do could have been done more profitably and methodologically less controversially if he had organized discussion meetings among various Yorùbá people from diverse fields, areas and backgrounds. This would have been a kind of 'focus-group' discussion, akin to Austin's weekly discussion meetings in Oxford.

In *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, Hallen's inquiries targeted what the components or elements of knowledge (ìmò) were thought to be by the Yorùbá[17] (such as 'belief', 'truth', and 'justification', in English). In doing this, Hallen must have believed that he was "engaging in some sort of philosophical dialogue"[18] with Yorùbá culture. As it appears, he seems to have structured the discussion with the *onísègùn* in line with his supposition that there might exist in Yorùbá language discourse a distinction between *ìmò* and *ìgbàgbó* similar to the distinction between knowledge and belief in English.[19]

The following question is important and worth asking. If the onísègùn made a mistake in their accounts or prescriptions of the correct use of a term, how was the researcher to have known or to have pointed it out to them? In the case of Austin's weekly meetings, that was not likely to have been a problem because the interrogators and the discussants were equally masters of the language and did not restrict their enquiries to any one professional or social group of English-speaking people gratuitously regarded as experts or the wise ones in the language-culture. This problem manifests at many points in *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, especially in the several glaringly incorrect (not indeterminate) interpretations and translations of the *onísègùn*'s responses to Hallen's questions. It is also important to ask if the *onísègùn* were always unanimous in their responses to Hallen's prompts, or whether they and Hallen ever disagreed on any relevant issue in the course of their discussions.

Given the manner of his approach to the *onísègùn*, they must have been thoroughly and understandably flattered, and have wanted to impress him (the white university professor of wisdom) by responding 'appropriately' to his prompts, even if they could not see either the point or the wider links of the distinction he was trying to establish in ordinary language Yorùbá discourse. The approach of the researcher to both "the local population" and the *onísègùn* must have been sufficiently ambiguous and vague, or at least not really understood by the people, so as to have misled them on the recommendations they made, especially when we consider the generally very low level of Western education and familiarity with academic discourse in a typical African village. If the researcher had sought the opinion of the local people about those who 'understood', or were 'deep in the language' ('*àwọn tó gbédè*', or '*àwọn tó jinlè nínú Yorùbá*'), or those who 'knew the wisdom' of the Yorùbá ('*àwọn tó mọ ọgbọń Yorùbá*'), the most likely idea that will occur to the average Yorùbá person is that some special persons with extra-ordinary powers and abilities, rather than ordinary language competence, were intended. This is because '*gbédè*', *jinl*è, and '*mọgbọń*' are not cognitively neutral expressions; they elicit in the thought of the average Yorùbá something special, uncommon and un-ordinary. It is not surprising, therefore, that the local people recommended the *onísègùn*, who they regarded as possessing some kind of secret, esoteric or mysterious knowledge of nature. This however does not make them, qua *onísègùn*, masters of the Yorùbá language or culture. To

regard them, *simpliciter*, as masters of correct ordinary use of the language, therefore, might be methodologically less than appropriate.

The extra effort which Hallen has had to make to try and justify his research method[20] indicates his own dissatisfaction with, or reservations about, the method – or of the appropriateness of *his* use of it. However, Hallen deserves credit for proposing the approach and for testing it in a particular African culture. He deserves credit even more so when it is realized that many Africans who are professional philosophers have not done as much, if anything, for the development of African philosophy as he has done.[21]

A philosopher's approach, such as Hallen proposes, to a traditional culture requires, as a necessary condition, a firm grounding in the culture in question. The essential aspects of this grounding are (i) a mastery of the language of the culture in question, (ii) a full participatory immersion in the culture, and (iii) a routine conscious working use of the language of the culture. In this regard, Africans who are philosophers need not bemoan their training and upbringing in European languages and cultures. All they need do is to get back, or move forward, to being as competent in their native languages as many of them are in those European languages, and as knowledgeable and participatory in their own cultures as many of them are in those European cultures. Then, they will be at a great cultural and philosophical advantage over their European and American counterparts, who are usually not well situated (even though many of them try very conscientiously) to master African languages and be sufficiently participatory in African cultures as many African intellectuals have had to be in European languages and cultures.

Hallen's analytical experiments in Yorùbá philosophy must be seen, therefore, as a great challenge to African professional philosophers, especially those of the Yorùbá language-culture. They can become analytic philosophers of their own culture if they adopt the method of ordinary language analysis, provided they are not either linguistically or culturally deficient. It is possible that the outcome of the investigations of such Yorùbá analytic philosophers will challenge part of Hallen's findings, thus engendering further critical interest in analytic Yorùbá philosophy. Hallen himself expects this much when he says: "…these conclusions are incomplete (not indeterminate). Many interesting comparisons between the two systems remain to be made…."[22] Hallen would then have succeeded finally in providing a universally viable alternative method for doing credible contemporary African philosophy.

Finally, it has to be remarked that, since the application of Austin's kind of "elevated insights" is required for the proper analysis of concepts in any language, only those who have the requisite linguistic skill, cultural immersion and philosophical competence can hope to do satisfactory ordinary language analysis in any language or culture. The special (rare) kind of insights required here cannot be imported through an interpreter who himself/herself might lack it, as in the case of Hallen's undergraduate

student-interpreter. Neither can the *onísègùn* be necessarily credited with such insights, or the activation of such insights in others, since "knowing medicine"[23] does not entail expertise or privileged competence in the use or analysis of ordinary language. Neither does knowledge of medicine place any one in any culture at "a level of understanding and analysis of … life and thought that is more critically sophisticated than that of the ordinary person."[24] Philosophically, as far as anyone can reasonably expect, however, Barry Hallen has done the best that an alien genuinely interested in an African culture can do under the circumstances.

What remains to perfect Hallen's procedure is the philosopher's personal "sharpness of his eye and ear for very fine *nuances*"[25] in Yorùbá, or any other African language. For this reason, Africans in professional philosophy, who are competent primary users of their respective languages and are ideally intimate with their cultures, should take up the challenge and the cue that Hallen has given to them. As they are the best suited to do it, they should become committed to philosophical analyses of concepts in their respective cultures and conceptual schemes, for both practical and theoretical purposes.[26]

What Hallen has initiated in the Yorùbá context is "collaboration between scholar and producer of culture".[27] Such an inquiry, which "is a prerequisite for critique",[28] will, however, be enhanced if it is undertaken as multidisciplinary experiments involving linguistically and culturally well-positioned philosophers, linguists, sociologists, artists and other relevantly knowledgeable persons among who may be *onísègùn*.

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NOTES

[1] B. Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful: Discourse about Values in Yoruba Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), p. 1.

[2] B. Hallen and J. O. Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft: Analytic Experiments in African Philosophy*, (London: Ethnographica, *1987*), p. 9.

[3] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 1.

[4] M. Òkè, "Modeling the Contemporary African Philosopher: Kwasi Wiredu in Focus", in O. Oladipo (ed.) *The Third Way in African Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Kwasi Wiredu* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Hope Publications, 2003), pp. 19 -35.

[5] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 8.

[6] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft,* and Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful.*

[7] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 39.

[8] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 39.

[9] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 8.

[10] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 11.

[11] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 11.

[12] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 7, where he says: "Of course, *Femi was with me* throughout all of this" and p. 10, where he says; "… in *my* discussions with the onísègùn. For *I* was relying upon them to explain to *me*…" (Emphases are mine). The use of the first person limiting personal pronoun referring to Hallen as the sole researcher, with Femi, his interpreter, is all over the texts. Moreover, Sodipo would not have referred to his own native language – Yoruba – as an alien language, or speak of any of its concepts as an "alien theoretical term", etc. (p. 39).

[13] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 7.

[14] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, pp. 8, 11.

[15] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, pp. 5-6; Ijan Ekiti is a small remote Yorùbá village inhabited mostly by illiterate old people with little or no formal education or exposure to academic life.

[16] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 13; and Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 7.

[17] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 39; and Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 7.

[18] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 5.

[19] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, p. 7; and Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 13.

[20] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, pp. 11-13; and Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, pp. 10-11.

[21] For references to some of his major publications in African Philosophy, see M. Òkè, "Modeling the Contemporary African Philosopher", pp. 28-29.

[22] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 39.

[23] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 13.

[24] Hallen and Sodipo, *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, p. 39.

[25] G. J. Warnock, *English Philosophy Since 1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 97. Also, Anders Wedberg, A History of

Philosophy, Volume 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 315-316.

[26] Hallen, *The Good, The Bad, and The Beautiful*, pp. 34 -35.

[27] I. Karp & D. A. Masolo, (Ed.) *African Philosophy As Cultural Inquiry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, and Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd; 1994), p. 13.

[28] Karp and Masolo, (Ed.) *African Philosophy As Cultural Inquiry*, p. 13.

A WAR ON DISTRUST:
REINVENTING THE MODE OF TOGETHERNESS IN AN AGE OF CONFLICT

Donny Gahral Adian

After the 9/11 catastrophe, the moral face of the globe has changed. Relationships among nations are increasingly colored by prejudices and stereotypes – in particular, prejudices and stereotypes obstructing relationships between the West and those in Middle East and parts of Asia. Those prejudices and stereotypes are being concretized in terms such as "the axis of evil", "the war on terror", "weapons of mass destruction", and so on. These terms are being used by the West, especially the United States, to generalize about some states in the Middle East, saying that they are "terrorist nests" which pose an imminent threat to national and international security. On the other hand, some Middle Eastern nations also show a deep distrust of any kind of diplomacy proposed by the United Nations, including its humanitarian-oriented diplomacy. They suspect that there is a hidden agenda at the very root of that diplomacy. That hidden agenda is suspected as promoting the interests – mainly the economic and ideological interests – of the United States.

At this time, there seems to be little mutual trust or cooperation. The climate of prejudice and stereotyping has blocked the very conditions for symmetrical trust. The prejudices backed by each's national interests create a particular mode of togetherness called the 'us/them mode of togetherness'. This is a mode of togetherness which negates any possibility of cooperation. In this paper, I will explore the root of this deep mutual distrust among nations resulting in continuing conflict, both potential and actual. First, I would like to explain the idea of 'precautionary principle' in international relations. Second, I would like to relate that idea to what I call 'social trap,' Finally, a new mode of togetherness has to be developed to prevent that social trap. In this case, I introduce something called "authentic we-ness" as a new mode of togetherness in international relations.

SUSTAINED DISTRUST

International relations can be divided into two major phenomena: harmony and discord. It is harmony when a state's policies automatically aid the attainment of one another's goals. It is harmony when bargaining is not required since there are no conflicting interests. The relationship changes into discord when a state's policies hinder the attainment of another state's goals, and there is no incentive to change behavior.

There is third alternative called cooperation. In cooperation, policies or actions of different states are brought into conformity through a process of policy coordination. The possibility of cooperation requires that

each state will change its behavior toward the others. It is founded in the strong belief that cooperation will maximize each other's benefits. This, however, is a difficult task to be accomplished in a world that has changed radically since 9/11. States have made national security the top priority. It is more advantageous to distrust others than not. Trusting others is a risky foreign policy that might create another unprecedented catastrophe.

We have come into what I call "a climate of distrust" in the world. An address by former President George W. Bush at the West Point military academy gives us a lucid illustration. He said, "if we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long. I believe it is essential that when we see a threat, we deal with those threats before they become imminent."[1] In other words, Bush proposed a worst-case scenario foreign policy – or, to put it in simple words: "Better safe than sorry."

This scenario rests upon a principle called the precautionary principle. The precautionary principle takes many forms. Despite these variants, the basic idea is that the regulator should take steps to protect against potential harm, even if causal chains are unclear and even if the chances of the materialization of harm are unknown. There are two basic reasons why the precautionary principle is worthy of sustained attention. First, it provides the foundation for intensely pragmatic debates about danger, fear and security. Second, the precautionary principle raises a host of theoretically fascinating questions about individual and social decision-making under conditions of risk and uncertainty.[2]

Based on the precautionary principle, the object of uncertainty must be found. In this case, the United States simply could not search elsewhere than in some nations in the Middle East which, it thought, most probably posed terrorist threats to its national security. That probability was not the result of scientific calculations, but certain historical stereotypes in the minds of American policy makers. Those stereotypes were responsible for blocking any information challenging the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

What former President Bush said about the condition of uncertainty was certainly a subjective possibility. It was advantageous to distrust Iraq due to its recent history and, most of all, its being a Moslem country. The United States, however, has its own history. Its double standard concerning the conflict between Israel and Palestine has created suspicion among Middle Eastern nations. That is allegedly why Iraq denied the UN's request for inspections related to the existence of weapons of mass destruction. It suspected a hidden agenda behind the UN's actions – an agenda it thought to be that of the United States.

Both sides were trapped in mutual distrust. For them, it was more advantageous to distrust than to trust, considering each's national interests. However, was it truly advantageous to distrust one another and be in a cautionary relationship at that time? The answer was that it was not. It has ended up that the United States has lost thousands of soldiers and Iraq has beem torn apart by civil war and insurgencies.

Following the violent conflict between the United States and Iraq, the climate of distrust among global actors has increased. The climate of distrust creates an institutionalized conflict among nations. Conflict is institutionalized when distrust has become the ruling norm in international relations. Conflict, not cooperation, becomes the pattern of behavior among nations. Shadowed by the climate of distrust, this pattern of conflict will continue. It will stay that way until each nation puts an end to their sustainable distrust.

In this climate of distrust, nations are falling into a social trap. Before we move on this important subject, it is necessary to clarify the notion of "social trap." The notion of "social trap" was invented by the psychologist John Platt[3]. It is an "umbrella term" for a number of strategic situations in which social actors find themselves. In this situation, their behavior is determined by their assessment of the future actions of others. The logic of the social trap can be described as follows:

1. "Everyone' wins if 'everyone' chooses to cooperate

2. But if people cannot trust that 'almost everyone else' will cooperate, it is meaningless to choose to cooperate, because the end is contingent on cooperation by almost everyone else.

3. Non-cooperation is rational when people do not trust that others will also cooperate.

4. Conclusion: efficient cooperation for common purposes can come about only if people trust that most other people will also choose to cooperate.

5. Lacking that trust, the social trap will slam inexorably shut. That is, we end up in a state of affairs that is worse for everyone, even though everyone realizes that they would profit by choosing to cooperate.

In terms of cooperation, the social trap entails two important problems. *First*, actors in a situation where there are options – of cooperation or non-cooperation – may end up in a situation that is most disadvantageous to them all. The parties involved might fall into certain pathological situations without any of them having intended the result. This happens simply by mistake when something that actually is an attempt to cooperate is misunderstood by the counterpart perceiving the action as deceitful or threatening, and the matter escalates into a social trap. *Second*, the term "trap" in "social trap" refers to the fact that once a group, society or organization has fallen into it, the escape route is difficult to find. Escaping from a social trap requires people who have developed deep mistrust over a long time to begin to trust each other and abandon memories of past deceitful behavior of the other group.

It must be noted that the actors in a social trap situation are not mathematically naive. They are not perfectly informed, strictly rational, unbiased actors, but real political actors having incomplete information and limited knowledge of their interlocutor. Nations reflect the behaviors of

political actors. If political actors are moved by their self-interest, nations are moved by their national interest. Political actors are moved by self-interest alone and use instrumental modes of rationality to further that interest. Consideration of other values is neglected. What matters the most is promoting one's self-interest effectively. The same logic works for nations. What matters the most is a nation's national interest and how to promote it effectively. In this new climate of distrust, the incentive to cooperate is low. As a result, most nations are falling into social traps.

The inability to trust one another is caused by how the image of the other appears in the mind of the policy makers. The shaping of an image of another is determined by variables, such as personal knowledge about the individuals in question, and culturally or ideologically-determined stereotypes or memories of how the actors have acted in similar situations in the past[4]. In the mind of the western policy makers and political actors, the image of Middle Eastern nations has been polluted by stereotypes such as "terrorist nest", "home of fundamentalism", "breeding ground of radicals", and so on. These images have blocked the minds of policy makers from any positive information about that region. Unfortunately, it is the acceptance of positive information that might actually change the climate of distrust among nations after the 9/11 catastrophe.

The inability to trust one another is also caused by domestic political interests. What we understand as a social trap is very much related to domestic politics. Domestic political entrepreneurs often build their power by manipulating our knowledge or memories of the behavior of other groups as having been treacherous. What they are doing is selling their foreign policy grounded on manipulated memory. That kind of political marketing is necessary to get votes. Domestic political actors also often choose to concentrate on negative information about the other group's intentions. This is frequently done to justify their foreign policy. This was done by American policy makers in the lead up to the war in Iraq. By manipulating evidence about Iraq's weapons programs, American policy makers justified a pre-emptive strike.

THE U.S.-IRAQ (UNDER SADDAM) SOCIAL TRAP

IRAQ (under Saddam) / U.S.	Trust	Distrust
Trust	(x, y)	(x-3, y)
Distrust	(x, y-3)	(x-2, y-2)

According to the above matrix, the ideal solution for shared benefit is trusting each other (x,y). However, due to the absence of trust, the parties got themselves into a disadvantageous situation (x-2, y-2). This is said to be the inevitable consequence of the rational behavior of political actors in a social trap situation. It leads to the question whether global political actors can ever escape from a social trap and engage in a mutually advantageous relationship. The answer, I believe, lies in the mode of togetherness that creates perpetual conflict among global political actors. In other words, we need to think about a new mode of togetherness which is not mutually exclusive and entraps actors in a situation of perpetual conflict.

TRANSLUCENCY AND THE NEW MODE OF TOGETHERNESS

As we can see, sustainable distrust produces a loss rather than a benefit. The remaining question is how to end that sustainable distrust responsible for social traps. How do we assure policy makers around the globe that cooperation is far more beneficial than the opposite strategy. Without that, the option not to cooperate will always look more reasonable.

Nations can be understood as agents motivated by self-interest. David Gauthier, for example, differentiates between straightforward maximizers and constrained maximizers.[5] Straightforward maximizers only take into account the other's strategies. To take into account the other's strategies is to act in accordance with the ways in which you expect the other will act. Constrained maximizers, however, consider both the other's strategy and utility. To take account of the other's utility is to consider how she will fare as a result of your action, and allow that to affect how you act.

Consider recent American foreign policy. The United States acted as a straightforward maximizer when it considered that the Iraqi strategy would be to hide the truth about the location of any weapons of mass destruction. The only option for the United States, then, was to launch a pre-emptive strike to protect itself. The United States had neglected the benefit of trusting Iraq and considering how a pre-emptive strike wiould create disutility for Iraq. The United States could have prevented that from happening by acting as a constrained maximizer. It could have considered Iraq's utility and chosen to cooperate for a long-term benefit. In other words, the United States could have constrained the maximization of its own utility (national security) by adopting the principle of morality. The principle of morality, in this case, is different from the principle of utility. Whereas the principle of utility focuses on utility maximization or expected utility maximization, the principle of morality focuses on rational judgment of preference based on impartial and unbiased criteria[6].

Nations should act cooperatively with each other. However, in a social trap situation that is unlikely to happen. To cooperate, each nation must believe that the others are disposed towards cooperation. Nations as agents must be able to assure themselves of the intentions of others in order to constrain their behavior. The United States, however, would not

cooperate until it was assured that Iraq would not lie concerning the existence of its weapons. Iraq also would not cooperate until it was assured that the UN observers would be neutral and independent of the U.S. agenda.

What is needed for cooperation is translucency.[7] Translucency is a cognitive assumption that the other's disposition, while not entirely transparent, is also not entirely hidden. It is assumed that agents might be able to discern the true disposition of the other. It is not a guaranteed disclosure, but it is better than guesswork. Translucency is an assumption that discriminates between the straightforward maximizer and the constrained one. The straightforward maximizer focuses only on negative information. The constrained maximizer, however, tries to determine the true motives of the other by suspending all stereotyped judgments.

There are two important results of translucency. *First*, it gives us a criterion by which we can decide whether to trust others, by allowing us to judge whether they have disposed themselves to be cooperative. *Second*, it gives us a reason to be trustworthy ourselves, for if others can see us well enough to be able to ascertain whether we have disposed ourselves to cooperativeness, then the benefits of cooperation will available to us only if in fact we are to be constrained maximizers. There are two criteria of trustworthiness entailed by translucency. The first is our willingness to suspend our stereotyped judgments. Through this kind of willingness, others will develop trust and be disposed to act so that they can be trusted. The second is the other's disposition to disclose herself in terms of her true motives. This disposition allows the opposite party to accept new information that leads to cooperation rather than conflict.

The phenomenon of the social trap placed the United States and Iraq in a situation of conflict. The conflict was sustained by each's stereotypes about the other. The conflict had blinded both to the long term benefits of a peaceful relationship. They would have avoided catastrophe if they had adopted translucency in their policies. In fact, we would have had a different story if they had disposed themselves to trust and be trusted. For, in such a situation, both states would have tried very hard to determine the true disposition of their counterpart, and so both would try to be trustworthy in the eye of the other. The result is illustrated in the following matrix:

IRAQ (under Saddam) \ U.S.	Trust (plus translucency)	Distrust (minus translucency)
Trust (plus translucency)	(x, y)	(x-3, y)
Distrust (minus translucency)	(x, y-3)	(x-2, y-2)

What translucency means is that we not discount another's disposition in advance without further inquiry. Translucency implies a willingness to trust and be trusted. This willingness, unfortunately, is blocked by the particular mode of togetherness called the 'us/them mode of togetherness.' This mode of togetherness is a prejudiced one. The logic of this mode of togetherness is the logic of exclusion. One grouping based on common interest always excludes the other as having an opposed interest. It is "us" against "them" or – to put it in former President Bush's terms, "either you are with us or against us". "Them" is an absolute evil, and the only policy available is total eradication. There is no possibility for trust.

The hidden assumption of the us/them mode of togetherness is as follows. A group may consider itself consisting of self-sufficient entities, each detached from the other. This, however, is inauthentic, since this denies that there is any mutual and enriching relationship with one another in the group. On the other hand, there is another mode of togetherness called "authentic we-ness".[8] In this mode of togetherness, being-together-with-others is established in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. There is no objectification of the other. The other is not a mere 'atom' or signularity, but a being worthy of respect and care. Here, the patterns of reciprocal objectification or manipulation within the group are absent. All there is, is mutual respect and enrichment. "Authentic we-ness" as a basic mode of togetherness is objective and supportive — i.e., constituents tend to lose their respective subjectivities and are incapable of actualization by themselves alone since, as a "we-ness," they experience themselves in relation to others.

The 'coalition of the willing' led by the United States is a vivid example of the "inauthentic we-ness" mode of togetherness. It is build upon the presumption of the existence of a third party, namely terrorist-harboring nations. The coalition of the willing denied any possibility whatsoever that its judgment might be misled by historical stereotypes. For them, Iraq (i.e., Saddam) was objectified as the threatening third party, for whom the only response available was military action. There was no incentive for cooperation or dialogue. Singularity or non-possibility meant there was no willingness to trust. The coalition of the willing was actually a coalition of the unwilling.

To escape the social trap, it is necessary to transform "inauthentic we-ness" into an "authentic we-ness" mode of togetherness. It is important to consider that the other is in the realm of relation and not singularity. This "other" asks us to be in a translucent mode of relationship with it. In other words, we must be willing to listen to others. The other is, ultimately, not a stereotype or an object of enmity but a fellow subject colored by possibility. This means that any presumption about the other must be suspended until there is convincing evidence to the contrary. Taking precautions concerning the other does not necessarily mean that our prior negative presumptions are immune to correction.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

For the sake of perpetual peace, the war on terror must be replaced by a war on distrust. The success of this war, however, requires us to rethink our current mode of togetherness, i.e., us/them or "inauthentic we-ness". This current mode of togetherness, I believe, is responsible for blocking trustworthiness among nations in the present era. However, it is only a fragment of a larger story. Due to this current mode of togetherness, the only pattern of global behavior seems to be one of conflict, not cooperation. Nations are making coalitions to invade other states, based on unquestioned assumptions. These assumptions, unfortunately, are left unchallenged. Information itself might be manipulated to justify the reasons for war (*jus ad bellum*). This, in fact, creates a social trap, resulting in collective disadvantage. To escape the social trap, each nation must adopt a new mode of togetherness based on translucency and mutual trust. This "authentic we-ness" mode of togetherness will take the global community to a new era of harmony where the possibilities of conflicts will be greatly reduced.

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NOTES

[1] See the complete text of former President Bush's West Point Address (June 3, 2002) at http://www.newsmax.com/ archives/ articles/ 2002/ 6 /2 /81354.shtml.

[2] See Cass Sunstein, *Laws of Fear: Beyond the Precautionary Principle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 4.

[3] See Bo Rothstein, *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 12.

[4] See Rothstein, *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust*, p. 15.

[5] See David Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 15-16, 166-170, 179-181.

[6] See John Harsanyi, "Advances in Understanding Rational Behavior" in *Rationality in Action* (New York: 1990), p. 278.

[7] Celeste M Friend, "Trust and the Presumption of Translucency" in *Social Theory and Practice* (January 2001), p.27.

[8] For further elaboration on the difference between inauthentic and authentic we-ness see Fuad Hassan, *Kita and Kami: the Basic Mode ofTogetherness* (Jakarta: Winoka, 2005), p. 28.

HUMAN RIGHTS, PRACTICES, AND CODES OF ETHICS[1]

David Lorenzo Izquierdo

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important issues in contemporary ethics (and also in political theory) is the relation between first principles and the application of those principles to specific fields of action, such as politics, economics, law, medicine, and so on. We find a similar issue with human rights. One of the most important challenges nowadays regarding human rights is how they can be applied and protected 'in practice'.

Human rights are principles which have been accepted by many countries and institutions as, so to speak, 'first' or 'common' principles. They are both ethical and political principles. But nowadays a new facet is called for: they have to guide particular acts – they have to be applied to specific fields of action (through specific laws, regulations, codes, etc.). But this is not an easy matter.

One of the areas where human rights have to be applied and protected is in the field of professional endeavours or the workplace. In recent years, codes of ethics have arisen as a possible means to foster and to define ethical behaviour in the professions. Among the principles of a code, human rights play the role of 'first' principles – as I shall explain below[2]. Humnan rights tend to function in codes as the principles that inspire and guide the rest of the moral rules. But how can codes of ethics make individuals respect and foster ethical principles and human rights in the professions? Can they guarantee a good ethical environment in the workplace? This paper aims to answer those questions.

PRACTICES, GOODS AND MORAL RULES

The concept of 'practice' is a central concept in contemporary sociology as well as in moral and political philosophy. One author who has focused on this concept is Alasdair MacIntyre. This concept is useful when thinking about the role of codes of ethics in applying and protecting human rights[3].

According to MacIntyre, practices are important because – as we read in his paper "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy: Rules, Virtues and Goods"[4] – individual acts and the development of human beings take place only in them. Social and individual lives are structured by practices, which take place in particular institutions and in a particular history or tradition – so that every practice is part of a history and a tradition.

In his book *After Virtue*, MacIntyre defines practice as

> any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity

are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropiate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.[5]

Sciences, architecture, and farming are examples of practices.[6] Therefore, a practice is an activity with internal goods and with internal standards of excellence. The academic life of a university can be considered, for instance, a practice; thus, this paper can be considered as a part of the practice which is the academic life of a particular university.

There are three elements of a practice, according to MacIntyre: goods, models of excellence (or authorities), and rules. Let us consider briefly each one of these. Regarding goods, the author distinguishes two kinds: external goods and internal goods. The internal ones are those goods which refer to the proper excellence of a specific practice. The best building and the best way to design it are internal goods to architecture. External goods are those not related directly to the proper excellence of a practice. These can be achieved through many kinds of practices and can be independent of the achievement of the internal goods to a practice. Some examples of external goods are money, power, and prestige. Therefore, internal goods are the proper or essential 'telos' of a practice.[7]

Rules are necessary elements of a practice because they are the guidelines or the norms to be followed by the individual who wishes to achieve the internal goods of the practice.[8] Certain rules have to be observed, because they are relkevant to an individual reaching excellence in a practice. For instance, it is necessary for the members of a soccer team to train weekly if one wishes to build a good soccer team.

The third element of practices are models or authorities. According to MacIntyre, they are necessary because the individual needs to know the rules and the goods of the practices, and he or she also has to learn how to apply the rules and how to understand the internal goods. Models and authorities are the means whereby individuals learn and practice these elements.[9]

Of course, in *After Virtue*, MacIntyre is cognizant that there are practices which are evil in themselves: for instance, torture, sadomasochistic sexuality, etc..[10] But, if all practices contain goods, how is it possible to consider a practice evil or wrong in itself? The author answers that we need a good external to the practices in order to 'judge' the issue. This external good is what MacIntyre, in his book *Dependent Rational Animals*, calls 'flourishing'. 'Flourishing' is the development of the powers that a human being possesses as a human being, or, in other words, how human beings should live.[11]

This is why MacIntyre says that an individual has to be able to make two distinctions:

1) Regarding the good internal to the practice, he or she has to distinguish between what seems good for him or her at this moment and what is really good according to the practice.
2) Regarding flourishing, he or she has to distinguish what is good for him or her here and now, and what is good in itself, for everybody[12].

Therefore, the final good beyond the goods of the practices is necessary to be able to 'judge' the same practices. In addition, a final good is necessary to explain human existence because there are many practices in which an individual can be involved, but the individual him or herself is an unity – one and the same person in different practices. A final good which relates to the individual as a whole, as a unity is necessary.

Because of this, MacIntyre distinguishes three meanings of the concept of 'good':

1) 'Good' as a means to another good, which is a good in itself.
2) 'Good' according to a specific practice. In this sense, an individual is good as a father, as a teacher and so on.[13]
3) 'Good' as a human being, as a member of the human species. In this sense, an individual is good if he or she is flourishing as such.[14]

In fact, this third sense of the concept is the main one for MacIntyre: something is good for an individual if it contributes to his/her flourishing[15]. Therefore, flourishing is the final good, the final 'telos' of human life.

We have seen so far four important ideas: human acts take place in practices; every practice has its own internal good; rules are necessary elements to achieve the internal good to any practice; and those rules imply both technical and moral aspects. Achieving the internal good to a practice is not only a technical matter but also a moral matter, because it is related to the individual's human qualities as a 'practicioner' and also as a human being.

In order to think about how codes of ethics can be a means to protect human rights, we can take two important and useful concepts from MacIntyre's thought: 'flourishing' and 'practice'. According to MacIntyre, beyond the goods of the practices, there must be a final good, which is necessary to 'judge' the same practices. Flourishing is this 'final good,'[16] as we have seen above. If 'flourishing' is the development of the powers that a human being possesses as a human being, it can be said that human rights are a set of ethical and political principles whose aim is to protect some basic goods which are necessary to make possible the individual's development or the individual's flourishing. MacIntyre does not relate human rights to the concept of 'flourishing', but we think that this relation can be acknowledged[17].

Regarding the MacIntyrean concept of 'practice', we can see that every profession is a practice (although not every practice is a profession strictly speaking[18]). It can be said that codes of ethics are sets of moral rules

whose aim is to guide human acts in the workplace from the moral point of view. If a profession includes both technical and moral aspects, codes of ethics can be narrowly related to practices. MacIntyre does not connect the rules of practices to codes of ethics, but we think that this relation exists and also that it is important to understand the role of codes of ethics in protecting human rights.

HUMAN ACTION, CODES OF ETHICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In our time, professional ethics has become more important and, as a result, the number of existing codes of ethics has increased. This fact can be used to point out many features of our society, but we wish to focus for the moment on the resulting increased awareness of two important matters: the difficulty of making decisions in certain particular circumstances[19], and the importantance of the social responsibility of individuals and their acts.

As we have seen by employing the MacIntyrean concept of 'practice', human action is a complex fact. Perhaps one of the most important and fruitful topics in ethics today has been the account of the different elements from which human action can be explained, or, in other words, how it is possible to explain human actions. It seems that it is a fact that cannot be explained in a static or 'fixed' way. This difficult point comes partly from the fact, obvious but deep, that human action is twofold: it has both an external and internal 'side' (intentions, feelings, etc.). That is why we can say that an action 'shows' how an individual 'is'. From this twofold nature of action, we can surmise that every human action implies three different kinds of relations: individual-end, individual-context and individual-fact/action. That is to say that when an individual acts, he or she carries out an action (a fact) within the 'frame' of a particular context, and this action comes from a personal intention (from a personal end, which is related, of course, to that context). These relationships are so various and changeable that sometimes individuals do not know how to act, how to make a decision. Codes of ethics tend to guide the external side of human actions (although they presuppose the internal side).

Codes of ethics include rules to guide an individual's actions in a specific field of activities. Because of this, one feature of such codes is that they contribute to the individual's training or formation: they make use of the experience and history of this activity (i.e., of this practice) in order to be able to teach the individual rules of acting correctly. Some of these rules perhaps are not known by the individual; or, if he or she knew about them, perhaps he or she didn't know their importance; one of the functions of models of excellence or authorities is to help the individual with those issues. This is possible only because codes of ethics make some rules 'explicit', so that they more easily show individuals that they must respect them. And, at the same time, this fact makes clearer and more obvious the social responsibility of an individual's acts. Another important feature of codes of ethics is that they are supported by a 'community' (e.g., a

professional association, a company, etc.), which defines the code's content and watches over the observance of its rules.

In order to explain these features, let us consider, for instance, the "Code of Ethics for Engineers" of the National Society for Professional Engineers (in the United States). This code says that, in order to show objectivity and independence in their professional duties, "Engineers shall disclose all known or potential conflicts of interest that could influence or appear to influence their judgment or the quality of their services" (Part II, art. 4.a). It also says: "Engineers shall not accept compensation, financial or otherwise, from more than one party for services on the same project, or for services pertaining to the same project, unless the circumstances are fully disclosed and agreed to by all interested parties" (Part II, art 4.b). These rules are determined by a professional association (the National Society for Professional Engineers) in accord with the experience and history of a profession (engineering, in this case). An engineer, as an engineer (and, to some extent, as a person) has to know and to follow these rules in order to carry out his or her profession. In this sense, we say that a code gives rules to guide the individual's actions. Perhaps an engineer does not need a code giving him or her those rules, because he or she can 'see' or grasp those rules on his or her own, by him or herself. These rules are, for some people, evident. But we think that it is clear that, by stating these rules explicitly, a code can help an individual to know and to follow them (in this case, in order to keep his or her objectivity and impartiality).

Nevertheless, a code's rules do not always help the individual to make decisions (and correct decisions) in a particular situation. This is due, first of all, to the fact that codes cannot rule on or solve all the possible situations that an individual may find in a practice. Codes of ethics include rules concerning a practice, but this does not imply that they include 'all' the possible rules related to it. In fact, professional associations must periodically change and update their codes according to circumstances. This is one of their important functions. Moreover, we have to take into account that sometimes, in particular situations, two or more rules of a code can come into conflict with one another. For instance, the conflict between the right to privacy and a common good can lead a physician, a lawyer, or a psychologist to not keep a professional secret. (Here, individuals need a model of excellence to solve such problems, that is to say, they need someone who can help them to make good decisions.) But why does this happen and what are its consequences? In order to answer these questions, we have to focus on the nature of human acts.

Human acts may be judged to be correct, not only with regard to some principle, rule or good, but also with regard to particular circumstances. Given the importance of individual circumstances, be they internal or external, contingency is the proper field of human acts. An act that has to be done by 'me' under some particular circumstances (here and now) is not the same as an act that another person ought to do (under the same, at least external, circumstances). In order to reach the internal good of

a practice, an individual has to act according to his or her personal circumstances and qualities, which are different from another individual's circumstances and qualities. People involved in a practice share the same good internal to this practice, but every individual seeks to reach this good according to his or her particular qualities. In this sense, they can share the same rules, but the way of applying them – though not the rule itself – can change depending on personal qualities and circumstances. That is why the rules included in a code of ethics can only 'guide' an individual's act, but cannot define or determinate it 'totally'. So human action is always a 'creative' fact.[20] It is a creative fact because the individual, in a particular situation, has to discover which rules should be followed and, at the same time, how he or she should apply them.

This creativity is based on the fact that a particular act in any profession (and in any practice) is the result of three elements: (1) an individual who 'mediates' (2) some first principles, and (3) some professional rules[21]. When individuals act in their professional fields, they are applying not only the rules of their codes of ethics, but also some primary or first moral principles (which are then 'first principles' with regard to this code). Take, for instance, a moral principle regarding truth. There is a first moral principle according to which every human being has the duty to say the truth; this would be a first principle. But different duties or rules can be derived from this principle depending on different practices (or professions). That is to say, different professional rules (the third element we have mentioned) can be derived from the same first moral principle.

For instance, both a marketer and an engineer, as human beings, have the duty to say the truth, but, each has to follow different rules in order to apply this principle (in their particular professions). The "Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice" of the Canadian Marketing Association says that "Marketing communications must be clear and truthful. Marketers must not knowingly make a representation to a consumer or business that is false or misleading" (Section H, art. I). The "Code of Ethics for Engineers" of the National Society for Professional Engineers says that "Engineers shall be objective and truthful in professional reports, statements, or testimony. They shall include all relevant and pertinent information in such reports, statements, or testimony, which should bear the date indicating when it was current" (Section II, art. 3.a).

What is the relation between first moral principles and professional rules? The first link between them is that the rules of a code of ethics base their legitimacy founded on some principles prior to them. A proof of this is the fact that the first articles of a code are usually dedicated to so called 'general principles'. Such principles express and refer to some human goods and also to some general rules which are the 'frame' of the profession (e.g., the "Preamble" and section I of the "Code of Ethics for Engineers" of the National Society for Professional Engineers; articles 5-14 of the "Catalonia's Psychologists' Code of Ethics"; articles 4-6 of the "Spanish

Medical Code of Ethics"). The "Catalan Medical Association's Code of Ethics" devotes its first section to making such principles explicit. Article 1 defines the goal (end) of the medical profession: individual and social health, while the subsequent articles define more general principles, such as the respect for human rights and human dignity (article 5). The "Economists' Code of Ethics of Spain" devotes section I to defining the basic principles of this profession: independence, integrity, loyalty, etc.

Nevertheless, first and basic ethical principles (and goods) do not always appear in the same way. For instance, the "Catalan Bar Code of Ethics" does not use words like 'human dignity' or 'human rights' in its first articles. However it states, in article 4, the principles of freedom, independence and competence as basic principles for lawyers.

Those facts show that there are some principles (related to some goods) that, in an implicit or explicit way, form the basis of the rules of a code of ethics. We can ask ourselves, of course, why such principles must be those specific principles, or why those principles must be defined with those particular words (and not with different words). But the most important matter here is the fact that those principles express some goods which work as a 'point of reference' for a practice and for its rules. We have to take into account that there is a narrow relation between rules and goods. Both from the moral and legal point of view, goods are the sense of rules. A rule does not make sense without a good. The aim of a rule is to protect a good. We have talked above about the concept of truth. Truth is the good protected by rules (e.g., such as we have mentioned above regarding marketers and engineers). In fact, normally, individuals do not follow a rule unless they know and understand the good that a rule tends to protect.

Using the MacIntyrean concepts explained above, we could say that an individual can reach the 'internal goods' of a practice only if he or she follows or respect those principles (e.g., related to some specific goods)[22]. Life, freedom, truth, justice, human dignity, integrity, amd so on, are those goods on which the rules of a code of ethics are based. And those goods are the goods that human rights try to protect, as we can see, for instance, in the articles 1, 3, 4, and 18 to 20 of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights":

> Art. 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
> Art. 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person.
> Art. 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
> Art. 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and

in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Art. 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Art. 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

In the first part of this paper we claimed that human rights can be related to the MacIntyrean concept of 'flourishing'. We admitted that MacIntyre does not state this relation as such, although he thinks that the rules of natural law are the rules that an individual has to observe in order to achieve his or her flourishing as a human being.[23] In order to relate human rights to human flourishing, beyond the debate over natural law, we think that the most important thing is the fact that there is a narrow relationship between human development (human flourishing) and some basic goods (life, freedom, etc.). Those basic goods (or some of them) are the goods protected by the articles of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" that we have just quoted. Given the relationship between rules and goods, we surmise that the aim of the principles of this Declaration is to protect some basic goods which are necessary to make possible the individual's development and flourishing.

Moreover regarding codes of ethics, we can find a narrow relationship between these six articles (or some of them) and, for instance, the "Code of Ethics for Engineers" (of the National Society for Professional Engineers), the "Catalan Medical Association's Code of Ethics", or the "European Code of Police Ethics". The "Code of Ethics for Engineers" does not include an explicit reference to the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", but the first of its "Fundamental Canons" states: "(Engineers shall) Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public" (Section I, art. 1). The "Catalan Medical Association's Code of Ethics" includes an explicit reference to this Declaration by saying, in the fifth principle of its "General Principles", that a physician shall respect human rights in carrying out his or her activities (Section I, "General Principles", art. 5). The "European Code of Police Ethics", in its first section ("Objetives of the Police"), says that one of the objectives of the Police is "to protect and respect the individual's fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined, in particular, in the European Convention on Human Rights" (Section I, art. 1).

The second important link between first principles and professional rules is that the goods protected by these principles are the point of reference or the criteria for applying these professional rules. It could be said that those goods are the 'spirit' of the code's 'letter' (that is to say, of the code's rules). For this reason, when two or more rules of a code conflict with one another in some particular circumstance, the individual takes this

'spirit' as a criterion (e.g., as a point of reference) to apply the rules of the code correctly, that is to say, the individual thinks about the goods to be protected. That's why a physician (according to the "Catalan Medical Association's Code of Ethics", Article 32) or a lawyer (according to the "Catalan Bar Code of Ethics", Article 41) can break their professional secrecy under certain special circumstances when another good (for instance, social safety) has to be protected[24].

Because of the relation between 'principles' and 'basic goods' (regarding human flourishing) in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and also because of the relation between those goods and general principles in codes of ethics, we believe that human rights can play the role of 'first' principles with regard to moral rules in codes of ethics. In this sense, it can be said that some basic human goods can be protected at different 'levels' through different kinds of principles: first principles and (also) professional rules (which would be secondary principles). And we can say, therefore, that, in carrying out a practice and in seeking to reach the internal good to a practice, an individual has the duty to respect some first principles since he or she has the duty to protect some basic human goods.

So far we have seen two important links between ethical first principles and the rules of codes of ethics. In dealing with the former, after seeing that these rules are based on these principles, we asked ourselves why those principles stated in a code explicitly must be specifically 'those' principles (and not others), and why those principles must be defined with some words (and not with different words). In dealing with the latter, we have said that the goods protected by these first principles are the point of reference needed in order to apply the rules of a code to a particular situation correctly.

Both issues can be stated and tackled from the point of view of the main element of the human act, as we have mentioned above, namely, the individual. We have also said that an individual acts by 'mediating' first principles and also the code's rules. It is the individual, through his or her abilities, virtues, conscience, qualities, etc. who, together with others (a professional association, for example), 'selects' and states the suitable principles to a code of ethics according to the social, technical and historical circumstances related to the practice (which is 'ruled' by this code). And it is the individual who 'mediates' the principles and the rules in order to know how to apply them in the best way.

According to MacIntyre (and also to classical ethics), this relation ('individual' and 'rules or principles') depends on the virtue of prudence or *phronesis*. MacIntyre, following Aristotle and Aquinas, defines prudence as

> the exercise of a capacity to apply truths about what it is good for such and such a type of person or for persons as such to do generally and in certain types of situation to oneself on particular occasions. The 'phronimos' is able to judge both which truths are relevant to him in his particular situation and from that judgment and from his

perception of the relevant aspects of himself and his situation to act rightly[25].

– and, MacIntyre adds, "the virtue of being able in particular situations to bring to bear the relevant universals and to act so that the universal is embodied in the particular".[26]

By combining these definitions with the concept of 'basic good' regarding first principles, we can say that the virtue of prudence is twofold. It implies that there are some goods which are goods for every human being. These are narrowly related to human flourishing and, therefore, there are some principles that an individual has *always* to respect. On the other hand, this virtue implies, at the same time, that an individual has to discover how to protect these goods and how to respect these principles in his or her particular situation or circumstances, because this is not an automatic process. That is the core of this virtue. In this sense, and specifically in a professional situation, codes of ethics help individuals discover these things. The virtue of prudence shows us the 'creative' nature of human acts and ethics.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude by saying that codes of ethics are nowadays an important means to protect human rights in a specific field of action, namely, the workplace. We have seen that any profession, as a practice, implies both technical and moral rules – rules set explicitly in the code of ethics related to it. At the same time, human rights play the role of 'first' principles on which rules of different codes are based. The goods protected by human rights are the point of reference used to define or to state duties in every practice through codes of ethics. In this sense, human rights are 'first principles' and codes of ethics are 'secondary principles'.

Nevertheless, codes of ethics are not enough to protect or to 'apply' human rights in particular situations. We have seen that, because of the nature of human actions and codes, individual moral qualities play an important role in protecting human rights. Individual moral qualities are very important, not only in defining the rules of the codes (in the social context of the professional association), but also in applying them to particular situations. Human actions are so complex that sometimes the rules of a code cannot show the individual how to act – or at least they cannot define or determine it totally. Therefore, it is the individual, through his or her conscience, virtues (especially the virtue of prudence), etc., and by following the 'spirit' of a code (the goods protected by it and by the principles of human rights), who must 'grasp' which is the best, and not only the correct, action in his or her particular circumstances.

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NOTES

[1] This paper is the initial result of a research project on the relations among human rights, applied ethics, and codes of ethics. The author would like to thank the referees for their valuable comments and suggestions to improve its content. He also would like to thank Professor Halley Sánchez for his suggestions on some grammatical and stylistic issues.

[2] According to the frame and the aim of this paper, by 'first principle' we mean a principle from which other principles can be derived, but also a principle that 'inspires' other principles.

[3] MacIntyre, of course, criticizes human rights discourse – for instance, in his paper "*Are there any natural rights*?" [Charles F. Adams lecture, delivered Feb. 28, 1983 in Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine], pp. 14-15, and in other work. But we think that this need not prevent us from relating the concept of 'human right' to the (MacIntyrean) concept of 'practice' (as we shall see). See his *After Virtue*: *A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 70ff.

[4] MacIntyre, "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy: Rules, Virtues and

Goods", in *The MacIntyre Reader*, ed. K. Knight (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1998), 136–52 at p. 139.

[5] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, pp. 187-188.

[6] *After Virtue*, pp. 187-188, 200-201.

[7] *After Virtue*, pp. 188-194; MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (London: Duckworth, 1990), pp. 64-65.

[8] *After Virtue*, pp. 194-195; MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), pp. 31-32.

[9] *After Virtue*, pp. 194-195.

[10] *After Virtue*, p. 200.

[11] MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (London: Duckworth, 1999), pp. 63-65, 76-77.

[12] *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, pp. 126-127; MacIntyre, "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy," p. 140.

[13] *Dependent Rational Animals*, pp. 65-66.

[14] "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy," p. 151; *Dependent Rational Animals*, p. 66.

[15] I would like to thank Prof. MacIntyre for personal conversation on this issue (September 2004).

[16] "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy," p. 151; *Dependent Rational Animals*, p. 66.

[17] In our opinion, although MacIntyre does not say this explicitly, this relation can be stated because he agrees that there is a natural law (and natural law can be related to human rights). Natural law is a topic which MacIntyre has dealt with mainly through papers or articles (see, for instance: "How Can We Learn What *Veritatis Splendor* Has To Teach?", *The Thomist*, Vol. 58 (1994), pp. 171-195; "Natural Law As Subversive: The Case of Aquinas", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 26, n. 1 (1996), pp. 61-83; "Natural Law Reconsidered", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 37 (1997), pp. 95-99; "Theories of Natural Law in the Culture of Advanced Modernity", in *Common Truths: New Perspectives on Natural Law*, Edward B. McLean (ed.), (Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2000), pp. 91-115. We have seen that practices can be judged and understood based on flourishing. Just as there are rules for practices, there are also rules for flourishing. These rules, according to MacIntyre, are the rules of natural law. The individual has to observe them in order to flourish as a human being. See MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, p. 139; "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy", p. 143; "How Can We Learn What *Veritatis Splendor* Has To Teach?", *The Thomist*, p. 173; "Wahre Selbsterkenntnis durch Verstehen unserer selbst aus der Perspektive anderer" (interview with Dmitri Nikulin), *Deutsche*

Zeitschrift für Philosophie, Vol. 44 (1996), pp. 671-683, at pp. 676-677; "The Privatization of Good. An Inaugural Lecture", *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 52 (1990), pp. 344-361, at p. 344).

[18] We mean a 'profession' with a contract, a salary, etc.

[19] For instance, an individual has to know how to apply rules in a particular situation, or sometimes rules conflict with one another.

[20] D. Innerarity, *Libertad como passion* (Pamplona: Eunsa, 1992), pp. 42-43.

[21] By saying that an individual 'mediates' these elements, we mean that an individual has to 'establish a dialogue' with them in order to make the best decision.

[22] These principles are, as we can see, not only technical rules.

[23] See, for example, MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*: 139; "Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy", p. 143; "How Can We Learn What *Veritatis Splendor* Has To Teach?", p. 173; Wahre Selbsterkenntnis durch Verstehen unserer selbst aus der Perspektive anderer," pp. 676-677; "The Privatization of Good. An Inaugural Lecture", p. 344

[24] This is an example of how two different goods (privacy and, for instance, social safety) can conflict with each other. Or, strictly speaking, they can conflict with each other 'in some particular circumstances'. Such goods do not conflict with one other in themselves, but only in some particular circumstances. In some cases, there are additional rules that can help an individual to find out which good has to be protected in a particular situation; in other cases, it depends on the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*). This issue is an important issue for ethics (and also for professional ethics), but we cannot deal with it in this paper (whose aim is related to other issues), at least in a deep way.

[25] MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, pp. 115-116.

[26] MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, p. 139.

THE ARGUMENTATIVE TRADITION IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY[1]

Balaganapathi Devarakonda

A spirit of disintegration and disunity is conspicuous in the contemporary social as well as philosophical scenes. There is a celebration of fragmentations and differences. In such a scenario, no less than a person than Amartya Sen rose to the occasion and traced out the roots and the space of a democratic discourse that has been sustained in the Indian philosophical tradition. It is laudable that he opened up a discussion that will strengthen the democratic spirit which is missing in the present. This paper examines the 'dialogic tradition' projected by Sen in his *The Argumentative Indian* (2005). Following a general exposition of the significance of the dialogic tradition, a paradigm of argument is constructed to explicate the dynamics of argumentation. Further, the place of argumentation in the methodology of the Indian philosophical tradition as projected by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya is also discussed. The limitations of Sen's exposition of the Indian argumentative tradition are explicated, first by pointing out the problem of distinction between argument and dialogue and lack of an explicitly stated extended definition of heterodoxy. Next, this paper critically examines Sen's four important claims which are put forth as: 1. India has a strong argumentative tradition; 2. Participation in the argumentative tradition is not limited to a few sections of the society; 3. Heterodoxy contributed extensively to the argumentative tradition; and 4. the argumentative tradition has created a public sphere.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIALOGIC TRADITION

Amartya Sen's *The Argumentative Indian* rightly emphasizes the significance of the dialogic tradition in the formation of 'public reasoning' in which every one has a part, irrespective of gender and social distinctions.[2] He opined that, if used with care and commitment, the argumentative tradition can be extremely useful in resisting social inequality and in alleviating poverty and deprivation. The work also informs us of the role that heterodoxy plays in making the dialogic tradition lively and forming public reasoning. Sen states that 'the tradition of public reasoning is closely related to the roots of Democracy across the globe'.[3] Public reasoning, for him, includes the opportunity for citizens to participate in political discussions and to influence public choice. He adds that open discussions on important public issues can not only enhance society and our respective priorities, but also provide the opportunity for revising the chosen priorities in response to public discussion.

Sen, while applying dialogic tradition, heterodoxy, and public reasoning to the Indian tradition and pointing out instances from the Epics (such as Ramayana and Mahabharata), Upanishads, and medieval mystical

poets, argues that the richness of the tradition of argument 'has helped to make Heterodoxy the natural state of affairs in India: persistent arguments are an important part of our public life. Heterodoxy deeply influences Indian politics, and is particularly relevant to the development of Democracy in India and the emergence of its secular priorities'.[4]

PARADIGM OF ARGUMENT

The word "argument" is often used to mean a verbal dispute or disagreement, which is different from the way it is used in philosophy. When two people verbally disagree with each other, unless they merely resort to name calling or threats, they typically present an *argument for* their respective positions. An argument, here, is a connected series of statements or propositions, some of which are intended to provide justification or evidence for the truth of another statement or proposition. In philosophy, then, "arguments" are those statements a person makes in an attempt to convince someone of something, or present reasons for accepting a given conclusion. Arguments must be separated from other uses of language, such as conversation, explaining, giving an example or telling a story. In these cases, one might find a connected series of statements, but the author or speaker does not intend it to be the case that some of the statements provide support or evidence in favour of one of the others. So they are not arguments. Argument must also be distinguished from dialogue, which Sen often uses as interchangeably with argumentation – which will be discussed a little later in this paper. Let us now examine the form of the argument, in order to have a better understanding of the concept.

FORM OF AN ARGUMENT

Prerequisites of an Argument:	--- Parties committed to their views --- Equally shared platform with open minds --- Difference of opinion over an issue
Act of Argument:	--- Methodical reasoning --- Equal opportunity to contradict the opponent and to advocate his view --- Attempt to oppose or menace each other's views.
Outcome of the Argument:	--- One wins the argument; making the opponent realize the inadequacy of his view; making the opponent accept that his view is correct or valid. --- End in disagreement --- Compromise

From the above depiction, it is understood that argument begins with difference and continues to strengthen or weaken the difference in its course. But it may not necessarily result in dissolution of difference. Differences may continue or may become still stronger in the course of argumentation. Further, a defeated argument may refuse to go into oblivion; "A defeated argument that refuses to be obliterated can remain very alive".[5] The course of argument may strengthen both the parties or may weaken at least one of them. The methodical reasoning employed by the parties is vital to the whole course of argument. Sometimes the methodical reasoning may be compelling in the sense that it is capable of convincing someone about the truth of the conclusion. Such reasoning is mostly either inadequate or misleading, since it depends more on the skill of the person in constructing the argument to manipulate the person who is being convinced, and less on the objective truth or undeniability of the argument itself. Hence, though argumentation is a skill by itself, it should not be manipulative. If the motive is strictly winning the argument, then the methodical reasoning adopted may sometimes be compelling and manipulative. But if the argument is initiated with an open mind, then it could result either in winning or in disagreement, both of which can be of ideal value. Though the parties involved start the argument with differences of opinion over an issue and oppose each other's views, it is possible that the argument may end in either disagreement or compromise.

Arguments can be either static or interactive on the basis of the involvement of the 'other'. In a static argument, the other (*purvapaksha*) that is being represented for rejection (*khandana*) is inactive. The other, in this case, is presented to strengthen one's argument. In an interactive argument, the other is an active participant. The position of the other always shifts between the parties involved in the argument. The other is *purvapaksha* for both. Both parties – proposer and interlocutor – interchange their roles according to their position. The proposer and interlocutor have a more symmetrical relationship. The premises as well as the validity of the intermediate inferences would be discussed actively. Unlike the static argument, the interactive argument is dynamic in practice. The static argument is passive in the sense that it represents the argument from only one point of view. However, a static argument has the potency of generating a dynamic argument. For instance, a text which is passive in representing its argument can generate a lively argument, by going beyond its spacio-temporal limitations, as it increases the accessibility of the argument. An interactive argument is dynamic in nature, as both the parties put forth their arguments while criticising the other in an interactive mode. As mentioned above, the change of roles as proposer and interlocutor makes the argumentative process dynamic. In a dynamic mode of argumentation, not only the roles, but also the rules and the reasoning may change according to the need. A static argument, once laid down, is limited by itself and leaves no scope for modification of the rules or the reasoning. But in an interactive argument, the rules are always negotiable and reasoning can be

modified accordingly. Sometimes static arguments may also depict interactive ones. But such depictions are limited by the intentions and motivation of the presenter of the argument.

Often, it is observed that the hierarchical power structure of the existent social set up not only determines the argumentation process, but also defines the terms of discourse. Rarely do arguments, whether social, intellectual or political, go outside the existent paradigm. However, the rules of the argumentation, whether it is static or interactive, may sometimes be negotiable by the parties, although in many cases the rules are already determined by social mores. Sometimes argumentation is viewed more as a process of discovery than as the justification of a conclusion. Ideally, the goal of argumentation is for participants to arrive jointly at a conclusion, whether it be unity or difference, by mutually accepted inferences.

Let us now proceed to explicate the argumentative methodology of the Indian philosophical tradition, as projected by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya.

ARGUMENTATIVENESS OF THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITION

Sen affirms the existence of "a great many discussions and compositions of different kinds, conforming to the loquaciousness of the argumentative tradition in Indian philosophical texts".[6] These texts, according to him, include elaborate religious expositions and protracted defences, along with controversies between defenders of religiosity on one side, and advocates of general scepticism on the other. While stressing the existence of the argumentative tradition, Sen states, "in philosophical discourses throughout Indian history, atheists and sceptics make frequent appearances and even though, in many cases, their points of view are ultimately rejected, they do get their say".[7] Before we examine the claims of Sen regarding the *Argumentative tradition* of India, let us explicate the place of argumentation in the Indian philosophical tradition.

Argumentativeness is considered to be the starting point of the methodology of the Indian philosophical tradition. The source of this methodology was traced by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya to the Upanishads. The main point of the methodology, he maintains, consists in moving towards a philosophical position through a clash of ideas or through confrontation of a thesis with its anti-thesis – in short, through arguments. The Upanishadic word for this is *Vakovakya*,[8] which means the art of argument through the medium of question and answer.

Argument has two forms: destructive and constructive. Unlike the former, which leads us nowhere in the acquisition of knowledge, the latter plays a significant role in the advancement of knowledge. It aids the zeal for knowledge and its clarification improves the technique of communication and strengthens conviction by way of removing doubt in the pre-existing stock of knowledge.[9] The art of argumentation, taken seriously, raises

questions concerning evidence, reason and fallacious thinking. It is Gotama and Vatsayana who first made a clear cut statement of philosophical methodology as growing out of the technique of debate or argument – or, to be more specific, of the direct, frontal clash of ideas.

In Indian philosophical methodology, generally followed by most of the systems of philosophy, the 'final ascertainment' (*nirnaya*) of a philosophical position is based on the 'critical examination' (*Pariksha*). There can be no final ascertainment or *nirnaya* without critical examination or *pariksha*. *Pariksha*, in turn, is dependent on 'Doubt' or *Samsaya*. Doubt is the intellectual situation of being confronted by two philosophical positions, opposing and menacing each other. It is the doubt resulting from contradictory assertions about the same thing – the argumentation between the two – each wanting to negate the other; this is the beginning of philosophical activity in India. A questioning attitude is the starting point of argumentation or the frontal clash of ideas.

Though questioning is a necessary aspect of the argumentative process, one must note that, mere questioning cannot be taken to be an argument. Questioning can be of at least three kinds; 1. questioning to know or obtain knowledge, 2. questioning to bring out how far the other knows, and 3. questioning to critically evaluate a view. In the first case, the questioner is a seeker and the other is presupposed to be a knowledgeable person. The second presupposes a doubt regarding the knowledge of the other. Here the questioner is not as ignorant as the one in the first case. In both these cases, though interaction and questioning are involved, they cannot be regarded as arguments. Argumentation makes use of the third kind of questioning coupled with methodological reasoning. Both the parties involved would question the view of the other and critically evaluate it. In this process, both try to substantiate their views by providing support or evidence through logical reasoning. One can infer from this that only this kind of questioning leads to argumentation.

As argumentation is the beginning of philosophical activity, it has played a key role in strengthening the positions in the Indian philosophical systems. This argumentativeness is presented by the philosophers of India while putting forth their views in writing. They developed their views, first by confronting it with its opposite i.e., the opponent's view, called *purvapaksha*. Only on the basis of a more or less elaborate negation of it, they established their own thesis called *siddhanta*. There was a continuous interchange of argument and counter argument between the participants, resulting in a cumulative sophistication of the positions held in an intellectual achievement of the highest order of which any culture might be reasonably proud.[10] This is the general methodology which is argumentative in nature that is adopted by most of the philosophers of India.

Stressing the importance of argumentation, Daya Krishna stated that argumentation provides an interesting starting point for exploring those possibilities of thought which have been so brusquely or casually rejected in the text.[11] In a sense, the Indian philosophical texts provide a far greater

opportunity for such an exercise than most philosophical texts written in the Western tradition – as the Indian texts provide, in the very format of their presentation, the possible argument or arguments against their position and their reply to them. Daya Krishna highlighted the sophisticated reformulations of the views following the process of argumentation which avoid static repetitions on the part of the Indian thinkers, when he wrote:

> …the history of the debate on any philosophical issue documents, thinker by thinker, the development of the argument and the flaws pointed out by each in the position of the others. There was, however, in this matter no static repetition of positions but a modification of one's position in the light of opponents' trenchant criticism or even a more sophisticated reformulation of one's position in the light of those criticisms.[12]

While stating the *purvapaksha*, utmost care was taken by Indian thinkers to avoid static repetitions. This care facilitated a more sophisticated reformulation of one's position. Thus, undeniably, the argumentative nature has made a significant contribution to Indian philosophical thought. However, one must also note that there is always the socially constituted and ideologically legitimised hierarchy that was ruling the argumentative platform. The hierarchy could be of gender, or social, or of a socially constructed spiritual nature. This ideologically legitimised hierarchy often implicitly imposes its own constitutive prejudices and threats.

Let us now proceed to examine the limitations of Sen's exposition of the argumentative tradition of India, first by pointing out the problem of distinction between argument and dialogue and the lack of an explicitly-stated extended definition of heterodoxy, and then by critically examining his four important claims.

PROBLEM OF DISTINCTION: ARGUMENT AND DIALOGUE

Sen used the phrases 'Argumentative tradition' and 'Dialogic tradition' inter-changeably while referring to the Indian tradition. This inter-changeable use ignores the essential distinction between the two. Though both seem to be stressing the involvement of more than one person in the discussion, they are distinct in their character. 'Dialogue' is more of a general talk or conversation or discussion between two groups. But an 'argument' is an exchange of views, especially of a contentious nature, with the support of methodical reasoning by the parties or groups involved. Unlike a dialogue, an argument involves a disagreement regarding an issue, methodical reasoning by the parties involved, and the intention of each of the parties involved to challenge and oppose the other's views. Dialogue need not involve opposing groups, but an argument invariably presupposes opposing groups. All arguments, with some reservation, could be considered as discussions, but not all discussions are arguments.

DEFINITION OF HETERODOXY

A significant issue given very little attention by Sen is the definition of the term 'heterodoxy.' Sen opined that heterodoxy has contributed enormously to the argumentative tradition of India. He states

> The particular point of the focus on heterodoxy and loquaciousness is not so much to elevate the role of tradition in the development of India, but to seek a fuller reading of Indian traditions, which have interacted with other factors in the dynamism of Indian society and culture.[13]

Sen used the examples of heterodox philosophical traditions such as Jainism, Buddhism and Carvaka. Sen also mentioned the voices of the oppressed against the affluent as 'heterodoxy'. The Indian philosophical tradition in general categorizes those who do not accept the Vedic authority as a part of the heterodox traditions. Sen seems to be going beyond this traditionally accepted definition by including the voices of various marginalized groups of the both ancient and modern times. Participation in argumentation requires substantial logical skills besides participation in a dialogue. Argumentation is a specialised skill and cannot be a general opportunity as claimed by Sen.[14] Debate could serve as a better supplement to dialogue than argument, if Sen is only looking for a synonym. The claim for this extension or inclusiveness is in need of a clearly and explicitly stated definition of heterodoxy – something which has not been provided by Sen.

CRITIQUE OF SEN'S CLAIMS

Taking the above exposition to be the background of Sen's account of the argumentative tradition in Indian philosophy, let us now proceed to critically examine the four claims he makes.

1. India has a strong argumentative tradition
2. Participation in the argumentative tradition is not limited to a few sections of the society.
3. Heterodoxy contributed extensively to the argumentative tradition.
4. The argumentative tradition created a public sphere.

Sen provided instances from the Geeta and the Upanishads in support of his first claim. The discussion between Krishna and Arjuna is stated as an example of the argumentative tradition. It presents, according to Sen, "a tussle between two contrary moral positions – Krishna's emphasis on doing one's duty, on one side, and Arjuna's focus on avoiding bad consequences (and generating good ones), on the other".[15] One can certainly

extract two different moral positions from the discussion between Krishna and Arjuna, but whether doing one's duty and avoiding bad consequences can be contrary to each other is a debatable issue. If we take the main focus of the discussion to be doing one's duty and avoiding bad consequences and generating good ones, as Sen himself stated, then the two parties are arguing from two different standpoints, though both are talking about the same action. One is talking about the duty of the individual and the other is talking about the consequences of the action. Argument requires both the parties to be either equal or standing on an equal platform without being subjected to any threat. But unfortunately the parties involved in the discussion in the Geeta are neither equals, nor standing on the equal platform for discussion. Further, none of the characteristics that are discussed above with regard to an argument can be applicable to the Geeta. There is no disagreement regarding an issue. There is no methodical reasoning provided by both the parties involved in support of their views and to oppose or challenge the views of the other. The discussion between Krishna and Arjuna implicitly presupposes a spiritual hierarchy; one is enlightened and the other is a seeker. It is not methodical reasoning, but 'emotional despair' that prompts Arjuna to seek clarifications. Though there is active participation by both the parties and there is a process of questioning and answering involved, a mere conversation without employing any methodological reasoning or critical attitude towards the view of the other would fall short of qualifying as an argument. Further, the actual argument of the Geeta was held at an 'imagined situation' constructed by a war for existence. The situation of existential challenge cannot create any 'ideal space' for symmetrical argument. Thus, the Geeta cannot be regarded as an example of argument, neither static nor interactive, as it is a conversation between 'Realised and the Seeker'. A similar kind of criticism applies even to the Upanishadic texts. Daya Krishna, while referring to the dialogue contained in the Upanishads, noted that, "…they do not even attempt to provide the atmosphere of a real dialogue, for it is a dialogue between those who have known and realized the truth and others who have not."[16] The implications of the discussion may be very relevant to the present time, as Sen rightly points out, but that itself cannot prompt us to judge anything about the strength of Indian argumentative tradition.

While stating that one cannot expect the argumentational participation to be uniformly distributed over all segments of the population, Sen argued that in India it is not confined only to the more affluent and male literate. He pointed out the participation of women like Gargi and Maitreyi (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*) and Draupadi (*Mahabharata*) in support of his argument. But one has to accept that the number of women who were shown to be participants in the argumentative tradition were incomparably fewer and were only the participants in the dominant tradition. They neither questioned nor argued against the affluent tradition. If one goes through the discussions of Maitreyi and Gargi with that of Yajnavalkya, one would come across the questions of seekers rather than questions loaded with

methodical reasoning. To recall the above discussion, questioning can be of at least three kinds; questioning used to seek answers regarding unknown issues, questioning the knowledge of the other, and questioning employed to critically evaluate viewpoints. The discussions of Maitreyi and Gargi are of either the first or the second kind. They attempt either to know what is not known or to know whether the other knows anything. In the first case the questioner is ignorant and in the second case the questioner attempts to prove the ignorance of the other. In any case, if the questioning is pursued beyond a point, there is always a threat to life.[17]

While claiming that argumentative encounters have "frequently crossed the barriers of class and caste"[18], Sen points to religious movements such as Jainism and Buddhism which have played quite a large role in the rebellious religious movements against the superiority of the priestly caste. According to Sen, they stood for human equality and protested and resisted the system of social hierarchy. Though both religious movements stressed the importance of equality, they themselves were caught up in the complicated structure of hierarchy. Subsequent to their initial[19] propagation of egalitarianism, they slowly succumbed to the hierarchical structure of the Indian tradition.

Heterodoxy in India, Sen maintains, has contributed extensively to the argumentative tradition, and underestimating this would give an inadequate picture of Indian thought. While pointing out the selective inattention paid to rationalist parts of this Indian heritage, Sen states that "an inadequately inclusive understanding of Indian heterodoxy is particularly important for appreciating the reach and range of heterodoxy in the country's intellectual background and diverse history".[20] It is true that the range of heterodoxy is underrepresented in contemporary accounts of the Indian tradition. Sen points to the constant neglect of the frequent appearance of atheists and sceptics in philosophical discourses throughout Indian history. But one must note that even these frequent appearances may be selective representations, presented on the basis of their possibility of being rejected. That is why most of the interesting accounts of the arguments involving members of disadvantaged groups tend to be biased.

Sen mentions Carvaka and Buddhism as the examples of the extensive contribution of heterodoxy to the argumentative tradition. Before we say anything about Carvaka, it must be noted that there are no original accounts of their philosophy written by their own exponents. Whatever material is available, is so through the selective representations of secondary sources.[21] These secondary sources do not depict any form of argumentation; rather they provide a pre-conceived representation of a defeated point. Though Carvaka is represented selectively, if not honestly, with the motive of defeating its tenets, one must be happy for at least an acknowledgement of its existence. These selective representations are cases of static argumentation, in which the other – in this case Carvaka – is neither active nor interactive. They are representations constrained by the intentions and the motives of the presenters. The ulterior motives of the

presenters may have thrown some or most of the dissenting voices, both unconquerable and weak, into oblivion.

Buddhist councils were mentioned by Sen for their contribution to the Indian argumentative tradition. Sen opines that these councils "also addressed the demands of social and civic duties, and furthermore helped in a general way, to consolidate and promote the tradition of open discussion on contentious issues".[22] But if one looks at the history of these councils and the discussions that went on in the course of the meetings of the councils, one may wonder, how far were they addressing the demands of social and civic duties? It may be true that they promoted the tradition of open discussion on contentious issues, but they were limited to issues of religious practices. A cursory view of the origin of the councils would reveal that they were invented by brilliant Buddhist monks in order to resolve religious conflicts. Some of the topics include the authoritative versions of the sacred texts, the *Tripitakas*, and the conduct and status of the Arhat.[23] Interestingly, instead of resolving the conflicts as conceived by the monks, the councils ended up in schism. Though the Buddhist councils can be regarded as the earliest attempts of brilliant Buddhists to facilitate open discussion, they were limited to religious practices of *sangha*.

Sen also claims that the argumentative tradition in India has created a public sphere which has to be carefully scrutinised. In its ideal form, the public sphere is made up of private individuals gathered together as a public, and articulating the needs of society with the state. Through acts of assembly and dialogue, the public sphere generates opinions and attitudes which serve to affirm or challenge – and, therefore, to guide – the affairs of state. In ideal terms, the public sphere is the source of public opinion needed to "legitimate authority in any functioning democracy".[24] Creation of a public sphere through argumentation is desirable and democratic, but it is only possible in an ideal situation. Even Jurgen Habermas, the most influential contemporary proponent of public sphere, opined that the public sphere is a virtual or imaginary community which does not necessarily exist in any identifiable space.[25] For a society like that of India with manifold cultures and religions possessing well-formulated ideologically imposed hierarchical systems, it would be a difficult dream to realise. Sen's claim, as pointed above, has a number of limitations. If we take the strength of the argumentative tradition to be the participation of people from all sections of society, then his discussion on the extent and reach of the argumentative tradition is not sufficient. We must note that the examples of less affluent and privileged people, which Sen provided, are not a representative sample. One should be careful in taking support of exceptions for forming generalisations. Though the participation in the argumentative tradition is not limited to a few privileged groups, the place and participation of the less privileged is very marginal and negligible. Further, one must also note that, as Sen himself pointed out, it is doubtful whether the sceptical arguments put forth belonged to the people to whom they are attributed, as they are the representations of a third person. One must see this to be a case of static

argument. These static arguments are mostly presented to defeat another or to prove another inadequate. It would also be possible that some of the authors had their vested interests and might have constructed the sceptical arguments in order to highlight the point they want to make.

Finally, Sen takes a leap in his argument from the existence of argumentative tradition to the resultant creation of a public sphere. The meagre evidences available can only prove the existence of the argumentative tradition, but they cannot conclusively establish the creation of public sphere. One should note in this context that, even among these meagre evidences, whenever there is an involvement of the less privileged in a dialogue or discussion, there was a possible threat to the life of the less privileged. Thus, the limitations and the threats of the argumentative tradition have curtailed the creation of a public sphere in India.

CONCLUSION

The limitations of Sen's account of an argumentative tradition of India, as pointed out above, do not undermine the relevance of an argumentative tradition in the formation of public reasoning which promotes democracy and upholds public sphere. The distinction between dialogue and argument is not maintained by Sen, which undermines the significance of argument. Further, though he seems to be advocating the voice of the dissent as heterodoxy, this is not explicitly stated as an extended definition, in contrast to the traditionally accepted one. The projection of the discussion between Arjuna and Krishna in the Geeta, as an instance of argumentation, can be contested, as it belongs neither to Static nor to Interactive forms of argument. Though it involves interaction and questioning, it does not carry the weight of the argument since it lacks the commitment to a particular standpoint and use of methodical reasoning in support of it. In contrast to the claim of Sen, there is discrimination on the basis of gender, class and caste in the Indian philosophic tradition. Whatever instances Sen provides in support of his claim are only exceptions, and no generalisation can be drawn on the basis of exceptions. An author's representation of an opponent's argument would always be limited by the possibility of refutation. Mostly an opponent's view (i.e., *purvapaksha*) is presented to suit the refutation. This prompts us to wonder whether there is any honest representation of the opponent at all.

Though Buddhist councils, for the first time in Indian history, facilitated a space for open discussion, they were limited only to religious issues and did not extend to other socially relevant matters. Since the Indian argumentative tradition is restrictive in scope, it could not create a public sphere. But this should not be surprising; there is no distinction between a public and a private sphere in the Indian tradition.

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NOTES

[1] I have benefited from suggestions and comments made by Dr. Tirupathi Rao, Dr. K.M. Anil, Mr. Srikumar, Ms. Anuradha and Ms. Sridevi in the course of developing this paper. I record my gratitude to them.

[2] Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian. Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2005), pp. 3-33.

[3] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 12.

[4] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 12.

[5] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 6.

[6] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 23.

[7] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 25.

[8] Chandogya Upanishad. VII. 1.1-4.

[9] Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *What is Living and What is Dead in Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1993), p. 5.

[10] Daya Krishna, "Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What It Ought to Be?" in *Interpreting Across Boundaries: New Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, eds. Gerald James Larson & Eliot Deutsch (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1989), p. 76.

[11] Daya Krishna, "Thinking vs Thought. Strategies for Conceptual Creativity," *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research,* Vol. V, No.2 (1988), pp. 45-57, at pp. 50-51.

[12] Daya Krishna, "Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What It Ought to Be?," p. 75.

[13] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 30.

[14] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. xiii.

[15] *The Argumentative Indian,* pp. 3-4.

[16] Daya Krishna, "Thinking vs Thought," p. 50.

[17] The two questions referred to by Sen that are asked by Gargi, while seemingly challenging Yajnavalkya, are one and the same. They represent the thirst of a seeker to know the ultimate eternal reality which is above the heavens, beneath the earth and between these two – the heaven and the earth – and that which is said to exist in the past, the present and the future (See D.S. Sarma, *The Upanishads: An Anthology* [Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1961], p 222). At yet another place in the same Upanishad, when the discussion is probed further by Gargi, Yajnavalkya warns her by saying,

"O Gargi! Do not ask too much, lest your head should fall off" (*maatiiprakshiirmaa te muurdhaa vyapatpadanati*! Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, VII. Up. III.1, 4-9. 7. – from D.S. Sharma, p. 216).

[18] Sen, *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 10.

[19] Only probable exception to such a religious movement is the Bhakti movement.

[20] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 25.

[21] Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya has made a significant contribution to Indian philosophical heritage by reconstructing the philosophical doctrines of Carvaka.

[22] *The Argumentative Indian,* p. 15.

[23] Nalinaksha Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass. 1998), pp. 15-23.

[24] Paul Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), p. 18.

[25] See, for example, Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, tr. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), and his "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere", in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, tr. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992) Though it is not intended to impose the Habermasian paradigm on Sen's view, one should be made aware of the significant discussion regarding public sphere. The success of the public sphere, as it is pointed out by Rutherford (*Endless Propaganda*, p. 18), depends upon; i. the extent of access (as close to universal as possible), ii. the degree of autonomy (citizens must be free of coercion), iii. the rejection of hierarchy (so that each might participate on an equal footing), iv. the rule of law (particularly the subordination of the state) and v. the quality of participation (the common commitment to the ways of logic). One can observe problems in applying all these aspects to the Indian Argumentative tradition and the consequent creation of a public sphere.

BOOK REVIEWS

Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008. ISBN 978-0-8028-4692-1. Paperback, 361 pages, $24.00.

Steven Bouma-Prediger, Professor of Religion at Hope College in Michigan and Brian Walsh, campus Minister at the University of Toronto, are both accomplished scholars as well as practical, involved Christian activists, particularly in environmental sciences and urban and housing affairs. They represent the best in progressive, evangelical, eco-theology. In this wide-ranging, deeply Christian and biblical volume, they have assembled a *tour de force* on the meaning of home and homelessness, in all forms: socioeconomic, ecological, cultural, and postmodern. They also describe the Christian goal of their quest: "redemptive homecoming." In a creative and Christian way, the authors take on a key issue in our postmodern and globalized world – displacement. "To be displaced. To be disconnected from place. To 'diss' place. That's our current place. We in North America live in a culture of displacement" (p. xii). And thus, most of us are never really "at home." Neighborhood, town, city, country, even church and creation have all become alien. The volume is broad and deep and, like Christianity itself, very demanding.

In the midst of a global real estate and economic melt-down and global migration, Bouma-Prediger and Walsh confront this culture of displacement, this homelessness – not only of the urban poor and rural immigrant, but also of the middle and upper class – with a radical biblical faith. The church is envisioned as the body of Christ and bodies, of course, need place. "This is not a faith about passing through this world, but a faith that declares this world – this blue-green planet so battered and bruised, yet lovely – as our home" (p. xii).

This confrontation is played out using the best of evangelical and radical orthodoxy thinkers, and makes for a fascinating read. The argument presented unfolds in a number of intricate steps, all leading to "homecoming." The first step involves memory. There is no vision, no hope for our culture of displacement apart from memory. We need to remember the promise – the memory of past homemaking. The argument teased out is that the Jewish and Christian scriptures present us with an unforgettable vision of home, a devastatingly tragic but true picture of homebreaking but also an empowering hope for homemaking and homecoming. The second and key step is the authors' central claim that God's creation is all about our finding and having a sense of home. This step clearly puts us out of step with what Bouma-Prediger and Walsh see as the socio-economic and cultural focus of our times. They use a wild and wide array of resources to develop this point – from philosophers, social scientists, environmentalists

and theologians to the *Wizard of Oz* and "Somewhere over the Rainbow." Walter Bruggeman and N. T. Wright are their most obvious biblical guides. Each chapter is followed by a "Biblical Interlude," a kind of hermeneutical theological retelling of biblical stories in relation to current issues of home and homelessness.

The discussion of home as a redemptive gift in this postmodern world is bolstered by appeals to Martin Heidegger, David Tracy, Peter Berger, John Milbank and Jacques Derrida, among many others. Their arguments are woven into a rich, biblical fabric, along with personal testimony and stories of urban and rural homeless and migrants, government hearings, urban planning and environmental studies. Particular cases studied tend to be from Canada. Poetry and pop music blend with scholarship. Wendell Berry and Bruce Cockburn provide lyrics and melody, and the outcome is both heady and heartfelt.

Nine chapters bring the reader through the authors' description of a culture of displacement, amnesia, and homelessness to a phenomenological description of the meaning of home. From there, they analyze some practical implications of social, economic, ethnic, and racial factors in homelessness and displacement – worldviews, rights, public policy and planning, and role of church in these affairs. They then move on to questions of environment and ecology and the biblical vision of Shalom – "homemaking and earthkeeping."

The final chapters provide a Christian biblical response to "postmodern migrants and homeless consumers." Most of us are programmed to think of homelessness in terms of the vague, cold figures who wait outside our subway stops in hope of a hand-out, but Bouma-Prediger and Walsh widen that picture to include even the well-off business man who spends his time on an airplane and the middle-class family constantly seeking to sell-off and trade-up their homes. The authors' response is the imaginative construction of hope based on biblical faith, which they call "Redemptive Homecoming." It involves trusting God but also taking the shackles off our imaginations; "…we are all homeless, but there is a home in which our yearning hearts can and will find rest" (p. 320).

Bouma-Prediger and Walsh have done us a great service by emphasizing homelessness and displacement as much more than a real estate or economic issue. The issue reveals a crisis of worldviews. But they might have helped their argument with more discussion of the economics of balance and growth, further exposition of the role of Christian social thought, and the importance of faith-based organizing. They clearly present the conflict, even demise, of grand narratives in this postmodern age, but then proceed to the biblical narrative of redemptive homecoming. For me, this makes sense but needs the intervening steps of arguing the validity of Christian and Jewish social principles and showing them in practice. The volume leads us to a fundamental option in contemporary theology: the relation between the sacred and the secular. I would love to see this text discussed and debated in dialogue with Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*.

The book is an excellent resource for college courses, adult education programs, and para-liturgies celebrating social justice and/or environmental themes. However, covering so much ground, the argument sometimes becomes hard to follow. Summaries and perhaps a few reflection questions at the end of each chapter would help.

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Karim Douglas Crow, ed., *Islam, Cultural Transformation, and the Re-Emergence of Falsafah: Studies Honoring Professor George Francis McLean on his Eightieth Birthday* (Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy, 2008). xiii + 179 pp.

A festschrift in honour of George McLean, O.M.I., Professor Emeritus at the Catholic University of America and Founder of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, this volume offers ten essays each of which deals with one or more of the titular themes. The authors were asked to "focus on specific contexts of Muslim cultures with an eye toward cultural transformation," (p. viii) and further to inspire the contributors to reflection, Fr. McLean himself provided the following statement:

> Given the global social-political and economic transformations underway, there is a need to shift into a period of social reconstruction. Philosophy may now draw upon the cultural resources of many world peoples and apply them in a creative retrieval of the dignity of persons and societies. What is sought is a new integration of humanity with nature, of persons with society, and of the secular with the sacred. (p. viii)

The result is an eclectic volume of topics unified by their common reflection on the questions 'how may philosophy emerge from culture?' and 'how may culture emerge from philosophy?'

The first two essays are eminently scholarly in detail and presentation. Fr. Joseph Kenny's contribution, "Ibn Sînâ and the Origin of Human Life", is a presentation (in Arabic and English) of Book 8, Chapter 16 of Avicenna's *al-Shifâ'* (*The Cure*), with Fr. Kenny's commentary. The text is a section from Avicenna's treatise on animals, in which he presents his position on the genesis at conception of the sensitive and intellective souls. Amid critical analysis, Kenny highlights the ways Avicenna's conclusions as a physician and natural philosopher depart from the received (and Qur'anic) legal position (*fiqh*) that 'spirit is breathed' into the flesh many days after conception.

In the next essay, "Is *ens per se* the Definition of Substance in Avicenna?" Gholamreza Aavani wishes to correct Étienne Gilson's answer to the title question, claiming that Gilson "merged two questions into one" (p. 21), namely, the textual question of whether scholars can find the relevant text in Avicenna and the philosophical question of the substantiality of God. Aavani points out that Gilson focused only on chapter 4 of tract 8 of Avicenna's *Metaphysica*, which is devoted to special rather than general metaphysics, and Gilson consequently failed to find Avicenna teaching that substance is *ens per se* (as St. Thomas cites, in *De potentia* 9.7). Aavani also provides an appendix with a translated passage from Avicenna's logical work *Kitāb al Burhān*, in which Avicenna offers an explicit teaching of the doctrine.

The next four essays offer prescriptions for merging Islamic philosophy and contemporary secular culture. Karim Crow presents the thesis that we ought to 'reconceptualize' our understanding of 'intelligence' away from the predominant information-processing model and toward the Islamic conception of *'aql*. *'Aql* is comprised of not only narrated reports (i.e. reason-giving, serving as the basis for legal rulings), but also an 'infused wisdom', a 'light in the heart', amounting to a kind of "innate intelligence in matters of faith." (p. 47) For Crow, reconceptualizing human intelligence as *'aql* would restore the notion of non-scientific modes of knowing, thus giving faith a renewed appreciation as being not irrational but a-rational. He also offers a curious thesis that a misreading al-Ghazālī's critique of falsafah has been responsible for the current mistrust in Islamic intellectual heritage.

Yasien Mohamed presents medieval ethicist Raghib Isfahānī's integration of Aristotle within Isfahānī's own Islamic theory of justice. Mohamed is writing against viewing the call for the 'Islamization' of knowledge as meaning that knowledge must be changed to 'become more Islamic' (whatever this may mean). Against this, Mohamed proposes that instead "we may transform the secular epistemic paradigm which informs contemporary knowledge," (p. 59) in explanation of which he says that "the secular paradigm will be replaced by an Islamic paradigm elaborated from our understanding of human nature and creation," and that "secular concepts and terms are replaced or expanded by faith-based conceptions and terms mediating our own values & concerns." (p. 60) He offers as examples of such transformations that "human law might be expanded by divine intent, gods may be replaced by One God, and worldly happiness could be extended to otherworldly happiness." (p. 60) The first is what Isfahānī does with Aristotle, "replacing Aristotle's notion of human law with divinely revealed law (*Sharī'ah*), by regarding justice of the self as the basis for justice towards others, and bringing in benevolence to temper justice." (p. 75) Mohamed is sympathetic to Islamization as "a response to secular modernity" (p. 62) but his worry seems to be that it is not integrative of other modes of knowledge in the (true philosophic) spirit of e.g., al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, who looked to Hellenic knowledge in conjunction with

Islamic teaching, "integrating them into an authentic Islamic worldview." (p. 62) Mohamed says, "Once foreign knowledge is integrated into an Islamic context, it becomes naturalized and indigenous to Islam." (p. 62) Isfahānī's treatment of Aristotle is presented as a model of how secular knowledge is to be 'naturalized' to Islam (perhaps not fully convincingly, but that is an especially tall order).

Burhanettin Tatar addresses the "severe tension or anxiety" (p. 88) Muslims experience when considering the Qur'an as achieving a complete worldview and at the same time offering a re-interpretable living text relevant to present-day concerns. Tatar identifies this tension between the letter and the spirit as a "split consciousness" of many Muslims. He notes that in the 'Golden Age of Islam' – roughly from the time of al-Kindī's school to the Mongol siege of Baghdad in 1258 – Muslim jurists held that "the Qur'an maintains a universal relevance to every human historical and immaterial condition thanks to the rationally attainable correspondence between the inherent sapientially ordered 'nature' of thinks and Divine hukm (wise ordinance)." (p. 82) Tatar proposes a Qur'anic hermeneutic, influenced by his reading of Hans-Georg Gadamer, whereby the past reveals itself within the continually unfolding present, which present includes "art, politics, commerce, religious knowledge and rituals, science, daily cultural practices, customs, and even humor and tragedy"; thus 'tradition' becomes not mere 'knowledge of the past', but rather "the nexus of historical continuities linking the past and the present." (p. 91) Tatar sees this vision as consistent with McLean's hermeneutical project to replace culture 'clash' with 'complementarity'.

Rahim Nohabar, in a substantial essay, presents the position of Islamic Teaching on the question of a division between public and private spheres. He distinguishes two issues: first, how Islam treats the public and private as domains separate from the state, and second, how Islamic Teachings differ on the public-private demarcation of classical or orthodox Liberalism. Nohabar offers various examples from early and current Islamic legal thinking to argue that Islam respects and values individual privacy. At the same time, Islamic Teachings "do not agree with the absolute distinction between the public and the private sphere as it is recognized in classic Liberalism." (p. 140) Nohabar notes that the Qur'an teaches that "all aspects of a Muslim's life are under the dominion of a coherent spectrum of values"; the upshot is that "Muslim peoples formulate their identity freely through careful consideration of their Islamic tradition". (p. 131)

The final four essays are very much focused on presenting McLean's philosophy and approach to culture complementarity. Md. Sirajul Islam's essay is a broad review of how Islam and Hinduism came together to forge Indian culture. He praises and follows Fr. McLean's goal for a common global pluralist culture, focusing on the experience of Indian Muslims. The author ends on a programmatic note: "In forging a global pluralist culture we shall take care to guard their specific identity.

Preserving their unique identities yields a more inclusive cultural whole sharing certain common characteristics." (p. 110)

Musa S. Dibadj's essay, "McLean About Us", suggests that current globalization cannot offer humans a new anthropology. Dibadj presents McLean as "aim[ing] at an integral reconstruction of the whole in which another reality, society or culture occupies its place in the ultimate completeness of the human being. This aspect of McLean's hermeneutics is all the more remarkable in that no other hermeneutical vision rivals any comparable theory of the reconstruction or re-creation of culture." (p. 141) Thus McLean's stance is more promising than the present eighteenth-century-rooted Enlightenment political philosophy of individualism and subjectivism.

The final two offerings from Latif H.S. Kazmi and Asna Husin are reflections on Fr. McLean's dedication and vision. Kazmi, tracking McLean's accomplishments and emphasizing his scholarship on al-Ghazālī, also praises McLean's firm belief in God as that "which oriented him to serve people of all faiths, to communicate with them and to work out the modalities for inter-faith, inter-cultural and inter-societal dialogues and for extracting commonalities between religions, cultural groups and societies." (p. 157) Husin, reflecting on McLean's remark: "I hope Muslims never become secularized", considers the relevance of McLean's ideology for modern Indonesia, highlighting "the core of Professor McLean's life mission of forging global cooperation and interchange of philosophical insights among faith communities and thinking believers to address the vital concerns of the age for the sake of our common good." (p. 176)

The volume includes a brief and laudatory introductory summary of Fr. McLean's accomplishments, as well as many statements of his mission, one of which, from Kazmi, I include here as exemplary of the tone of reverence taken by various contributors: "It is McLean's firm faith, devotion and commitment which enables him to work insistently in cultivating the atmosphere of love, togetherness and faithful rational communication for cross-cultural dialogue, freedom of thought and expression, respect for human rights, inter-faith understanding, democratic co-existence, value-based governance and sensible humane unity in diversity." (p. 157) The essays succeed in addressing issues of importance, and throughout the book, Father McLean's students, colleagues and contemporaries very much present him as engaged as "a sage seeking wisdom".

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