

Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change
Series I. Culture and Values, Volume 50

Philosophy Re-engaging Cultures and Ways of Life

Edited by
William Sweet and George F. McLean

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

**Copyright © 2022 by
The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy**

Gibbons Hall B20
620 Michigan Ave. NE
Washington, DC 20064

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication

Names: Sweet, William, editor. | McLean, George F., editor.

Title: Philosophy re-engaging cultures and ways of life / edited by William Sweet, George F. McLean.

Description: Washington, DC : Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, [2020] | Series: Cultural heritage and contemporary change. Series I, Culture and values ; volume 50 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018053749 | ISBN 9781565183384 (pbk.)

Subjects: LCSH: Philosophy.

Classification: LCC B29 .P525583 2019 | DDC 100--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018053749>

Table of Contents

Preface	vii
<i>William Sweet</i>	
Introduction: What Is It for Philosophy to Re-engage Culture?	1
<i>William Sweet and George F. McLean</i>	
Part I. Openness to the Other	
1. Varieties of Religious and Secular Spirituality	23
<i>Stelios Virvidakis</i>	
2. Kant's Openness to the Other: Not Just a Matter of Faith	38
<i>Konstantinos Polias</i>	
3. Finding Values in African Traditional Thought and Ways of Life: A Defense of Reconstructionist Ontology	57
<i>Ruth M. Lucier</i>	
4. African Philosophy, "Unique-Mania," and Intercultural Philosophy	68
<i>Anthony C. Ajah</i>	
5. The Subaltern Perspective on Social Justice	80
<i>Ramesh Chandra Sinha</i>	
6. Sri Aurobindo's <i>The Renaissance in India</i> : A Study in Spiritual Regeneration	87
<i>Thummapudi Bharathi</i>	
7. The Jaina Philosophy of <i>Anekantavada</i> as a Way of Life for Communal Harmony and Social Peace	94
<i>Rekha Singh</i>	
8. The De-estrangement of Metaphysics	99
<i>Gholamreza A'avani</i>	
9. Metaphysics as the Way from Phenomenology to Theology	110
<i>Oliva Blanchette</i>	
10. Beauty, Pleasure, Perfection: On the Theological Constitution of Consciousness	120
<i>John Panteleimon Manoussakis</i>	
11. Homo Orans	132
<i>Wilhelm Dancă</i>	
12. Critical and Relational Ontology: Parallels between Joseph Kaipayil and Christos Yannaras	144
<i>Sotiris Mitralexis</i>	
13. Mystical Language as a Method of Expression in Islamic Spirituality	155
<i>Ruzana Pskhu</i>	
14. Playing with <i>Tao</i> : The Art of the Qin and its World View	162
<i>Wang Shang-Wen</i>	

15. Plato's Theory of Love 174
Vasiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou

Part II. Embodiment and Spirit

16. Seeing Self (*Jiva*), Seeing as Self (*Atman*), and
 Seeing Self as Ultimate Consciousness (*Brahman*) 189
Indra Nath Choudhuri
17. Three Dimensions of the Research on the Concept
 of Body in Chinese Philosophy 204
Yan Lianfu
18. Karol Wojtyla on the Psychosomatic Integrity of
 the Human Person 216
Jove Jim S. Aguas
19. The Human Being as Integrated Matter and Spirit and
 its Meaning for Aesthetic Perception in the Global Age 228
Katia Lenehan
20. Skillful Knowledge and an Epistemology of Embodiment 244
Cheng Sumei
21. Body as a Garment: Understandings of Body in Christianity 258
Dan Chițoiu
22. Recognizing Who We Are: Arendt and Ricoeur on
 the *Bios Politikos* 264
Mark Gedney
23. On the Self-awareness of Life 277
Yu Xuanmeng
24. Perception, Dualism, and Free Will 294
Chen Gang
25. Mou Zongsan's Interpretation of Kant and
 the Transformation of Traditional Chinese Philosophy 306
Pong Wen-berng

Part III. Cultures and Philosophies as Ways of Life

26. Wittgenstein's Conception of Philosophy as a Way of Life 323
Chrysoula Gitsoulis
27. Philosophy and the Limits of Language:
 Living Myth as a Way of Life 331
Troy R. Mack
28. Philosophy as a Faith and a Way of Life 349
S. R. Bhatt
29. Translation as a Bridge between Cultures 352
A. T. Kulsaryieva and Zh. A. Zhumashova
30. Recent Philosophizing as Re-engaging Culture as a Way of Life 359
Marietta Stepanyants

31. Social Solidarity as the Foundation for Democracy in Vietnam <i>Pham Van Duc</i>	370
32. Human Development, Culture, and Socialism in Vietnam <i>Tran Tuan Phong</i>	381
33. Multicultural India and the Politics of Recognition: Envisaging Indian Culture as a Way of Life <i>Sreekala M. Nair</i>	390
34. Philosophising Acholi Culture as a Way of Life <i>Wilfred Lajul and Benedetta Lanfranchi</i>	400
35. Ubuntu as a Human Right <i>Mogabe B. Ramose</i>	418
36. The Jain Way of Life: A Philosophical Perspective <i>Geeta Mehta</i>	433
37. The Practice of <i>laku</i> in Javanese Culture: A Southeast Asian Way of Life in Times of Global Crisis <i>Alois Agus Nugroho</i>	452
38. Philosophy and Culture: Thinking about Global Crises <i>Jānis (John) Tāivaldis Ozoliņš</i>	459
39. Democratic Criticism of Philosophy, Humanities, and the Arts <i>Héctor Muzzopappa</i>	474
40. Changes in the Contemporary Character of Lithuanian Society and Paradigmatic Developments in Recent Philosophy <i>Jurate Morkuniene</i>	479
41. Culture and Ecological Responsibility in the Global Era: A Philosophical Perspective from Latin America <i>H. Daniel Dei</i>	486
42. Environmental Ethics and Responsibility <i>Luiz Paulo Rouanet</i>	492
43. Indigenous Climate Knowledge in Africa and the Need for Global Climate Justice <i>Workineh Kelbessa</i>	502
44. Corporate Social Philosophy: Challenges in the Philosophy of Business in Global Times <i>Engelbert C. Pasag and Rhonda Padilla</i>	523
45. Changing the Culture of ‘Anti-Politics’ <i>William Sweet</i>	528
46. Bioethics as an Intercultural Bridge <i>Tsai Wei-Ding</i>	539
Contributors	
Index	549
	555

Preface

William Sweet

In 2013, philosophers from around the world gathered in Athens on the occasion of the XXIII World Congress of Philosophy. That Congress had, as its theme, “Philosophy as inquiry and way of life,” and the organisers sought to provide a way in which the discussion of philosophical method, but also the practice of philosophy, could be discussed.

The theme of philosophy as a “way of life,” then, invited philosophers to reflect not only on how philosophy is a way of life, but how philosophers do or might engage the various ways of life and cultures in which they live and work. While many papers on the program of the World Congress took up methodological and epistemological issues, a number of others focused on philosophy as practical wisdom and on philosophy and public life, following the Socratic injunction that the unexamined life is not worth living.

Questions of the relation of philosophy to cultures and ways of life had long been a major concern of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP). The RVP publishes a book series on the theme of Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change, and many of the conferences that it has co-ordinated or organized over some forty years have sought to examine how philosophy is a product of, but also bears on culture. In 2008, in Seoul, Korea,¹ for example, the RVP sponsored a conference on “Philosophy Emerging from Culture,” just prior to the XXII World Congress on “Philosophy Facing World Problems.” In 2003, in Istanbul, Turkey, on the occasion of the XXI World Congress on “Philosophy Facing World Problems,” the RVP held a “pre-World Congress” conference on “The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions: A Global Perspective.”²

In 2010, the RVP, under the direction of its late President, George F. McLean, proposed that the RVP organize another “pre-World Congress” conference at the XXIII World Congress of Philosophy in 2013; it would allow philosophers to focus on aspects of the World Congress, but in a more intimate environment. The theme of the pre-Congress conference was “Culture and Philosophy as Ways of Life in Times of Global Change.” McLean and the RVP brought together scholars from some 35 countries and, in close to 100 papers over a three day period, participants dealt with issues on how philosophy has reengaged, or can re-engage cultures and ways of life, and how philosophy can contribute to humanity’s global future.

¹ *Philosophy Emerging from Culture*, eds. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Oliva Blanchette, and Wonbin Park (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2013).

² *The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions: A Global Perspective*, eds. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Tomonobu Imamichi et al. (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008).

That conference on “Culture and Philosophy as Ways of Life in Times of Global Change” not only offered different perspectives on the World Congress theme, but different perspectives on philosophy, and on what counts as philosophy. In the present volume, containing a selection of some of the papers presented at the pre-Congress conference, the reader will find that, for some authors, there is little distinction between philosophy and culture and way of life. For others, philosophies are to be discerned or extracted from cultures and ways of life, and for yet others, philosophies not only engage, but may call into question cultures and ways of life.

The primary purpose of this volume, like that of the conference on which it was based, is to examine closely whether, and if so how, philosophies that are a part of and a product of culture, can continue to engage and re-engage ways of life. This volume also seeks to look closely at some of the presuppositions of the theme of the World Congress, but also to prepare an agenda for future philosophical debate.

Unfortunately, George McLean did not live to see the publication of this volume. Nevertheless, it is, along with the continuing work of the RVP and its various book series, particularly that on “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change,” part of his immense legacy.

Introduction

What Is It for Philosophy to Re-engage Culture?

William Sweet and George F. McLean

Concepts and Contexts

Issues of culture – of individual and collective identity, of the place of custom and tradition, of awareness of ethnicity, social class, gender, political ideologies, law and political order, religion, social geography, nationality, and, inevitably, the phenomenon of xenophobia – are likely more recognized now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, than they have ever been. Advances in technology and communication allow people to be aware – almost instantly aware – of cultures, beliefs, and cultural practices from around the globe, of their diversity, and of the differences among them. Many nations, including many long-standing, ethnically homogeneous nations, have encountered the plurality of cultures – dealing not only with those ‘outside’ but, increasingly, with refugees and immigrants. In some quarters, there is a desire to recognize and accommodate this diversity. But, at the same time, there have also been allegations of a clash of cultures or civilizations.¹ These issues of culture are all issues in which philosophy has a stake, and to which philosophers, arguably, can make a contribution.

The theme of this volume is “re-engaging culture.” Such a theme invites a number of questions – and perhaps the most obvious is, ‘What is culture?’ The term culture is a vague and contested one.² In a mid-20th century study of the notion, Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn provided some 164 different senses of the term, and the more than 60 years since then

¹ See, for example, William Sweet, *Cultural Clash and Religion* (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2014).

² Among the many discussions of the nature and meaning of culture are those of Matthew Arnold, *Philistinism in England and America*, in *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, vol. X, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 59; T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948); Ernest Gellner, *Culture, Identity, and Politics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1983); Fredric Jameson, “Culture and Finance Capital,” and “The Brick and the Balloon: Architecture, Idealism and Land Speculation,” in *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), and *Theory of Culture: Lectures at Rikkyo* (Tokyo: Y. Hamada, 1994); Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1994); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

have led to additions to this list.³ Still, while it is, in general, important to be aware of the vagueness and ambiguity of the term, in the context of the present volume, and without being too presumptuous, the classic definition of the anthropologist, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor – that culture “is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”⁴ – provides a working understanding of the term.

The theme of this volume also invites the question, “What does it mean to re-engage culture?” To re-engage suggests that there has already been some engagement or, at the very least, some relationship. While the claim that there is an essential dependence of philosophy upon culture has been contested, it is nevertheless widely accepted that philosophy emerges from, and is a product of culture.⁵ For example, it is in culture that one finds the language and values used by philosophy, and culture determines in large part, if not entirely, the concerns and kinds of questions that philosophy addresses. Indeed, it is from the culture that the very conception of what counts as philosophy (as distinct from religion or literature or science), and that the criteria and standards of justification, truth and falsity, and appropriateness and inappropriateness arise.

Yet re-engagement goes much further than this, for it seems clear that philosophy not only emerges from culture, but it has often, in practice if not in principle, responded to it. Philosophy does not simply reflect the values and beliefs found within a culture, but often contests them, and shows where the culture may be inconsistent, or limited, or deficient, or wrong. A philosophy not only may play this role within its culture of origin, but it may migrate to and have a role in other cultures, and it may also draw on novel features of other cultures to address concerns found in the culture of origin. Philosophy’s engagement with culture may, furthermore, give rise to new philosophies and social and political theories both at home and abroad.⁶

By way of illustration, recall the philosophers of 18th and 19th century Germany – philosophers such as Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805),⁷ Johann

³ A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, with the assistance of Wayne Untereiner and appendices by Alfred G. Meyer (Cambridge, MA: The Museum, 1952).

⁴ Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1871).

⁵ See William Sweet, George F. McLean, Olivia Blanchette and Wonbin Park, eds. *Philosophy Emerging from Culture* (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2013).

⁶ For more on this, see William Sweet, *Migrating Texts and Traditions* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2012).

⁷ Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: in a series of letters [Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen]*, eds. trans., introd., and commentary, Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

Gottfried Herder (1744-1803),⁸ and Georg Simmel (1858-1918),⁹ who were keenly conscious of the role of culture, and who made early contributions to the study of the philosophy of culture. In books such as Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: in a series of letters (Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen)*; Herder's *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind (Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit)*; and Simmel's *Philosophische Kultur: gesammelte Essays*, the authors recognised the importance of language, culture, and cultural traditions that distinguish and define nations, and in philosophy's contribution to a more general awareness of this. Thus, for Schiller, philosophy recognises that "[T]he goal for which the human being *strives* through culture is infinitely superior to the goal that he *attains* through nature."¹⁰ And some have argued that Herder's philosophy sought to "give the German people an intelligent reason as to why the development of a national culture upon a native foundation was not only desirable but necessary."¹¹ What these authors did, then, was, in part, respond to, but also prod the dominant culture and ways of life. As they did this, philosophers were not only responding to the culture that they found, but engaged and influenced it.

Yet, in the 20th century, particularly with the increasing influence and dominance of so-called analytic philosophy in what is called 'the West,' philosophy generally seemed less explicitly responsive to and engaged with culture. There was, to begin with, great concern about distinguishing philosophy from the religious, the literary, and the mystical, so that culture as a whole was scarcely commented on. Moreover, through much of the 20th century, many philosophers saw normative questions as not strictly susceptible of a purely philosophical solution and, thus, not properly of philosophical concern. Instead, philosophers were often focused on questions of analysis and clarification of concepts, and their investigations were often inward looking to a degree that made them inaccessible to a general public. Further, the separation of 'is' and 'ought,' made famous by Hume and revived by his disciples in the mid-20th century, may also have left many philosophers doubtful whether they could properly address cultural concerns and, so, were indifferent to culture as a possible object of philosophical investigation. It is in this context that the Cambridge historian and social and political scientist, Peter Laslett, in his "Introduction" to *Philosophy, Politics and*

⁸ Johann Gottfried Herder [1744-1803], *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind [Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit]*, abridged ed. with an intro. Frank E. Manuel (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

⁹ Georg Simmel [1858-1918], *Philosophische Kultur: gesammelte Essays* (Leipzig: W. Klinkhardt, 1911).

¹⁰ Friedrich Schiller, *Essays*, eds. Walter Hinderer and Daniel O. Dahlstrom (New York: Continuum, 1993), 202.

¹¹ Royal J. Schmidt, "Cultural Nationalism in Herder," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17 (1956): 407-417, at 407.

Society, in 1956, could write that “For the moment, anyway, political philosophy is dead” – and this was a view that was echoed by many others.¹²

In addition, one finds that metaphysical questions, particularly those of systematic speculative philosophy raised in volumes that sought to provide answers about human nature and the good society, had been widely abandoned in both the analytic and the ‘continental’ traditions – and, in some quarters, they still are. Moreover, there was also very little concern shown by academic philosophers in the West for such questions as they were pursued in traditions outside of the West, and some doubted that philosophy existed in any significant sense outside of western cultures.¹³ Indeed, culture seems to have been regarded by many philosophers in the West as either incidental to philosophy – that the universal character of philosophical method and values made cultural difference simply irrelevant. And this lack of concern for culture in these countries at the philosophical ‘centre’ eventually extended to the countries on the periphery, i.e., their colonies and un- or underdeveloped countries, and was, all-too-often, embraced by those in the colonies as well.

In short, while sociologists, anthropologists, literary critics, and political theorists discussed and wrote on culture,¹⁴ philosophers in the Anglo-American world generally did not discuss it – and the lack of substantial writing on culture – on the concerns of culture and ordinary life, the ‘knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and customs’ of society – was widespread.

In recent years, however, there is evidence – and this is a view widely shared by the authors in this volume – that this ‘disengagement’ is lessen-

¹²Peter Laslett, “Introduction,” in *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, first series, eds. Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman (Oxford, Blackwell, 1956), vii.

¹³One famous (or infamous) example is Kant’s remark that “Philosophy is not to be found in the whole Orient” (cited by Julia Ching, “Chinese Ethics and Kant,” *Philosophy East and West* 28 (1978): 161-72, at 169). Another is Jacques Derrida’s comment that “China does not have any philosophy, only thought” (cited in B. W. Van Norden, *Taking Back Philosophy* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2017]).

Some have argued that philosophy, as it is understood in the West, is a product of a Greek culture that emphasized reason and argument, identifying problems, clarifying concepts, articulating justifications and proofs, and considering counterarguments, independent of religion and tradition; that philosophy in this sense continued in European and Anglo-American traditions and cultures, but not to the same degree elsewhere; and that while there was a ‘pursuit of wisdom’ outside of the West, the methods and approaches tended to be rather different than what had been inherited from the Greeks. For an interesting discussion of whether there is philosophy ‘outside’ the Western tradition, see J. Weinberg, “When Someone Suggests Expanding The Canon....” [May 13, 2016], accessed June 1, 2020, <http://dailynous.com/2016/05/13/when-someone-suggests-expanding-the-canon/>.

¹⁴See, for example, the volumes noted above, e.g., Gellner, *Culture, Identity, and Politics*, and *Nations and Nationalism*; Jameson, “Culture and Finance Capital,” “The Brick and the Balloon: Architecture, Idealism and Land Speculation,” and *Theory of Culture: Lectures at Rikkyo*; Said, *Culture and Imperialism*; Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*; Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*.

ing, and that, in many fields, philosophers are again explicitly engaging or re-engaging culture.

From the early 1970s, there has been an increasing interest in normative philosophical issues, and, by the 1990s, an increasing awareness of how cultural and ethical diversity influence the way in which one should approach, for example, ethical problems. ‘Global’ and ‘multicultural’ approaches to many of the sub disciplines of philosophy are becoming more common, and normative studies are taking into account culture and tradition. There is increasingly a recognition by philosophers of the importance of culture and context – in part, because of the phenomenon that many countries are home to a range of cultures and traditions, and because of the challenges that these differences pose. But culture is also recognized as important because of an awareness that philosophical views are contextualized, relative to culture, and (unless closely rooted to the empirical sciences) at least largely determined by culture.

This attention to and engagement with culture is, also, in part a product of the recognition of the marginalized and the ‘subaltern’ – a recognition found especially in Hegelian and Marxist analyses and in the Marxist discussion of colonialism – and of the ‘post-colonial’ critiques of scholarship, often by those from nations long regarded as ‘on the periphery.’ It is also, in part, a product of the concern, particularly within democracies, with matters of individual and collective identity and their relation to culture. There is, further, a renewed recognition of the human person as embodied and embedded in society, though there is some debate whether and how far individuals are determined by this.

It is worth noting, as well, moreover, the increasing awareness in the Anglo-American world of the insights of the phenomenological tradition – of the recognition of ‘the other,’ of emotion and experience, and of phenomena such as beauty, that suggest an openness towards what is sometimes called the transcendent. And philosophers have come to look at phenomena in a way that the tradition often did not – to look at how language reveals the thought and culture of a group, and how the plurality of cultures and values provides a different perspective for identifying and examining their own presuppositions and for challenging universalisms – and for bringing the insights that result to bear on their philosophical work.

This volume draws on perspectives from more than 20 countries: from Asia (China, India, Kazakhstan, and Taiwan), the Pacific Rim (Australia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam), Europe (Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Romania, and Russia), Africa (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda, and South Africa), the Middle East (Iran), and the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and the United States). The authors in this volume argue that these recognitions and (re)engagements of culture should inspire and inform philosophers as they reflect upon the philosophical enterprise, but also as they engage of articulating what democracy requires in pluralistic cultures; of looking to better understand, or re-energize cultural practices; to address ethical dilemmas in the practice of business and the promoting of health and security;

and to build solidarity – and also to look anew at the contributions of spirituality and religion. Here, they seek (1) to provide a more thorough analysis and discussion of the need to be open to culture, to cultures, and to the transcendent; (2) to look at philosophizing as an activity of beings who are embedded in contexts of which they may not be conscious, but perhaps are able to go beyond these contexts; and (3) to show how a philosophy that (re)engages culture is best placed to address contemporary issues.

Philosophy (Re)Engaging

Part I, “Openness to the Other,” deals with the theme of philosophy’s openness to difference, to culture and, particularly, to the diversity of cultures. Part II, “Embodiment and Spirit,” focuses on the material and on embodiment which have an essential role in human identity but also in providing the basis for cultures and for identifying a locus for local and global cooperation. The authors also address the deeper issue of whether, in individuals and in cultures, there can be not only a recognition of the presence of ‘spirit,’ but also an integration of the material and the spiritual. Part III, “Cultures and Philosophies as Ways of Life,” investigates what it means to see philosophy as a way of life, but also to show how philosophical activity and conceptions of philosophy might continue to expand, and engage and re-engage cultures, in a way that not only enriches philosophy, but also enables philosophy to contribute to the global future.

Openness to the Other

In Part I, “Openness to the Other,” the authors address, first, topics related to the philosophical (re)discovery of what philosophers such as Emmanuel Lévinas have called ‘the other’ – both the individual ‘other’ and collective ‘others’ such as the plurality of cultures. This attention to ‘otherness’ has generally shifted the focus of philosophy to interpersonal and social life, and has suggested to some that, in these times, ethics, and not metaphysics, is “first philosophy.” Second, the authors address the transcendent ‘other,’ often represented in metaphysics and religion, noting the different ways in which philosophy and culture have engaged, or can engage, that otherness, and arguing that attentiveness to that otherness will ‘open’ philosophy to consider the experience of individuals and of cultures that goes beyond the purely immanent.

In the first seven papers of Part I, it is argued that being open to ‘the other’ and to other cultures shows how philosophy can come to re-engage cultures.

In “Varieties of Religious and Secular Spirituality,” Stelios Virvidakis surveys the range of spiritualities in a world that is increasingly secular. Virvidakis focuses on the work of Philip Kitcher, who reviews some of the challenges for religious faith in a culture widely influenced by naturalistic views. While offering primarily only a typography of spirituality, Virvidakis

suggests that there is, nevertheless, a need for openness to all kinds of spiritualities, including religious spiritualities

One reason that looking at spiritualities is important is that it is a reminder of the relevance of others to one's own identity. Some have argued that many philosophers have lost or neglected looking at this aspect of experience, and that philosophers need to have a deeper awareness of 'the other,' particularly of other human beings as beings of fundamental value. Konstantinos Polias in "Kant's Openness to the Other: Not Just a Matter of Faith" discusses how to go beyond classical statements of the essence of human nature, to 'the other.' Specifically, Polias examines Kant's arguments in the *Critique of Judgement*, challenging Kant's putative 'top-down' approach to understanding others, and responds to Kant's argument by drawing particularly on the writings of Emmanuel Lévinas.

Another place that one may look for 'the other' is by looking at cultures – particularly cultures different from one's own. In "Finding Values in African Traditional Thought and Ways of Life: A Defense of Reconstructionist Ontology," Ruth M. Lucier argues that culture and language are resources for philosophy, and proposes 'extracting' philosophical perspectives from language systems. Lucier looks, specifically, at the Bantu tradition, and notes that, in this tradition, there is no rigid distinction between the sacred and the profane. She shows this, however, not by looking at texts (of which there are few), but by looking at the Bantu language system. What does this analysis offer to philosophy today? She suggests that the philosophy that one can extract from the Bantu language and culture offers a vision of the world that leaves room for the appreciation of the sacred in life.

In "African Philosophy, 'Unique-Mania,' and Intercultural Philosophy," Anthony C. Ajah also argues for the importance of turning to cultures – for self-understanding and also for a sense of collective identity – but warns that a focus on distinctiveness can become an obsession or "mania." After presenting some insights from Jürgen Habermas and from the Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu,¹⁵ Ajah argues that an overemphasis on the distinctiveness of a culture runs the risk of leading to relativism. Ajah, therefore, recommends intercultural philosophy, that recognizes the values of cultural identity, without a 'manic' fixation on it.

R. C. Sinha, too, suggests that philosophers look at issues from the perspective of 'the other,' but, in particular, the marginalized and oppressed 'other,' e.g., 'the subaltern,' such as the Dalits (or untouchables) of India. In "The Subaltern Perspective on Social Justice," Sinha explains the subaltern perspective, and shows how taking this perspective can lead to a rethinking of and change in Indian morality and values, and, indeed, can be extended beyond the Indian situation. Sinha notes the relevance of this perspective to issues of social justice, such as ensuring that marginalized clas-

¹⁵ See, for example, *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies*, eds. Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992).

ses have access to benefits – but also to have responsibilities, as part of a recognition of their full human personhood.

Thummapudi Bharathi argues for an openness to, and reengagement with, the spiritual dimensions of culture. In “Sri Aurobindo’s *The Renaissance in India: A Study in Spiritual Regeneration*,” Bharathi looks closely at one of Sri Aurobindo’s (1872-1950) key works, *The Renaissance in India*, pointing out the importance of both the spiritual and the ‘earthly life.’ Aurobindo offers, according to Bharathi, a view that is neither purely spiritual and idealistic, nor materialist and naturalistic, but has elements of both. Aurobindo’s re-engagement with the spiritual, Bharathi concludes, provides an alternative to the materialism of contemporary culture that is needed in India but also beyond.

The need for philosophy to be open to all cultures is discussed, as well, by Rekha Singh. In “The Jaina Philosophy of *Anekantavada* as a Way of Life for Communal Harmony and Social Peace,” Singh introduces the reader to the realistic pluralism of Jaina philosophy. Singh reminds the reader of two key concepts in Jaina philosophy – *Anekantavada* (many-sidedness) and *syadvada* (epistemological relativism) – and argues that, on the Jaina view, one can have full knowledge only when one knows everything. Singh concludes that philosophies that recognize that such conditions for full knowledge are unlikely to be met will be less dogmatic and pluralist and, as such, more likely to contribute to social cohesion and well-being.

The authors in Part I, however, argue for philosophy to be open, not just to ‘the other’ and to other cultures, but to transcendence, e.g., to the metaphysical and the distinctively religious.

In “The De-estrangement of Metaphysics,” Gholamreza A’avani argues for a return to, i.e., a “de-estrangement” from, metaphysics. After briefly reviewing some of the uneven but rich history of metaphysics in the Western world, A’avani goes on to show what “precipitated the breakdown and decline of metaphysics” in the modern period. This, he believes, indicates what philosophy needs to address if metaphysics is to be “rehabilitated” and revived.

Oliva Blanchette also calls for a return to metaphysics. Blanchette points to the decline of metaphysics – particularly in how one does theology – attributing this to the shift of interest in theology to phenomenology – “the science of human being in the world.” In “Metaphysics as the Way from Phenomenology to Theology,” Blanchette argues that phenomenology is indeed necessary to theology, but that theology must also draw on a metaphysics to create “a properly theological discourse” appropriate to discussion of a transcendent principle.

John Panteleimon Manoussakis in “Beauty, Pleasure, Perfection: On the Theological Constitution of Consciousness” similarly recognises that attempts to talk about the divine require metaphysics, and asks whether and how phenomenology can contribute to this. Following Jean-Luc Marion, Manoussakis presents Marion’s view of “the pure form of the call” – a call that Marion identifies with “the beautiful.” Manoussakis explains Marion’s

view, drawing his readers' attention to how this call – or 'the beautiful' – points to future perfection.

Wilhelm Dancă examines the phenomenon of prayer as a means of being open to all aspects of reality. In "*Homo Orans*," he gives the example of the Romanian essayist, diplomat, and Catholic priest, Prince Vladimir Ghika (1873-1954), who saw prayer – leaving one's ego behind, "the lifting of one's mind," and a 'going beyond oneself' – as not just a personal and spiritual activity, but a practical activity. On such a view, Dancă would hold, if one looks at prayer in this way, one will see that it allows for greater personal and ethical awareness and progress.

For a model of how an openness to the transcendent can serve to enlarge philosophy, Sotiris Mitralaxis looks at two figures who, while unknown to one another and offering sometimes opposing views, articulated an ontology that is both critical and relational. A critical ontology is one, such as that of Kant, which holds that philosophy should be grounded on empirical science, but must also be able to transcend the empirical. Since a critical ontology is one that recognises that human beings are relational beings – and that relation is constitutive of (human) being and, indeed of all being – a critical ontology is also a relational ontology. In "Critical and Relational Ontology: Parallels between Joseph Kaipayil and Christos Yannaras," Mitralaxis argues that such a critical ontology allows one to see human beings as ontologically in relation and, yet, in which the 'absolute otherness' of the person is not compromised.

Openness to the transcendent does not depend solely on metaphysics, ontology, and spirituality. It is possible, some argue, through poetry and through music as well.

In "Mystical Language as a Method of Expression in Islamic Spirituality," Ruzana Pskhu reflects on the challenges of engaging mystical poetic texts. Can such texts express a reality external to the mystic, or do they simply express the mystic's vision? The "counter-logical" character of mystical language indicates that these texts are, at the very least, not susceptible of easy understanding. Pskhu suggests, however, that it is possible to gain access to the meaning of these texts and to the insights contained therein. Pskhu illustrates this in a discussion of Arabic mystical texts, specifically that of the Sufi mystic, Muhammad b. Abd al-Jabbar an-Niffary (d. 965). Little is known of Niffary, and his language is distinctive and original. Pskhu leads the reader through one of Niffary's mystical texts, noting its poetic character, and arguing that its paradoxical expression is an expression of the mystic's inner state. One must, then, be attentive to the "way of speaking," and not just the content. For readers to seek to discern the "meaning" of mystical texts, then, one should avoid the theoretical. Understanding the texts requires following the process of thinking of the mystic and demands, therefore, a philological rather than a strictly philosophical approach.

Wang Shang-Wen in "Playing with *Tao*: The Art of the Qin and its World View" looks at the "relatedness to the world" of the music of the

Qin, one of the oldest musical instruments in China. The author argues that the art and music of the Qin reflects a broadly Taoist cosmology, presents a way of seeing the relation between nature and the human being, and opens up a new way of ‘hearing.’ These are interconnected so that what is meant to be played by the Qin is not the music or melody as such, but the Tao hidden behind it. In the Asian traditions, and arguably beyond, philosophy, then, ought to take account of the arts, such as the art of the Qin, as they provide an access to a reality by a means that is too rarely taken.

In “Plato’s Theory of Love,” Vasiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou argues that love is an important factor for the attainment of theoretical understanding, and also for the advancement of practical living. Solomou-Papanikolaou notes that Plato offers a theory of love that has both an other-worldly and a this-worldly character, and that love in the latter sense can be transformed into the love of wisdom.

Embodiment and Spirit

At the centre of the concepts of cultures and ways of life is the human being. How human beings are to be conceived of, how they relate to one another, and how they are to engage in practices, are all aspects of culture. In Part II, “Embodiment and Spirit,” the authors discuss how to understand the human being. A key feature that has been too often neglected in the history of philosophy, is the value of “the material” and the body. This is needed, in part, in order to have a more robust account of human identity and its significance. But this is needed also because it is necessary for a deeper understanding of the meaning of ‘matter’ in a world where attention to economic and material progress has tended to marginalize cultures and values. It is through their bodies that human beings cooperate, and it is in them and in “the material world” that cultures exist. Yet it is also important not to ignore the presence of ‘spirit’ – whence arises the issue of relating spirit and matter.

There has been a long, admittedly ambiguous, history of dualisms within cultures, and particularly of dualisms that distinguish the mind or self from the material body.¹⁶ For example, in Plato, to be a philosopher is to ‘train for dying,’ looking forward to a time when the soul is separated from the body.¹⁷ And the Sufi mystic and poet, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (1207-73), tells us that “I am a bird of Paradise, I am not of the earthy realm / For a few days imprisoned in my cage of flesh and bone.”¹⁸

¹⁶ See, for example, William Sweet, “Body and Embodiment,” *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* 44 (2017): 79-102.

¹⁷ Plato, *Phaedo* 67e.

¹⁸ Rumi, *Divan-e Shams, Poem* 114, accessed June 1, 2020, <http://www.bahaistudies.net/asma/divaneshams.pdf>.

The authors, here, focus, first, on consciousness, spirit, and the self. But, in a second moment, they argue for not only the significance of embodiment, but the importance of the integration of spirit and body.

In “Seeing Self (*Jiva*), Seeing as Self (*Atman*), and Seeing Self as Ultimate Consciousness (*Brahman*),” Indra Nath Choudhuri notes the ambivalent approach in some philosophies towards the body, and he offers a conceptual interpretation of the empirical self, the metaphysical self, and ultimate consciousness. Drawing on the Advaita of Shankara, Choudhuri notes that many human beings relate only or primarily at the level of the embodied self (*jiva*). And while, on Shankara’s view, the self (*atman*) is logically and ontologically prior to the consciousness in the embodied self, it still reflects a distinction between self and other. When the distinction between self and other disappears, however, one has ‘pure awareness’ and experiences pure being. When this occurs, one has a foundation for a new conception of humanity.

In “Three Dimensions of the Research on the Concept of Body in Chinese Philosophy,” Yan Lianfu offers an alternative approach to understanding the human being, by presenting and discussing some of the recent Chinese scholarly literature on the concept of the body. Starting with a brief review of some recent studies, Yan focuses turns to the work of Zhang Zailin, and to Zhang’s interpretation of Chinese philosophy as, fundamentally, a philosophy of the body. Following Zhang, Yan argues that this approach helps to overcome crises in modern thinking about the human being, and offers an alternative to the increasing influence of Western thinking in Chinese philosophy. By placing the body and bodily thinking at the centre of our understanding of the human person, Zhang hopes to overcome the ‘omission’ of the body, and the binary opposition of heart (or soul) and body, that characterize modern thought. According to Yan, then, Zhang’s ‘philosophy of the body’ describes the dynamic dialogue, balance, and complementarity between heart and body.

How, then, are philosophers to understand the relation between body and spirit?

Jove Jim S. Aguas notes that, despite a lengthy history of dualism in the West, there is also a lengthy view of the body as an integral part of human identity. Aguas presents the view of Karol Wojtyla (later, Pope John Paul II) of the “psychosomatic unity” of the body. In “Karol Wojtyla on the Psychosomatic Integrity of the Human Person,” Aguas notes that there are two dynamisms in the human person – that of the *soma* (the outer reality of the body and bodily functions as they enter into lived experience) and of the *psyche* (the feelings, emotions, and perceptions, as they are manifest in lived experience). Yet we find a unity in consciousness of these dynamisms – a unity that is not a monism, but an integration. This integrated unity, Aguas argues, is revealed in human action (for it is in acting that a wholeness of the person is manifested) and in “the experience of the integral subjectivity of human beings.”

Katia Lenehan also focuses on the importance of understanding the human being as an integrated being of body and spirit. In “Human Being as Integrated Matter and Spirit and its Meaning for Aesthetic Perception in the Global Age,” Lenehan discusses aesthetic experience. Aesthetic appreciation occurs within embodied subjects, that is, unities of matter and spirit. Yet one may ask how art and aesthetic experience can help to explain this unity. Drawing on Thomas Aquinas, Jacques Maritain, and Umberto Eco, Lenehan argues that Maritain’s notions of ‘connatural knowledge,’ of aesthetic experience, and of the nature of artistic creation allow us to grasp better this relation of soul and body. Yet aesthetic experience is not merely a matter of the observation of a work of art; it also provides an access to the transcendent. Lenehan argues, then, for the importance of aesthetic education to not only oneself, but to reality as a whole.

In “Skillful Knowledge and an Epistemology of Embodiment,” Cheng Sumei notes the limitations of traditional epistemologies that focus on propositional knowledge and reflect a separation of subject and object, but also notes the move to philosophies that overcome and bridge this separation. Cheng looks at the notion of the embodied agent, and at such things as the role of the body in perception and the development of skills (and “skillful knowledge”). This information leads us, Cheng suggests, to what he calls an ‘epistemology of embodiment.’ Cheng concludes by identifying some of the advantages to such an epistemology, but also some limitations.

Dan Chițoiu, in “Body as a Garment: Understandings of Body in Christianity,” raises the issue of what is meant by embodiment. Chițoiu reminds the reader of the pre-Enlightenment Western view, in which rationality was only one feature of human being, and he notes a parallel with Eastern Christian philosophical and theological traditions. Chițoiu then considers how *Genesis 3* – in which Yahweh is said to have made “garments of skin” for the first human beings – has been understood within Eastern Christian traditions. Chițoiu reports that Eastern Christian scholars have interpreted the term ‘garments’ not as “an outer piece of clothing, but...a part of the self” and, particularly, as providing a “cultural way of being.” Culture is, on this view, the ‘garment’ that mediates human beings’ relation to the world. Chițoiu concludes that this approach reminds us of the importance of the body and of the relevance of the social to human existence, but this approach also suggests that there is a need to rethink the Western Enlightenment model of culture that still dominates much of the world today.

Mark Gedney in “Recognizing Who We Are: Arendt and Ricoeur on the *Bios Politikos*,” extends the understanding of the embodied human being to the social and political. Describing and following some of the arguments of Hannah Arendt, Gedney calls for a transfiguration of the merely natural (*zoon*) into a more truly human life (*bios*), which involves a recognition of the centrality of the political for human flourishing. Gedney focuses, first, on Arendt’s notion of action and the paradoxes that are involved in it. Then, drawing on Ricoeur and Michel Foucault, he reassesses Arendt’s understanding of the biopolitical nature of contemporary society. Gedney argues

that the desire to be oneself is connected with the desire to be with others, and concludes that politics has an essential role in this.

What are the implications of human being as embodied and, at least in part, material? Does this affect the relation of human beings to nature? Does this affect dualistic accounts of the human and, by extension, the existence of human free will? Does consciousness depend on the existence of something beyond the phenomenal? The final three papers of Part II bear on these questions.

Yu Xuanmeng claims that much philosophy, particularly philosophies in Western cultures, are prone to confusion and contradiction on matters of being self-aware and, more broadly, being aware of life as a whole. In “On the Self-awareness of Life,” Yu argues that traditional philosophy in China offers a different way of doing philosophy and that it can avoid these problems. Specifically, in the Chinese traditions, one finds the presence of a tradition of ‘sage philosophy’ and a recognition of the importance of the relation of the self to nature. Focusing on these insights from Chinese traditions will, Yu believes, help one to ‘enlarge one’s heart’ and to enable one to achieve genuine self-awareness.

Chen Gang in “Perception, Dualism, and Free Will” discusses the general question of how to explain why some physical systems (e.g., humans) have both physical and mental properties (e.g., free will), while others (e.g., rocks) do not. While dualist theories seem to offer some answers here, Chen challenges Donald Davidson’s “property dualism,” and suggests a more robust version of dualism (though not a Cartesian substance dualism) that he calls “simultanience.”

The final paper of Part II bears on the question of whether consciousness is something beyond the phenomenal, or whether the relation of body and mind is simply a matter of perspective. In “Mou Zongsan’s Interpretation of Kant and the Transformation of Traditional Chinese Philosophy,” Wen-berng Pong considers how one might address the relationship between appearance and reality, by focusing on the work of the 20th century Chinese philosopher Mou Zongsan (1909-95). Pong looks at the Kantian discussion of the distinction between things in themselves and appearances, and proposes a version of the ‘two aspect view’ adopted by Mou – that both are the same, simply regarded from different points of view. Such an approach is necessary, Pong maintains, in order to be consistent with Kant’s transcendental idealism and its place in Kant’s *Critiques*. Pong argues, however, that Mou’s defense of the Kantian ‘two aspect’ view needs some further revision. Pong suggests that, if the ‘double-aspect theory’ is understood as reflecting a ‘two-level ontology,’ it can be a model, not just for preserving Kantian idealism, but for defending Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

Cultures and Philosophies as Ways of Life

The third part of this volume, “Cultures and Philosophies as Ways of Life,” deals primarily with the enlargement of the horizons for philosophical

work in a global world. The authors begin by presenting and describing ways in which philosophies offer ‘ways of life.’ Next, the authors examine philosophies and cultures that have re-engaged with their traditions and origins (e.g., through drawing on the resources of their cultures and civilizations; by employing the insights of the social sciences; and by adopting a hermeneutical approach). Finally, the authors provide examples of how this expansion of philosophical horizons can enable philosophy to be more present in global times – on issues of ethics, the environment, and social development – and, thus, how it can contribute to the future of humanity.

A first issue to be addressed is ‘What is the relation between philosophy and ways of life?’ Can philosophy, for example, *be* a way of life?

Chrysoula Gitsoulis begins by noting that, from the times of classical Greek philosophy, to understand philosophy as a way of life has meant to show a commitment to, and a willingness to engage in, reflective activity, and that engagement in reflection is essential to our status as free beings. She then looks at the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein and finds, in his writings, a similar view of philosophy as a way of life. In “Wittgenstein’s Conception of Philosophy as a Way of Life,” Gitsoulis shows how, for Wittgenstein, engagement in philosophy and, particularly, the employment of a method that focuses on the clarification of the use of language, can properly be seen as a way of life appropriate to the contemporary world.

Troy R. Mack also looks at how philosophy’s turn to language can have an effect on the understanding of human freedom. Mack notes that language affects how human beings articulate their freedom, but that problems with language can interfere with this freedom. Thus, in “Philosophy and the Limits of Language: Living Myth as a Way of Life,” he suggests a move beyond “mere” language, to another way of “disclosure” – namely, myth. After reviewing several accounts of the relation of language and myth, Mack notes that while both language and myth are *sui generis*, they are also modes of thought and modes of communication, and that both can and must be used in and for philosophical investigation. The study of language and myth, moreover, are revelatory in the understanding of human freedom. To illustrate this and, more broadly, the role of myth in ways of life, Mack looks at the writings of Ernst Cassirer and Raymond Geuss, and at their comments on 19th century German thought.

S. R. Bhatt in “Philosophy as a Faith and a Way of Life” argues for a model of philosophy in which faith is compatible with reason. Drawing on Indian traditions and examples, Bhatt argues that, in Ancient India, religion and philosophy were not separate, and that philosophy was always a faith by which its adherents lived. The understanding of reason in the Indian tradition, Bhatt suggests, can be drawn on to support *darshana* (intuitive apprehension), but also the occurrence of *anugraha* (divine grace).

It may seem that the existence of different ways of life, cultural diversity, and different philosophies, is opposed to thinking of philosophy as a way of life that can help to bridge cultures. To respond to this, A.T. Kulsaryieva and Zh. A. Zhumashova raise the issue of the role of translation in

cross cultural communication. “Translation as a Bridge between Cultures” begins with a brief discussion of the nature and characteristics of civilization. Civilization, the authors argue, must be ‘open,’ and this requires an openness of communication. But for civilizations to develop, they must communicate with other civilizations, and thus, Kulsaryieva and Zhumashova claim, translation has an essential role; translation destroys barriers between cultures and is a tool of cultural dialogue. The authors further argue, first, that translation is possible only where there are civilizations, and, second, that the degree of development of a society is correlated with how far translation activities are possible. Kulsaryieva and Zhumashova hold, then, that translation which enables cross-cultural communication not only serves to bridge cultures, but also serves for particular cultures to be more unified and stable.

A second issue addressed in Part III is how philosophizing world cultures bears on the character of cultures as “ways of life.”

Marietta Stepanyants in “Recent Philosophizing as Re-engaging Culture as a Way of Life” discusses the importance of learning from the arts and culture, not only in order to philosophize about culture, but also in order to articulate cultural identity. She takes the example of Russian culture, and argues that we can obtain an insight into Russian metaphysical ideas through a hermeneutical reading of Russian literature. The Russian example is interesting, she argues, as the modern history of Russia reflects an oscillation between an orientation to the west and an orientation to the ‘east’; Russia’s history as a ‘crossroads’ people affects its identity. By looking at authors such as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, we can see a ‘working out’ of Russia’s soul and consciousness. In conclusion, Stepanyants reminds us that, in a world that is increasingly unaware of literature and culture, nations need to maintain and develop their arts, literature, and culture.

In “Social Solidarity as the Foundation for Democracy in Vietnam,” Pham Van Duc explains the issue of ‘philosophizing culture’ by looking at contemporary Vietnam. He presents Ho Chi Minh’s views on social solidarity, and how the Communist Party of Vietnam (Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam) has developed these ideas in pursuing a comprehensive renovation of the country. Specifically, Duc describes how the vision of social solidarity contributes to democracy and the harmonization of diverse interests, and how this harmonization, in turn, is at the core of the Vietnamese strategy for sustainable development.

Tran Tuan Phong also looks at philosophizing Vietnamese culture, and examines how Vietnam and Vietnamese philosophy have drawn on and integrated the insights of the Marxist account of human nature in order to re-engage Vietnamese traditions and contribute to development in Vietnam. In “Human Development, Culture, and Socialism in Vietnam,” Phong describes how human nature unfolds in the different contexts of cultural traditions, which shows the necessity of culture in the formation of human beings. Phong argues that a full development of human potential is possible, however, only in a socialist society. He concludes by arguing that Ho Chi

Minh's justification for and implementation of socialism has contributed to such a development in Vietnam.

Sreekala Nair in "Multicultural India and the Politics of Recognition: Envisaging Indian Culture as a Way of Life" presents how philosophy and, specifically, how Indian philosophy and culture can promote a way of life appropriate to a multicultural world. While multiculturalism has tended to be theorized by those drawing on postmodern thought, Nair states that the Indian model of multiculturalism provides an alternative to postmodernism. After describing that model, she addresses the problem of cultural identity, arguing that India has an identity as a nation and yet is also a model of a multicultural culture that accommodates and even fosters diversity. The Indian example, Nair believes, may be able to serve as a model in other multicultural counties.

Wilfred Lajul and Benedetta Lanfranchi in "Philosophising Acholi Culture as a Way of Life" challenge what they call the Western approach to philosophy, with its putatively universalist character. As an alternative, they look at what they call the "distinctive features of African philosophizing," and employ the Ugandan philosopher Kwame Gyekye's approach to identifying the cultural sites of philosophy. In seeking to provide an alternative to what they call Western approaches to philosophy, they adopt a Western hermeneutical approach in order to uncover the philosophy putatively implicit in (Ugandan) Acholi culture. After a rapid summary of Acholi beliefs, they argue that one can understand the notion of 'wisdom' (*ongon*) in that culture as 'philosophy.' African philosophy and, specifically, Acholi philosophy, then, is something embedded in African thought systems and practices – and, arguably, is found throughout African culture and ways of life.

A further effort in Africa to philosophize world culture focuses on what is often regarded as the core of African philosophy, Ubuntu. Mogobe B. Ramose argues that Ubuntu should be a human right. In "Ubuntu as a Human Right," Ramose argues that there are problems with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948, and that these are due, in part, to the Declaration being drafted by colonial powers and other countries of the 'northern hemisphere.' Ramose notes that there are alternative philosophies, from 'the south,' that affirm the equality of human beings and the importance of social justice – such as Ubuntu. What makes Ubuntu especially valuable, according to Ramose, is its recognition that all human beings are embodied, that their embodiment is the way of entering into the world, and that there is a basic equality of human beings. Ramose states that there is no reason to deny that there can be multiple and even divergent conceptions of human rights, and he starts by reviewing one "African" model – that of the South African philosopher and former Prime Minister of the country, J.C. Smuts (1870-1950), who influenced the text of the Preamble of the Universal Declaration. Ramose rejects this model, however, as a "vertical version of holism" and as hierarchical. Since Ubuntu is more 'horizontal' in its understanding of human being and society, Ramose believes Ubuntu should be recognized as a human right.

In “The Jain Way of Life: A Philosophical Perspective,” Geeta Mehta examines some key features of Jain culture and religion. After a brief definition of ‘culture,’ the author turns to a lengthy summary of the main religious doctrines of Jainism, focusing on the principle of *ahimsa* (non-violence). The author continues with discussions of mindfulness and environmental ethics, before summarizing the doctrines of *aparigraha* (non-attachment) and *anekanta* (many-sidedness). Mehta concludes with a statement on how a philosophical reflection on Jain culture provides lessons for Jain practice – but also, arguably, for other ways of life as well.

Alois Agus Nugroho in “The Practice of *laku* in Javanese Culture: A Southeast Asian Way of Life in Times of Global Crisis” engages Javanese culture, and seeks to draw out some philosophical implications for contemporary life. Nugroho begins by noting, generally, the importance of drawing on concrete experience in philosophizing, and identifies two concrete issues of global scope: climate change and the global financial crisis. Yet, Nugroho notes, such discussions have frequently fallen victim to “Giddens’s paradox,” named after the British sociologist, Anthony Giddens, who stated that people do not grasp the significance of crises, such as climate change, because it is presented to them in a way that is too abstract, and that they will not until they see its concrete effects, at which point it is too late to address them. In response, Nugroho offers lessons from the Javanese text *Serat Wédhatama (The Book of Noble Teachings)*, according to which knowledge means nothing without action and implementation (*laku*).

A third issue discussed in Part III deals with how a large conception of philosophy, informed by and (re)engaged with culture, can be useful in dealing with global problems, such as climate change, global economic integration, irresponsible practices by international corporations, and anti-democratic politics.

In “Philosophy and Culture: Thinking about Global Crises,” Jānis (John) Ozoliņš begins by enumerating a number of global problems – problems which he believes, given the extent of the phenomenon of globalization, are beyond the power of any single nation to address. Ozoliņš argues that, nevertheless, philosophy provides the means to evaluate the beliefs and values that lie at the root of such problems. While philosophy is susceptible to cultural influence and the effects of its embeddedness in culture, it still has a role to play. Finally, Ozoliņš looks at the model of global ethics (e.g., provided by Hans Küng) and that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and suggests that, while there is not a single way to respond to contemporary global problems and crises, philosophy can provide a common structure from which an understanding of various perspectives can take place.

Héctor Muzzopappa argues that democracy needs philosophy, but that philosophy’s role in democracy has been ambivalent and that, before democracy draws on it, philosophy itself needs to be expanded. In “Democratic Criticism of Philosophy, Humanities, and the Arts,” Muzzopappa argues that philosophy must be liberated from its “hierarchical” character. Once it

embraces democratic principles, philosophy will be better able to contribute to a democratic society.

Jurate Morkuniene agrees that philosophy has a role in addressing contemporary problems, but holds that it can provide only part of the answer to them. In “Changes in the Contemporary Character of Lithuanian Society and Paradigmatic Developments in Recent Philosophy,” she argues that we need a new multi-disciplinary approach in philosophizing that incorporates methods from the social and the natural sciences, and that will allow us to investigate better the changes in social morality. She gives examples from the contemporary situation in Lithuania, warning against the inclination to universalize philosophical approaches, and she argues for a new philosophical paradigm – one she thinks inevitable – that will allow for the articulation of general principles across cultures.

A philosophy that (re)engages culture today obviously must address issues concerning humanity’s responsibility to the natural environment. In “Culture and Ecological Responsibility in the Global Era: A Philosophical Perspective from Latin America,” H. Daniel Dei mounts an attack on philosophers for having been too aloof from applied ethical issues and, particularly, from ecological issues. Dei suggests that the current acknowledgement of ecological responsibility is due to our being aware of ‘the other,’ and he calls on philosophers to commit themselves to engaging in ethics to a greater degree, so that such a recognition is enhanced.

Luiz Paulo Rouanet develops some of the themes of the previous papers by explaining some of the main issues of environmental ethics. In “Environmental Ethics and Responsibility,” Rouanet focuses on climate change and the role of greenhouse gas emissions. While some of the effects on the environment are likely irreversible, Rouanet says that this does not preclude the possibility of improvement, and that philosophy has tools that can assist in this regard. Rouanet offers, then, a discourse ethics and a principle of responsibility that can contribute to doing environmental ethics. In this way, philosophy today can have a role in solving a serious global problem.

Workineh Kelbessa presents the contributions of philosophy influenced by indigenous African knowledge to the solution of problems related to climate change. In “Indigenous Climate Knowledge in Africa and the Need for Global Climate Justice,” Kelbessa also identifies some of the ethical issues involved in climate change, notes the importance of adopting the African organic conception of the ecological interdependence of humanity, and calls for a coordination of indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge in promoting global climate justice.

Aside from engaging issues of the environment and climate change, the authors in Part III call on philosophers to address other global problems, including the social responsibility of corporations, capitalist globalization, bioethics and the technologizing of the human, and the phenomenon of anti-politics.

In “Corporate Social Philosophy: Challenges in the Philosophy of Business in Global Times,” Engelbert C. Pasag and Rhonda Padilla address

this first problem. Raising the question “What is the primary purpose of business?,” the authors answer that business is to be accountable not just to its owners and shareholders, but also to its employees and to communities. Drawing on examples from the Philippines, the authors argue that businesses and corporations have, as a central part of their mandate, social responsibility.

Another of the global challenges that philosophy is faced with today is “anti-politics.” In “Changing the Culture of ‘Anti-politics,’” William Sweet acknowledges that, at present, in many Western nations and perhaps beyond, one finds what has been called the culture of ‘anti-politics,’ i.e., “the reaction or rejection of the practices or attitudes associated with traditional politics,” such as increasingly lower levels of participation in elections, a general indifference to political organizations, parties, and structures, and a lack of trust in political leaders, but also, more and more, a refusal to act on one’s sense of justice. Sweet notes some responses to this, which he judges to have been largely ineffective, and suggests, in their place, a further option suggested by the writings of the French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, and the Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor. Sweet suggests that Maritain’s and Taylor’s approaches provide insights in how to revive not only political engagement but the intuition of justice and, thereby, change the culture of anti-politics.

Finally, Tsai Wei-Ding in “Bioethics as an Intercultural Bridge” looks at problems in intercultural communication, and suggests that philosophies that depend on interdisciplinarity, such as bioethics, may be able to provide some insights. Beginning with a discussion of some of the challenges inherent in intercultural communication, Tsai turns to the philosophical subfield of bioethics which deals with not only normative ethical principles, but principles from “another culture,” namely, the principles of the natural sciences. Such communication across intellectual cultures can, Tsai believes, provide a model for communication across cultures in general.

Conclusion

The call for philosophy to (re)engage culture, while not entirely novel, nevertheless is one that has only relatively recently – and after a long interval – been heard. While philosophies clearly do emerge from culture and are a product of culture, this relationship has not always been recognized, and philosophical activity in recent times has frequently been carried out with what has seemed to be a general indifference to the issues of the day.

The authors in this volume challenge such an indifference. First, they have argued for a recognition of the importance of being open to ‘the other’ and, more broadly, of others (i.e., other cultures), so that philosophy is not so much a study of the nature of reality as an ethics. The authors also argue for a deeper understanding of the human – of those beings who contribute to, but who are also constituted by, culture. Philosophers, the authors maintain, must see the human being as a being of culture, and that culture is es-

sential to individual personal identity. Once philosophy engages, or re-engages, with culture, then, it will be better placed to address the problems that confront culture, and philosophy, today.

This volume will serve, therefore, not only in showing how philosophy is related to culture and originates in culture, but in confirming that philosophy needs to return to culture for problems, insights, its language, but also for its own revitalization. This summons for philosophers in general to recognize, call on, and (re)engage cultures in carrying out their philosophical tasks, reflects the mission of the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, and particularly the mission and vision of the late George F. McLean.

Part I
Openness to the Other

1

Varieties of Religious and Secular Spirituality¹

Stelios Virvidakis

Spiritual Religion and Secular Humanism

In the final chapter of his *Living with Darwin*, Philip Kitcher summarizes the most powerful challenges for religious faith in secularized societies, the members of which consciously or unconsciously embrace a thoroughly naturalistic *Weltanschauung*. Kitcher, however, does not endorse the simplistic and aggressive attitude of the so-called “New Atheists,” who urge us to jettison the heritage of all traditional religions. He is aware of the fact that there would be something important missing in a purely secular culture, and expresses the view that Secular Humanism cannot ignore the positive aspects of religion and their significance to our lives.²

Kitcher seems to acknowledge the possibility of making room for a kind of *spiritual* construal of religions – as opposed to *supernaturalist*, *providentialist* and *literalist* ones – which would provide a plausible and probably fruitful interpretation of their teachings. “Spiritual religion” can presumably be reconciled with a naturalist, scientific worldview. The problem is that such a construal may be disappointing for all parties in the debate between believers and their critics. As he puts it,

Pressed from two flanks, spiritual religion can easily appear unstable. On one side it is liable to lapse from clearheaded acceptance of the enlightenment case and so topple back into supernaturalism. On the other, it may replace partiality to a particular tradition – Judaism or Christianity say – and metamorphose into a cosmopolitan secular humanism. For a secular humanist like me, spiritual religion faces the challenge of providing more content than the exhortations to, and examples of compassion and social justice that humanists enthusiastically endorse, without simultaneously reverting to supernaturalism. Although I do not see how that challenge can be met, it is not clear how to circumscribe all possible responses to it – and thus to close

¹ Earlier drafts of this paper were presented at the conference on “Culture and Philosophy as Ways of Life in Times of Global Change” and at the meeting of Greek and Finnish philosophers at the Finnish Institute at Athens on October 9, 2013. I would like to thank the participants in these events for their questions and comments, particularly, Father John Panteleimon Manoussakis and Professors Katerina Ierodiakonou, Vasso Kindi, and William Sweet. I am also grateful to Tasos Karakatsanis and Anna Vassilaki for their help in the corrections of the final draft.

² See Philip Kitcher, *Living with Darwin: Evolution, Design and the Future of Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

the case against religion, period. The enlightenment case culminates in a (polite) request to the reflective people who go beyond supernaturalism to spiritual religion, to explain, as clearly as they can, what more they affirm that secular humanists cannot grant.³

The analogous and converse challenge for Secular Humanism is to show that it can offer something as rich and existentially important as the peculiar spiritual dimension apparently available to those participating in religious forms of life, something more than a “mess of pottage” – to use the Biblical metaphor adopted in *Living with Darwin*.⁴ It is this challenge that Kitcher tries to meet in a series of recent papers and lectures, in an attempt to show how we could “cultivate these attitudes that lend deep and enduring support to the processes of living,” “pointing to a position on which secular humanism and spiritual religion could converge.”⁵ Of course, what is required before discussion proceeds any further is to make sure that we have a more or less clear grasp of the meaning of “spiritual.”

In what follows, I shall focus on the notion of spirituality employed in contemporary philosophical debate with a view to elucidating its content and pondering its implications. My analysis starts with the unoriginal observation that there are various conceptions and versions appealed to on both sides. One wonders whether there is indeed a common ground or “core” of spirituality – on which opposed agnosto-atheist and religious views could converge – or, if there are such deep going, intrinsic differences, that any project of reconciliation or synthesis of these views would be futile. The

³ Kitcher, *Living with Darwin*, 154. See also his first Terry lecture: “Purified religion appears to face a dilemma. If it successfully evades the main line of secularist argument, it deprives itself of the resources to tackle the problems it challenges Secular Humanism to address; if it articulates the obvious solutions to those problems, those that more literalist interpretations have elaborated, it slides back into the type of position it concedes to be vulnerable to secular criticism.” I am grateful to Professor Kitcher for access to his unpublished Terry lectures (with the general title *Secular Humanism*) and for his responses to my remarks and queries concerning his views on the issue of spirituality.

⁴ A slightly different challenge, regarding the ethical potential of secular humanism, before it tries to develop any form of spirituality analogous to the original religious models, is put forth by John Cottingham in his book, *The Spiritual Dimension: Religion, Philosophy and Human Value* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 140: “...the traditions of spirituality converge on what has served for countless human beings as a highly fruitful solution to addressing certain fundamental obstacles to the attainment of human happiness and virtue. While the path of spirituality may not be the only conceivable way of overcoming such obstacles, a richer understanding of what these obstacles are, and how spiritual praxis is supposed to address them, may at least place the onus on its opponents to indicate what alternatives might be available within an entirely secular and non-spiritual ethical system.” In what follows, we shall have a chance to discuss Cottingham’s views in more detail.

⁵ Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 161. Here, one could also refer to his “Militant Modern Atheism,” *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 28 (2011): 1-13; “Challenges for Secularism,” in *The Joy of Secularism*, ed. George Levine (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 26-56, 228-232, and to the Terry lectures.

central background question to which we should eventually turn is formulated succinctly by Thomas Nagel: “What if anything, does secular philosophy have to put in the place of religion?”⁶

Here one should try to assess the prospects of a *secular* kind of genuine spirituality.⁷ Thus, one would have to take into consideration varieties of spiritual activity or practices which would succeed in catering to our deeper existential needs, presumably satisfied by religion, and which would not turn out to be an artificial substitute of the “real thing.” However, the adjectives “genuine” and “real” presuppose that there is such a thing as an essence or quasi-essence of spirituality, and this is by no means evident. We may at best be dealing with an elusive family-resemblance concept, and we should bear this in mind when we try to find our way in this maze of logical and inferential connections. We therefore need an adequate “conceptual map,” and our survey of certain characteristic accounts of the central notion in question can be regarded as a preliminary draft of such a map.

John Cottingham’s arguments in *The Spiritual Dimension* constitute one of the most interesting and fruitful attempts to draw on the “domain of spirituality” to defend a theistic, and, more particularly, Christian approach.⁸ He begins by observing that the concept of spirituality “does not seem to provoke, straight off, the kind of immediately polarized reaction one finds in the case of religion.”⁹ In fact, this may be partly due to the vagueness of the term “spiritual,” which is used to denote a set of miscellaneous qualities and practices. Cottingham goes on to point out that,

...the label ‘spiritual’ tends to be invoked by those purveying a heterogeneous range of products and services, from magic crystals, scented candles and astrology, to alternative medicine, tai chi and meditation courses. Yet at the richer end of the spectrum, we find the term used in connection with activities and attitudes which command widespread appeal, irrespective of metaphysical commitment or doc-

⁶ See Thomas Nagel, “Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament,” in his *Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament. Essays 2002-2008* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-17.

⁷ Kitcher is aware of objections to the more general use of the term “secularism,” usually associated with a particular position concerning the relationship between religion and the state, and explains that he chose it in order to refer to the views of all those who “do not believe in transcendental entities” – including atheists and agnostics. See his “Challenges for Secularism,” 228, n.1. He adopts “secular humanism” as the title of the Terry lectures, in which he tries to develop and enrich the notion of humanism, on which, according to his initial analysis, “contemporary prominent atheists” are rather “light” (“Challenges for Secularism,” 228, n.1). Kitcher also uses the term “agnosto-atheism” to describe his own positions. His writings provide an excellent articulation and defense of the case for a secular spirituality that does justice both to naturalist proposals and to possible responses by religious believers.

⁸ See Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*. Cottingham’s philosophy of religion emphasizes the importance of spiritual praxis, thus avoiding the extremes of both purely cognitivist theoretical conceptions and anti-rationalistic fideism.

⁹ Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 3.

trinal allegiance. Even the most convinced atheist may be prepared to avow an interest in the ‘spiritual’ dimension of human existence, if that dimension is taken to cover forms of life that put a premium on certain kinds of intensely focused moral and aesthetic response, or on the search for deeper reflective awareness of the meaning of our lives and of our relationship to others and to the natural world. In general, the label ‘spiritual’ seems to be used to refer to activities which aim to fill the creative and meditative space left over when science and technology have satisfied our material needs. So construed, both supporters and opponents of religion might agree that the loss of the spiritual dimension would leave our human existence radically impoverished.¹⁰

These remarks, despite their generality, indicate specific directives to isolate features or aspects of spirituality in “intensely focused moral or aesthetic responses” or “reflective awareness” of a certain kind. Moreover, one could perhaps get a better grasp of the core content of the notion of spirituality, by turning to the elucidation of the concepts of “transcendence,” the “sacred,” and the “Absolute.”¹¹ In any case, we may agree that, as it has come to be used in recent discussions, the term “spiritual” has a broader sense than that of “religious,” at least insofar as we are speaking of theistic religions. However, what is described by some philosophers as a religious *attitude, temperament, or point of view*, without any commitment to a particular theistic position, may be coextensive with what we want to express when we use the term “spirituality.”

Here, one recalls Wittgenstein’s remark to the effect that he “was not a religious man” but that he could not help “seeing every problem from a religious point of view.”¹² The adoption of such a point of view is facilitated by what Nagel characterizes as a “religious temperament.”¹³ Nagel observes that one displays such a temperament to the extent that one expresses,

...a “yearning for cosmic reconciliation that has been part of the philosophical impulse from the beginning. Its greatest example is

¹⁰ Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 5.

¹¹ See Kees Waajman, *Spirituality: Forms, Foundations, Methods* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 1. “Spirituality as we have defined it touches the core of our human existence: our relation to the Absolute.” See also the definitions provided in the Internet: “There is no single, widely-agreed definition of spirituality. Social scientists have defined spirituality as the search for the sacred, for that which is set apart from the ordinary and worthy of veneration, ‘a transcendent dimension within human experience...discovered in moments in which the individual questions the meaning of personal existence and attempts to place the self within a broader ontological context...’” “Spirituality,” Wikipedia, accessed October 25, 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Spirituality>.

¹² See M. O’C. Drury, “Conversations with Wittgenstein,” in *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, ed. Rush Rhees (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 79. On this, see also the discussion in Norman Malcolm, *Wittgenstein: A Religious Point of View?* ed. Peter Winch (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

¹³ Nagel, *Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament*.

Plato, who had what I would call a profoundly religious temperament – displayed not in what he said about religion, but in his philosophy.

...I am using the term “religious temperament” in a way that may seem illegitimate to those who are genuinely religious. Yet I think it is the appropriate name for a disposition to seek a view of the world that can play a certain role in the inner life – a role that for some people is occupied by religion.¹⁴

Nagel dubs “hard headed atheists” those who lack this temperament, insofar as they do not experience a craving for existential reconciliation or for attaining a deeper harmony between the human self and the world that surrounds it.¹⁵ This craving is eventually satisfied if one espouses traditional religious faith and accepts some monotheistic, polytheistic, or even pantheistic doctrine, or subscribes to a form of Platonism according to which there is “a non-accidental fit, between us and the world order.”¹⁶ On the other hand, for most atheistic existentialists there seems to be no way to achieve such a fit and our inescapable predicament is a sense of the absurd. Finally, there are more or less naturalistically oriented humanists who acknowledge the reality of the issue – and the legitimacy of the quest for an adequate philosophical response – and put forth various suggestions in pursuit of the missing harmony. All the above thinkers, who do not share the indifference or “tone deafness” of hard headed atheistic naturalism, can be said to display expressions of the religious temperament and *a fortiori* of some kind of spirituality.

Kitcher’s project for the elaboration of a secular humanism and the hope for the development of a “secular spirituality” exemplifies a broad minded naturalistic stance which Nagel describes as compatible with the religious temperament.¹⁷ Analogous, though different endeavors, are the

¹⁴ Nagel, *Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament*, 3-4. See the similar formulation of the definition of spirituality in Wikipedia, cited in footnote 11.

¹⁵ Such atheists could also be described, and are often self-described as “religiously tone-deaf.” Here, one could refer to views expressed by Richard Rorty, but could trace this tone-deafness to great philosophers of the past, such as Hume. See Richard Rorty, *An Ethics for Today: Finding Common Ground between Philosophy and Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010). Rorty is ready to acknowledge that he may “lack any sense of the spiritual,” if “spirituality is defined as a yearning for the infinite.” However, he doesn’t agree that this is the case, “...if spirituality is thought of as an exalted sense of new possibilities opening up for finite beings.” He points out that “the difference between these two meanings of the term spirituality is the difference between the hope to transcend finitude and the hope for a world in which human beings live far happier lives than they live at the present time.” According to his analysis, in modern times “...a form of spirituality has emerged that turns away from the possibility of sainthood, turns away from perfecting an individual human life, towards the possibility of perfecting human society” (Rorty, *An Ethics for Today*, 14-15). This leads to an ethical vision “of horizontal progress toward a planetwide cooperative commonwealth” (Rorty, *An Ethics for Today*, 17).

¹⁶ Nagel, *Secular Philosophy and the Religious Temperament*, 16.

¹⁷ See Kitcher, *Secular Humanism*.

development of a Spinozistic “spirituality without God” by André Comte-Sponville, and the defense of an ethics of salvation conforming to a panentheistic conception of divinity by Mark Johnston.¹⁸ A variant of the Platonist alternative included in Nagel’s typology seems to be embraced by Dworkin in his plea for a humanistic “religion without God,” going beyond the metaphysics of naturalism and relying on a robust and monistic value realism, which is not grounded in any natural or supernatural facts. Without dwelling on the details of the complex positions and arguments deployed by Kitcher, Comte-Sponville, Johnston, and Dworkin, we are going to draw on some of their main claims in order to highlight various aspects of their sympathetic approaches to the spiritual dimension. The question we shall have to ask is whether the models of spirituality that they endorse can be compared to religious spirituality as we know it.

Looking for Spirituality in a Disenchanted World

We could start by trying to identify and specify what seems to be missing in a secular culture dominated by a purely naturalistic outlook: “what science and technology cannot provide,” or, in Cottingham’s words, what may “fill the creative and meditative space left over when science and technology have satisfied our material needs.” The absence of genuine spirituality of any kind is diagnosed by thinkers who bemoan the thorough disenchantment of the contemporary world.¹⁹ To be sure, one may welcome this disenchantment insofar as it involves jettisoning a “magical” conception of the natural realm and doesn’t necessarily imply the elimination of all evaluative and normative properties.²⁰ However, as Charles Taylor pointed out in

¹⁸ See André Comte-Sponville, *L’esprit de l’athéisme. Introduction à une spiritualité sans Dieu* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2006), translated into English as *The Book of Atheist Spirituality: An Elegant Argument for Spirituality without God* (London: Bantam Books, 2009); Mark Johnston, *Saving God: Religion after Idolatry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009) and *Surviving Death* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); Ronald Dworkin, *Religion without God* (Cambridge MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2013).

¹⁹ For an interesting appreciation of the function of religion in contemporary secular societies, see Jürgen Habermas et al., *An Awareness of What is Missing: Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age*, trans. Ciara Cronin (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010). See also the discussion of the disenchantment of European culture and of the ensuing “metaphysical boredom” in David Bentley Hart, “Religion in America: Ancient and Modern,” in his *Provocations and Laments* (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 43-63, at 43-47. For Bentley Hart, the decline of religion in Western Europe entails a serious decline in spirituality and this may prove fatal for its cultural vitality, insofar as “A culture – a civilization – is only as great as the religious ideas that animate it; the magnitude of a people’s cultural achievements is determined by the height of its spiritual aspirations” (Bentley Hart, “Religion in America,” 59).

²⁰ See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008) and “Disenchantment – Reenchantment,” in *The Joy of Secularism*, ed. George Levine (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 57-73. Most of the authors in *The Joy of Secularism* respond to worries about disenchantment. Ac-

The Secular Age, the loss of the quality of enchantment, in a sense relevant to our spiritual concerns, brings about the disappearance of an important dimension of life, leaving us with the feeling of a certain “flatness” or absence of depth. As above mentioned, the challenge for secular humanists, such as Kitcher, who do acknowledge that there is something really missing from the hardheaded atheist outlook, is to show that they can make up for this loss, that they can provide a form of spirituality as rich and as deep as that supposedly attainable by those possessing authentic religious faith.

Here, one wonders whether we could come up with any “objective” or “neutral” criteria that would make possible the study of some reliable testimony concerning these matters. Their employment would presumably help us adjudicate relevant claims and eventually convince the atheistic and naturalistic humanist that she cannot aspire to the level, degree, or quality of the spiritual experience which is accessible to the religious believer, or, on the contrary, convince the believer that her humanistic opponent can boast of an analogous achievement, without *ipso facto* committing herself to the metaphysics of transcendence that she has firmly rejected.

In his discussion of Taylor’s remarks, Kitcher focuses on cases of peculiar experiences of “fullness,” involving serenity or bliss and elation, often invoked by religious believers and described as “epiphanies,” verging on the mystical or the quasi-mystical. Concerning the issues of fullness and depth, the challenge for secular humanism may boil down to proving the availability to non-believers of a peculiar spiritual dimension revealed by epiphanies of this kind. More particularly, one could examine the following questions formulated by Kitcher:

- (1) Can thoroughly secular people have experiences like the “epiphanies” described by religious people?²¹
- (2) Do such experiences provide any evidence for a “supernatural realm”?
- (3) Are the experiences of those who believe in supernatural sources richer and deeper than the experiences of those who do not?

cording to a certain philosophical approach to normativity and values, a thorough-going naturalistic disenchantment leads precisely to an inability to account for normative and evaluative aspects of the world and we soon realize the need for some form of reenchantment. See John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). Dworkin’s strong commitment to the independent reality of value points in the same direction. It is noteworthy that Dworkin doesn’t believe he needs any metaphysical or epistemological grounding for his realism, apart from the practice of first-order normative argumentation, and he doesn’t try to develop any systematic non-naturalist metaethics. See Ronald Dworkin, “Objectivity and Truth: You’d Better Believe It,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 25, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 87-139, and *Justice for Hedgehogs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

²¹ Kitcher refers to the epiphany described by Bede Griffiths, cited by Taylor, and also to the fictional account of an analogous experience provided by James Joyce in his *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*. See Kitcher, “Challenges for Secularism,” 50-54.

(4) For religious people, do such experiences reinforce a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives, and do they strengthen the commitment to shared ethical projects?

(5) Are experiences of this sort more readily available and more sustainable, if they are linked to systems of religious belief?²²

Kitcher argues that the answers are far from obvious and easy to get:

...There should be no automatic presumption that religious believers are especially predisposed to having their lives transformed for the better. Indeed, once it is appreciated that the central issue concerns the enduring positive effects of a type of experience available to religious and secular subjects alike, it should be evident that a large number of empirical questions are in danger of being begged. Do epiphanies typically have long-term positive effects? Do they occur more frequently in the lives of religious people than in those of the secular? Are the consequences for believers likely to be more enduring and more positive than those for unbelievers? What factors make it more probable that epiphanies will result in pervasive positive transformations? Even if such factors are presently found more frequently in the lives of the religious, would it be possible to make those factors commonplace in thoroughly secular societies? Only if it is supposed that these questions have specific answers does it follow that there is a fundamental asymmetry between the religious life and the secular life, that the lives of non-religious people are somehow “flattened.” Systematic studies of these issues would be extremely hard to carry out, and, because there is currently no evidence in favor of the correctness of the answers presupposed, the assertion that religious experience makes the religious life “fuller” or “deeper” is an unsubstantiated prejudice.

...Until rigorous forms of inquiry can deliver firm conclusions, judgments about those possibilities and limitations can only be tentative, garnered from whatever sources have illuminated aspects of the human condition. History, anthropology, and personal experience provide fallible guides – and so too do powerful works of fiction, supplying ideas for the shaping of experiments and for the appraisal of them.²³

Thus, according to Kitcher, secular humanists should adopt a careful empirical stance, engaging in tentative “experiments of living,” in John Stuart Mill’s sense. They will then have to wait and see if the spirituality they shall be able to attain is the “real” thing, according to standards they have appropriated from the religious heritage, the doctrinal and metaphysical components which they have debunked. Other agnostic and atheist thinkers,

²² Kitcher, “Challenges for Secularism,” 51.

²³ See Kitcher, *Secular Humanism* – Lecture IV.

who don't seem to share Kitcher's pragmatist patience and caution, are ready to defend in principle the possibility of an atheist spirituality, compatible with thorough-going materialism and naturalism. On the contrary, philosophers who reject pure naturalism, whether or not they display some form of theistic faith, seem convinced that such a spirituality wouldn't be genuine or would even involve a kind of contradiction in terms.

Indeed, Comte-Sponville develops his Spinozistic worldview by providing a concise phenomenology of experiences of "fullness," "simplicity," "unity," "silence," "eternity," "serenity," "acceptance," and "independence."²⁴ His account is largely based on his own personal understanding of states of mind presumably reflecting states of the natural world in which he feels immersed. His conception of spirituality, based on "fidelity" to truth and to love, is one "of immanence rather than transcendence," of "openness rather than interiority."²⁵ Johnston urges us to seek salvation and a radical spiritual transformation of our existence, so that we could be "reconciled to the large-scale structural defects of human life."²⁶ This could be achieved if we rejected the common idolatrous construal of the major traditional religions, overcame selfishness and oriented ourselves towards goodness, *agape*, and communion with our fellow human beings. We would thus attain the only form of immortality we may aspire to, without the assistance of any higher, supernatural or non natural agency or source.²⁷

Luc Ferry takes Comte-Sponville to task for trying to present his positive exploration of a rich and multifaceted spiritual dimension as really compatible with determinism and materialism. According to his analysis, such a philosophical construal of the adduced evidence would be totally wrong, insofar as one would have to eliminate transcendence altogether, contradicting the phenomenology invoked by the atheist philosopher himself. He endorses a strong conception of autonomy of Kantian origin and puts forth his own proposal for a "divinisation" of the human, entailing the recognition of irreducible "transcendence in immanence," which he qualifies as "horizontal" rather than "vertical."²⁸ In a similar vein, though displaying a realist, rather than a projectivist or constructivist disposition, Dworkin affirms the existence of a transcendent and non-natural – though not supernatural – dimension of reality. He advocates the adoption of a "religious attitude," consisting in the recognition of the fact that "human life has objective meaning or importance," entailing "ethical responsibilities to oneself" and "moral responsibilities to others," as well as of the fact that

²⁴ Comte-Sponville, *L'esprit de l'athéisme*, 143-196.

²⁵ Comte-Sponville, *L'esprit de l'athéisme*, 209.

²⁶ Johnston, *Saving God*, 14-15 and *passim*.

²⁷ Johnston, *Saving God*, 14-15, and *Surviving Death*, *passim*. Johnston also draws on the Buddhist doctrine of *anatta*, "the claim that there is no persisting self worth caring about, but at most something like a variably constituted hylomorphic self, as we might now put it." See Johnston, *Surviving Death*, 234 and 315-316.

²⁸ See Luc Ferry, *Qu'est-ce qu'une vie réussie?* (Paris: Grasset, 2002), 461-495.

“the universe as a whole and in all its parts...is itself sublime: something of intrinsic value and wonder.”²⁹

In his critique of the positions elaborated by Johnston and Comte-Sponville, Cottingham argues that spirituality does not make real sense without the reference to a distinct and fully transcendent divine source – that is, to the God of monotheistic religions. He questions the coherence of their projects, insofar as they “help themselves to a vocabulary” to which “as naturalists they are no longer entitled.” Fidelity to the Judaeo-Christian tradition, in which they have been shaped, doesn’t warrant the reinterpretation of crucial concepts that they try to employ, such the “sacred,” the “holy,” and “salvation,” and doesn’t seem to allow the integration of notions coming from foreign cultural and philosophical sources such as the Buddhist *anatta*.³⁰ However, he would also reject both Ferry’s divinisation of the human, by exposing its hybriatic character, and Dworkin’s “ungrounded” realism of value, by appealing to a “*reductio*” to the effect that “objective ethical truths *would be* undermined in the absence of the cosmic moral teleology that theism provides.”³¹ His detailed study of the spiritual dimension eventually leads to an attempt at a justification of his adherence to the Christian tradition, and at a defense of his belief in the superiority of Christian theology, when it is compared to alternatives.³²

Kinds, Aspects, Levels and Degrees of Spirituality

At this point, we could try to derive some conclusions from our brief and dense survey, distinguishing among varieties of both religious and secular senses of spirituality in a more or less systematic way and on the basis of different criteria. We should stress the normative implications of the classificatory schema we propose, which could serve as a framework for some tentative answers to the questions stated at the beginning of this paper. We may, thus, come up with a first outline of the conceptual map we intend to draw, with a view to specifying directives for further discussion.

Broad vs Narrow/Superficial vs Deep

As we noted above, focusing on Cottingham’s introductory remarks, there is a widespread use of the term “spiritual” which seems to refer to a *broad* and rather loose or vague sense. We could thus agree that any form of self-aware mental activity directed towards finding meaning in life might allow us to speak of a “minimal” spirituality. Only totally unreflective peo-

²⁹ Dworkin, *Religion without God*, 10-11.

³⁰ See his critical review of Johnston’s *Saving Death* and Comte-Sponville’s *L’esprit de l’athéisme*, in John Cottingham, “It Is Not God Who Needs Saving. It Is Us,” *Standpoint* (September 2010). See also his “Reply to Holland: The Meaning of Life and Darwinism,” *Environmental Values* 20 (2011): 299-308, and *The Spiritual Dimension*.

³¹ Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 56.

³² Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 150-172.

ple, unable to ponder their own life plans, would be deprived of it. At the other end of the spectrum, we would encounter particular instances of expression of a *narrow* conception, involving the self-conscious pursuit of transcendence and/or of the Absolute, construed in a variety of ways, and a sensitivity to the experience of sacredness. Paradigmatic forms of spirituality, understood in this sense, are encountered in the major religious traditions, and it is analogous forms, properly reinterpreted, that seem to be the object of the quest engaged in by agnosto-atheist and secular authors, such as those referred to in our discussion.

We could perhaps characterize spirituality in the broad and loose sense as superficial and save the metaphor of depth for forms of spirituality in the narrow sense. We may also invoke the metaphorical notions of levels, stages, and degrees of intensity to describe the dynamic progress of spiritual development.

Subjective vs Objective

When we speak of spirituality we often tend to think of mental states or mystical, inner experiences conceived as subjective and private psychological occurrences, and we find it hard to appeal to any objective criteria for their proper comprehension and for the comparative appreciation of their quality. If we limit ourselves to such a conception, which may be inescapable to some extent when we are dealing with the domain of the mystical, we shall eventually have to give up any attempt at a far reaching, rational philosophical investigation. We will probably adopt an extreme relativist or subjectivist approach and recognize as legitimate all sorts of personal reports regarding the experiences in question.³³

However, what we regard as spiritual is not properly understood and appreciated, unless we invoke certain objective and public standards originating from established religious and philosophical traditions.³⁴ The cultivation of spirituality requires a certain discipline, which is usually instituted and elaborated within one or another common form of life.³⁵ In fact, this observation leads to the next distinctions or contrasting conceptions that we intend to highlight.

³³ Here, one may bring to mind the opposition between the modern and contemporary conception of happiness as a subjective mental state and the ancient Greek concept of *eudaimonia* employed in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, which seems to refer to an objective ideal of human life and can be better translated as "flourishing."

³⁴ One could appeal to a version of Wittgenstein's private language argument in order to show that spiritual experience, conceived as totally private, without any connection with publicly accepted criteria, would be meaningless. Such criteria are related to some form of rule-governedness the emergence of which wouldn't be possible without the participation in a language game and in a form of life, involving a community.

³⁵ I would like to thank Professor Sweet for drawing my attention to the importance of discipline for the proper expression and development of spirituality.

Individual vs Social

When we describe the personality or the character of a human being, we may recognize certain spiritual qualities that we often associate with individual intellectual and moral virtues, such as power of discernment, perseverance, humility, generosity, benevolence, compassion, etc. However, we may also describe certain groups of people, whole classes, or even societies in certain historical periods, such as medieval scholars, zen monks, idealist philosophers, surrealist artists, professors and teachers, etc., as collectively displaying forms of embodied and socially extended spirituality. Conversely, we could regard entire societies as collective agents and may want to denigrate them for totally lacking spirituality, as we often do when we deplore the crude consumerist and materialist mentality of certain contemporary social groups. Of course, we may often consider such positive or negative judgments, made in particular circumstances, to be simplistic and erroneous. Here, one remembers Michel Foucault's notorious praise of the "political spirituality" of the leaders of Iranian revolutionaries, whose violent activity clearly reflected a "religion of combat and sacrifice."³⁶

Theoretical/Contemplative vs Practical

It is easier to understand the public aspects of spirituality and the objective standards which regulate it when we realize that expressions of the spiritual dimension have been traditionally associated more often with individual praxis and communal practices, rather than with theoretical beliefs and passive contemplation. Cottingham, who emphasizes the "primacy of praxis," reminds us of the "spiritual exercises" systematically presented by St. Ignatius Loyola, involving a strictly structured pattern of activities such as the study of texts, meditation, reflection, and prayer, combined with a program of ascetic training of the body, fasting, and staying awake in order to participate in rituals, and so on. According to this conception, one can impose a rigorous discipline on one's self as a whole, in order to practice techniques as "attention," which entails "vigilance and presence of mind" (*prosohe*), to attain a change of heart (*metanoia*) and eventually prepare for contemplation or even some form of mystical experience. Specific forms of religious spirituality are thus focused on a radical conversion of the soul and more generally on a self-transformation of the whole individual. In fact, such spiritual exercises could be traced back to classical philosophy, especially of the Hellenistic period, as is argued by Pierre Hadot, who first emphasized the importance of the tradition of philosophy as a "way of life," also construed as an "art of living."³⁷ It is worth noting that Johnston also

³⁶ Foucault cited in Mark Lilla, *The Reckless Mind: Intellectuals in Politics* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2001), 154.

³⁷ See Cottingham, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 4-5. See also Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, 3^{me} éd. augmentée (Paris: Études augustinienes,

urges us to go beyond ordinary intellectual and moral virtues and aim at cultivating dispositions analogous to the theological virtues of the Christian tradition – that is, hope, faith and love (charity). Such are the virtues that would make possible the reorientation and thoroughgoing transformation of our lives, with a view to attaining redemption from our existential predicament, involving confrontation with evil in all its forms. As we have already pointed out, Johnston tried to explain the crucial significance of love within a pantheistic and naturalistic metaphysical framework.³⁸

Positive vs Negative

One may entertain the mistaken thought that all kinds of spirituality are related to some form of flourishing and always go along with moral excellence. However, a careful study of the relevant notion inherited from the Christian religious tradition shows clearly that this is not the case. Spirituality, as we have described it, adopting Nagel's conception of the religious temperament, has to do with the yearning for meaningfulness and cosmic reconciliation, rather than for happiness and/or goodness. Unfortunately, as Nagel makes clear, the religious temperament does not necessarily lead to the acceptance of Platonist or quasi-Platonist views, such as the religious attitude espoused by Dworkin. Those of us who share the sensitivity informing atheistic or agnostic existentialism, may be incurably afflicted by nihilistic pessimism, or, to put it in existentialist jargon, anxiety and despair. Moreover, existential revolt does not always take benign forms. There are transgressive and vicious manifestations of such a stance,³⁹ as is easily recognized by those familiar with the works of Marquis de Sade or Georges Bataille. Thus, we could speak of a “negative” spirituality of the most intense variety.

All this is explained in eloquent detail by Søren Kierkegaard. In his masterpiece, *The Sickness unto Death*, which begins with the affirmation that “man is spirit... a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity,” Kierkegaard proceeds to explore the irresolvable tensions in the human soul: antinomies constituting the object of painful spiritual self-awareness, through an exhaustive phenomenology of types of despair. If one cannot make the “leap of faith,” which is a

1993). For a different, rather aestheticist approach to the conception of philosophy as a way of life, in ancient thought and in modern philosophy, see Alexander Nehamas, *The Art of Living: Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2000). For a study of classical Greek philosophy in this perspective, see John Cooper, *Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Plato to Plotinus* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

³⁸ Johnston, *Saving God*, 16-17; *Surviving Death*, 189-377.

³⁹ This is admitted by Cottingham, who nonetheless tries to argue “that the traditions of spirituality converge on what has served for countless human beings as a highly fruitful solution to addressing certain fundamental obstacles to the attainment of human happiness and virtue.” See *The Spiritual Dimension*, 140-141ff.

prerequisite of religious redemption, his or her spirituality may progress in a malignant way, from the unconscious level of the purely aesthetic stage to the highest demoniac intensity in the conscious despair of defiance, “which despairing wills to be oneself.” The latter, frightening form of spirituality can be attributed to the devil himself, who vehemently opposes divine power, revolting against the whole of existence, thus turning love into spite and hatred against his Creator.⁴⁰

Which Spirituality?

It would be presumptuous to try to adjudicate in a few pages the debates among the proponents of the conceptions of spirituality we have tried to sketch. In fact, we may agree that the outcome of such debates is not so much a matter of evaluating the validity and soundness of particular arguments, as of identifying significant insights through occupying and appreciating the relevant alternative points of view, before embarking upon any comparative assessment.⁴¹ It is clearly not sufficient to understand abstract theoretical doctrines and the reasoning that sustains them, while it seems necessary to participate in *forms of life* which display the aspects of spirituality we want to familiarize ourselves with.

As we saw in the preceding discussion, the exchanges among believers and their opponents, who are committed to various forms of more or less pure materialistic naturalism, lead to diverging assessments concerning the prospects and the quality of most versions of secular spirituality. One may see the point of reservations put forth by Cottingham, regarding the coherence of the particular pantheistic and atheistic conceptions developed by Johnston and Comte-Spoville, or with analogous worries which could be addressed to Ferry and Dworkin, about their non-naturalist variants of spirituality, and still be willing to jettison, or at least reinterpret, the notions inherited from traditional religious worldviews, with a view to readjusting them to the purposes of a spiritually sensitive secular humanism. Thus, one doesn't have to agree with Christian philosophers that humility and a sense of creatureliness are the appropriate existential attitudes, presumably corresponding to ontological truths. One may even be determined to display Nietzschean pride and defiance, in self-reliance and in self-overcoming, without any fear of committing hubris.

Crucial questions do remain open about both the intellectual possibilities and the practical options: Can we rediscover, or reinvent and cultivate

⁴⁰ See Robert Bretall, ed., *A Kierkegaard Anthology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 339-371.

⁴¹ See the discussion of Dworkin's *Religion without God* by Moshe Halbertal, in “Can You Have Religion Without God? Ronald Dworkin and a Religious Worldview for Secularists,” *The New Republic*, October 26, 2013. As Halbertal puts it, “...the main endeavor of *Religion without God* is to convey an attitude – not so much to argue as to ‘show,’ to set before the reader a certain philosophical temper and to share a particular stance.”

spirituality through proper discipline, by reviving exercises analogous to those prescribed by ancient and medieval philosophers and theologians within a secular context? Can we design educational and political institutions fostering spirituality at a communal level? Could we aspire to novel rituals and ceremonies that would replace the old ones and would help us build spiritual bonds among the members of contemporary societies? Isn't there a risk of artificiality, superficiality and even conceit, if we "plan" for the spiritual dimension and don't let it emerge more or less spontaneously from a living tradition? Shouldn't we expect it to grow naturally out of a long period of thinking and acting according to particular values?⁴²

To be sure, one could try to develop a rather broad and positive form of spirituality, by promoting the religious attitude described by Dworkin, just by striving for the realization of goodness in life and by cultivating excellences, by enhancing aesthetic creativity and encouraging ethical and moral responsibility. However, this would not be enough, insofar as what we are after seems to be something richer and deeper, involving a different quality and intensity of experiences of transcendence. At the end of the day, we may decide to undertake the Millian experiments of living envisaged by Kitcher, in whatever way it is practically possible for us to engage in them at a personal and at a social level. Our philosophical ingenuity and our argumentative skills notwithstanding, however, we shall admit that we cannot anticipate the results of such experiments, as far as the proper choice, the viability and the fruitfulness of one or another form of secular spirituality are concerned.

⁴² For such a rather artificial and eclectic solution, proposing to combine and mix elements from different religious traditions, see Alain de Botton, *Religion for Atheists* (London: Penguin Books, 2012).

Kant's Openness to the Other: Not Just a Matter of Faith¹

Konstantinos Polias

Lévinas' "Beyond Essence" as "Determinate Negation" of "Kantism"

In his *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, Emmanuel Lévinas refers to the "meaning" or "sense" that Kant and "Kantism" assign to "the human without measuring it by ontology" or "being," that is, "beyond essence," as an element that, in abstraction from the overall architectonic of their system, could be understood as pointing towards his own views on the "openness" to the "other."² Lévinas refers here obviously to the neo-Kantian Hermann Cohen, in whose work on Kant's ethical thought the Platonic concept of "beyond essence" (*ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας*) finds a prominent place. Cohen's *Kant's Foundation of Ethics* begins with Plato's "bold and ambiguous expression *ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας*," which according to Cohen "signifies the problem of ethics in its relation to the investigations on the concept of being. The single word *ἐπέκεινα* articulates the systematic problem in its most prominent dimension: *the relation of the experience-reality to that kind of validity that pertains to the supersensible*. That was and still remains the question of ethics."³

While Lévinas lays his positive emphasis concerning "Kantism" on the way of thinking that determines being "on the basis of sense" (as opposed to "a sense...measured by being"),⁴ Cohen interprets in his own work on ethics, that is, in his *Ethics of the Pure Will*,⁵ the correspondence that he claims to exist between Kant's "*primacy of practical Reason*" and Plato's "beyond essence" ("the transcendence of the good in relation to being") in a rather negative way.⁶ According to Cohen, that is "the way of expression of religious affection," since he thinks that this "decrease of logic in relation to

¹ Although the argument of the paper is based on an interpretation of Kant, it also goes beyond Kant. In this systematic sense it would be more precise to understand the reference to Kant in the broader sense of 'Kantian.' This clarification was motivated by a question raised at the discussion following the presentation of the paper at the conference, for which I am thankful. See note 96, below.

² See Emmanuel Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998), 129.

³ Hermann Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Ethik* (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1877), 1-2.

⁴ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 129.

⁵ Hermann Cohen, *Kants Ethik des reinen Willens* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1904). Cohen defines ethics as the "theory of the human being" (Cohen, *Kants Ethik*, 1).

⁶ See Cohen, *Kants Ethik*, 84.

ethics" in an "exaltation of moral feeling" may imply a triumph of "religious ethics," but does not promote "ethical truth."⁷

Cohen's critique refers unambiguously to the problem of the systematic unity of theoretical and practical reason from the perspective of his effort to offer – following, as he says, Plato's "riddle" of "beyond essence," which allows to think of the good both as "beyond essence" and as "the highest being"⁸ – a continuous logical justification of this systematic unity. Since Cohen actually identifies logic with theoretical reason,⁹ this effort can be thought to have the overall ontological implications Lévinas is suggesting regarding the overall architectonic of the system of "Kantism."¹⁰ Such an approach could justify, in the sense of a "determinate negation" of its antinomic potential, Lévinas' alternative way of thinking concerning the "passage" of "essence" to the "beyond essence," to the "other" or the "otherwise than being."¹¹

Kant's 'Meta-Critical' Precedent

Kant's Critical Afterthought on the "Riddle" of the "Introduction" of the Third Critique

Cohen is not following, in his systematic efforts, just the "riddle"¹² of Plato, but also the "riddle" of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* [= CPJ]¹³ and the argument that Kant develops there, especially in its "Introduction" concerning the problem of the "way of thinking" of the systematic unity of theoretical and practical reason – in other words, the problem of the "way of thinking" regarding the possibility of the realization of the "highest good" in the world of experience. Since this argument is being presented in terms of a "passage" or a "transition" from theoretical to practical reason (e.g., from the "sensible" to the "supersensible") – which seems to be based

⁷ See Cohen, *Kants Ethik*, 84.

⁸ See Cohen, *Kant's Begründung der Ethik*, 3.

⁹ See Cohen, *Kants Ethik*, 83. On the systematic "primacy of theoretical reason" by Hermann Cohen see from a critical perspective Andrea Marlen Esser, *Eine Ethik für Endliche. Kants Tugendlehre in der Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Frommann Holzboog, 2003), 162-163.

¹⁰ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 179. See also the critique of the "primacy of theoretical reason" (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 96 and 155).

¹¹ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 3 and xlii and, most importantly, his critique of the antinomic potential of idealism (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 163). See note 103, below.

¹² See Lévinas' references to the "enigma" (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 9-10, 12, 19, 44, 93 and also 95, 196, n. 20, 153ff., 161-162).

¹³ Kant refers in the "Preface" of the CPJ to its "puzzling" element and also to the "obscurity" of the solution he offers in the CPJ to a problem "that nature has made so involuted." See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 57-58. See more precisely on the "riddle" of the CPJ notes 24 and 88 below.

solely on the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” concerning the “purposiveness of nature” for “knowledge in general”¹⁴ that can be thought to belong to theoretical reason¹⁵ – it seems to offer clear support to Lévinas’ overall ontological reading of “Kantism.” However, as it becomes clear especially from an essay that Kant published under the title *On the Miscarriage of all Philosophical Trials in Theodicy* [= *MPT*] only a year after the appearance of the CPJ, the connection between theoretical and practical reason, that seems according to the CPJ to rest solely on the aforementioned “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment,” is dependent on an important critical restriction.

That the *MPT* is a critical afterthought to the argument of the CPJ regarding the “passage” from theoretical to practical reason (and the justification of the reality of the “highest good” in the world of experience) as resting solely on the aforementioned “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” (which can be thought to belong to the “concepts of nature”), can become evident by examining its “outcome,” namely, “that our reason is absolutely incapable of insight *into the relationship in which any world as we may ever become acquainted with through experience stands with respect to the highest wisdom.*”¹⁶ This “outcome” is based on the distinction between “the concept of an *artistic wisdom*” (that belongs to “physical teleology” or to theoretical reason, and corresponds to the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” concerning the “purposiveness of nature” for “knowledge in general”), and the “concept of a *moral wisdom*”¹⁷ that belongs to “moral teleology” or “ethicotheology” and to practical reason). As I will argue in the first part of the following subsection, the latter element (of “*moral wisdom*”), which is actually based on the subjective principle of the (“practical”) “purposiveness...of the subject *due to* the concept of freedom” (*zufolge dem Freiheitsbegriff*; my emphasis, KP),¹⁸ is precisely

¹⁴ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, especially sections II-V and IX of the “Introduction.”

¹⁵ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 66 and 82.

¹⁶ Immanuel Kant, “On the Miscarriage of All Philosophical Trials in Theodicy,” trans. George di Giovanni; *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans., ed. Allan Wood and George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 19-37, here 30.

¹⁷ See Kant, *MPT*, 30-31.

¹⁸ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 69 and 77-78 and Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, ed., *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. V (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1908), 192, line 8; the expression “*zufolge dem Freiheitsbegriff*” that refers to the principle of purposiveness of the “sublime” is opposed here to the “purposiveness of the object...in accordance with the concept of nature” that corresponds to the principle of taste and to the “transcendental principle” of the “purposiveness of nature” (“for knowledge in general”) and means rather “consequently to the concept of freedom” in the sense of “for the consequences of the concept of freedom.” This expression should be understood in correspondence to the determination of the “sensible” by the “supersensible in the subject” “for the consequences of the former,” that is, “for the consequences of” “the supersensible [“that the concept of freedom contains practically,” KP] in the subject” “on the latter,” that is, “on nature,” which is explicitly opposed to the “cognition of nature.” See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81 and 63. On this

that element in Kant's philosophy that, great differences notwithstanding, corresponds mostly to Lévinas' "passage" to the "other."

According to the "outcome" of the *MTP*, all philosophical attempts in theodicy – that is, in defending "moral wisdom...against the doubts raised against it on the basis of what the experience of this world teaches" – miscarry, because "we have no concept," that is, eventually no "concept of nature" or no concept of the theoretical reason that yields knowledge, "[o]f the unity in the agreement in a sensible world" "of that artistic with the moral wisdom,"¹⁹ "nor can we ever hope to attain one."²⁰ And, interestingly, Kant backs up this impossibility with an analysis of the content of the required concept that makes clear its antinomic potential. This concept seeks to combine eventually under a "concept of nature" – that is, under the concept of "artistic wisdom" or of "purposiveness of nature" ("for knowledge in general") – the concepts of "a creature...as a natural being" that is "merely the result of the will of the creator," on the one hand, and "as a freely acting being (one which has a will independent of external influence and possibly opposed to the...[former,] sc. "the will of the creator"] in a variety of ways),"²¹ on the other. The combination under a "concept of nature" of the "responsibility" or "imputability" of a free being with the consideration "at the same time" of "one's own deed...as the effect of a higher being,"²² would lead the Kantian system clearly to an antinomy, since it would open up, among other things, the possibility of a "naturalized" "reason." Kant allows for this combination only under a "concept of freedom" and as a sheer "matter of faith."²³

This "outcome" stands, however, in opposition, at least in a sense,²⁴ to the argument of the CPJ concerning the systematic unity of theoretical and

opposition see also Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 129-130. On the identification of the principle of "ethicotheology" with the principle of the "judgment of the sublime," see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 312 (the reference to "the moral predisposition as...subjective principle") and §29. On the issue of freedom see also Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 180ff. and 183f. Lévinas conceives the "openness" to the "other" from the very beginning as "responsibility for the freedom of the others" (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 10 and 109).

¹⁹ On this slight alteration of the translation see Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, ed., *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. VIII (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1923), 263, line 29.

²⁰ See Kant, *MPT*, 30-31.

²¹ See Kant, *MPT*, 31. On the slight alteration of the translation see *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, VIII, 263, lines 31-34.

²² See Kant, *MPT*, 31.

²³ See Kant, *MPT*, 31ff. and Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §86ff.

²⁴ In a sense, because, although Kant makes clear, in the "ethicotheology" of the CPJ (§§ 86-91), that the reality of the "final end" is actually a "matter of faith," in its "Introduction" he creates the impression that this reality can be thought solely on the basis of the "transcendental principle" of the "purposiveness of nature." This is also a kind of 'antinomy' (or "ambiguity") and is what Lévinas refers to, when he asks himself about the "enigma of a God speaking in man and of a man not counting on any god?" (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 154). This is precisely the "riddle" of the CPJ that is

practical reason and, thus, assumes the function of a kind of critical afterthought. Then, in the “Introduction” of the CPJ, Kant puts forward the claim – precisely on the basis of the application of “the maxim of pure reason to seek unity of principles as far as is possible” concerning the unification of “moral teleology” or “ethicotheology” and “physical teleology” or “physicotheology”²⁵ – that the “transcendental principle” of the “purposiveness of nature” “for knowledge in general” is the “concept” of the “ground of *unity* of the supersensible that grounds nature with that which the concept of freedom contains practically,” which “makes possible the transition from the manner of thinking in accordance with the principles of the one [sc. of nature] to that in accordance with the principles of the other [sc. of freedom].”²⁶ And most importantly, Kant actually states, at the end of the “Introduction” of the CPJ, that, through the aforementioned principle, “the possibility of the final end [that is, of the “highest good”], which can become actual only in nature and according to its laws,” is “cognized.”²⁷

Consequently, it is more than clear that Kant at least creates in the CPJ of 1790 the “ontological” impression that a theoretical concept of the unity of “moral teleology” (including the “moral wisdom” of God) and “physical teleology” is possible – an impression he, however, decisively deconstructs only one year later in the *MPT* of 1791.

The Problem of the Procedurally ‘Closed’ ‘Passage’ of the CPJ to the ‘Other’: I

The *MPT* helps us see that, contrary to Cohen’s interpretation of the CPJ²⁸ (but in agreement with his aforementioned critique in his *Ethics of the Pure Will*), Kant’s “passage” to the “beyond essence” rests already in the CPJ solely on the “*determination*” of nature “consequently to the concept of

connected with the “obscurity,” for which Kant apologizes in the “Preface” of the CPJ (see note 13, above), as I will further argue in the second part of the following subsection.

²⁵ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 321.

²⁶ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 63ff.

²⁷ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82.

²⁸ See Hermann Cohen, *Kant’s Begründung der Aesthetik* (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889). A more recent interpretation that supports the claim that the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” “for knowledge in general” offers an independent and completely satisfactory solution to the problem of the unity of theoretical and practical reason is Henry Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste. A Reading of Kant’s Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For a recent opposite interpretation see Christian Krijnen, “Teleology in Kant’s Philosophy of Culture. A Problem for the Architectonic of Reason,” in *The Sublime and its Teleology: Kant – German Idealism – Phenomenology*, ed. Donald Loose (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 115-132. See also Donald Loose, “The Dynamic Sublime as the Pivoting Point between Nature and Freedom in Kant,” in *The Sublime and its Teleology: Kant – German Idealism – Phenomenology*, ed. Donald Loose (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 53-78.

freedom.”²⁹ Since this “passage” is articulated in the CPJ (in differentiation from the godlike, “top-down” perspective of the *Critique of Practical Reason*) from the “bottom-up” perspective of the phenomenal subject³⁰ and of the “idea of humanity,”³¹ the same can be said, in what concerns the realization of this idea on earth that includes relations among humans, in relation to the “passage” of the CPJ to the “other” and, in this sense, in relation to Kant’s “openness” to the “other.”

The “Converse” ‘First Step’ of the “Passage” of the CPJ to the “Other” and its Affinity to Lévinas’ “Passage” to the “Other”

In the last section of the “Introduction” of the CPJ, Kant distinguishes between the “*determinability*” of nature (or of its “supersensible substratum”) on the basis of the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” (“for knowledge in general”),³² and the “*determination*” of nature (or of its “supersensible substratum”) on the basis of the “legislation” of practical reason.³³ Although Kant seems to reduce the “passage” or the “transition” from the “sensible” to the “supersensible” – in what concerns the CPJ (and the “power of judgment”) – to the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” (“for knowledge in general”), his argument makes clear that the aforementioned “*determination*” functions as the “converse” ‘first step’ of this “passage,” in the sense of being the necessary precondition for the ‘second step’ of the “*determinability*” that is related to the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature.”³⁴ Moreover, this

²⁹ In other words, “for the consequences of the former,” that is, of the “supersensible in the subject,” “which the concept of freedom contains practically,” “on the latter,” that is, on “nature.” See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81f. and 63. See also note 18, above.

³⁰ See on the empirical-anthropological perspective of the moral problematic of the CPJ, Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, 205ff.

³¹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 216, the crucial reference to the “supersensible substratum of humanity,” which refers to the “ground of unity” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 63) or to the “final end” of nature “in us” and also “outside us” (the “morally good”; see §59). To this division correspond the two principles of the last of the “three ideas” of the “Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 221). Allison (see *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, 383-384, n. 18) offers a more adequate translation of this last idea and moreover points correctly to the further correspondence between that idea and the reference in the “Introduction” of the CPJ to the “*determination*” of the “supersensible substratum” of “nature” (“in us as well as outside us”) (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82). See also notes 29 and 18, above.

³² See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82.

³³ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82 and 81.

³⁴ This is the way Kant actually begins his argument in the last section of the “Introduction” of the CPJ. See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 80-81. The same holds also for his argument in the passage that distinguishes between “*determinability*” and “*determination*”: “The power of judgment, through its *a priori* principle for judging nature in accordance with possible particular laws for it, provides for its supersensible

“*determination*” of nature “for the consequences” “of the supersensible in the subject” on nature – that is, for the realization of the “final end” of practical reason (of the “highest good”) in nature – refers not only to the nature “outside us,” but also – clearly in relation to the “intelligible substratum” or the “idea of humanity” – to “the nature (of the subject as a sensible being, that is, as a human being).”³⁵ This “*determination*” of “the nature (of the subject...)” – that is, the ethicoteleological presupposition “in the nature (of the subject...)” of the “condition of possibility” of the practical reality of the “final end” of practical reason (of the “highest good”) in experience – stands in exact correspondence to the “practical” “purposiveness...of the subject...consequently to the concept of freedom.”³⁶

Consequently the aforementioned “*determination*,” that refers to the “converse” ‘first step’ of the “passage” of the CPJ to the “beyond essence” or to the “other,” is an integrant part of the CPJ and, furthermore, since it concerns the necessary pre-condition for the ‘second step’ of the “*determinability*,”³⁷ the very element on which eventually rests the “passage” of the

substratum (in us as well as outside us) *determinability through the intellectual faculty*. But reason provides *determination* for the same substratum through its practical law *a priori*; and thus [and only thus, that is, on the pre-condition of this “*determination*,” KP] the power of judgment makes possible the transition from the domain of the concept of nature to that of the concept of freedom” (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82). The practical presupposition of the reality of the “ground of unity” is also a pre-condition of the argument in section II of the “Introduction” of the CPJ (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 63: “Thus there must still be a ground of the unity”) and corresponds exactly to the aforementioned “*determination*.”

³⁵ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81 and notes 18, 29 and 31 above. See on this also Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 129 and 16 and, further, 78: “A notion of subjectivity independent of the adventure of cognition, and in which the corporeality of the subject is not separable from its subjectivity, is required if signification signifies otherwise than by the synchrony of being, if intelligibility and being are distinguishable.”

³⁶ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 77-78. This presupposition and the “purposiveness” of the sublime correspond further to the “practical purposiveness” “of nature” that refers to the “power of desire,” as it is also the case with the sublime (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 69, 73-74 and 131).

³⁷ The “converse” ‘first step’ of the argument of the last section of the “Introduction” of the CPJ corresponds to the “converse...” “purposiveness” “of the subject... consequently to the concept of freedom,” which is “converse” exactly in relation to the “purposiveness of the objects...in accordance with the concept of nature,” that is, to the “purposiveness of nature” (“for knowledge in general”) that corresponds to the ‘second step’ of the “*determinability*” (see, Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81 and 77-78). On the thesis that the distinction of the “Introduction” of the CPJ between the beautiful and the sublime or between the “purposiveness of the object...in accordance with the concept of nature” and the “purposiveness...of the subject...due to the concept of freedom” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 77-78) corresponds to its distinction between “*determinability*” and “*determination*” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82 and notes 18 and 29 above), see Louis Guillermit, *L’élucidation critique du jugement de goût selon Kant* (Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1986), 103f. N.B. Beyond the “transition” or “passage” of the “Introduction” of the CPJ, there is also the “passage” on the “Transition from the faculty for judging the beautiful to the one for judging the

CPJ to the "other" in the sense of the realizability on earth of the "final end" of reason (of the "highest good" or of the "idea of humanity"). This is, moreover, exactly the element in Kant's system that, great differences notwithstanding, corresponds most to Lévinas' determination "of being" "on the basis of sense" ("beyond essence").

This ethicoteological "*determination*" or presupposition of the "purposiveness...of the subject...consequently to the concept of freedom" can, in itself, rest only on "moral faith,"³⁸ since (as a concept of the "final end" of nature and not just of our practical reason) it is not included in the moral-practical necessary "legislation" of reason, whereas its (eventually theoretical) cognoscibility would lead the Kantian system to an antinomy. This "*determination*" of "the nature (of the subject as sensible being, that is, as human being)" "consequently to the concept of freedom," is precisely what corresponds to Lévinas' determination "of being" "on the basis of sense"; it is clearly opposed to what Lévinas calls the "measuring" of "the sense" "by being" that corresponds to "physical teleology" (or "physicotheology") and to the cognitive "*determinability*" provided to "being" by the "transcendental principle" of the "power of judgment"³⁹ (concerning the "purposiveness of nature" "for knowledge in general"). Kant refers, at this point, the "*determination*" of "being" "on the basis of sense," or the presupposition he is making regarding the "subject as sensible being," to the "consequences of"

sublime" (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §23) that corresponds to the "converse" 'first step' of the "transition" of the "Introduction" of the CPJ. For a detailed defense of the thesis that the sublime is an integral part of the "transition" of the CPJ, see Christine Pries, *Übergänge ohne Brücken. Kants Erhabenes zwischen Kritik und Metaphysik* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996).

³⁸ Kant emphasizes at the beginning of his argument precisely that he is referring to something "the possibility of which cannot of course be understood," that is, it cannot be cognized ("in accordance with the concept of nature"). See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81. Although Lévinas' approach can be thought as an effort to overcome the (psychological) subjectivity of faith, in his case also one cannot properly talk of "reality" or "fact" concerning the "passage" to the "other" in itself, but only of "religion" and "religiosity" (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 117 and 168) or ethical faith. Lévinas' foundation of the "passage" to the "other" can in itself rest on ethical faith only, even though it is certainly "not simply a passage to a subjective point of view" (see *Otherwise than Being*, 82). See on this Ernst Cassirer, *The Problem of Knowledge. Philosophy, Science, and History since Hegel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950), 294ff. Cassirer lays emphasis on the unconscious or social-ethical (intersubjective or "bottom-up") element of religion. The difference between Lévinas and Cassirer consists in the idealist emphasis of Cassirer concerning the idea of a "sociology of religion" on the pole of "religion" (see Cassirer, *The Problem of Knowledge*, 309), whereas Lévinas emphasizes rather the "passivity" of "sociality" in "subjectivity" (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 101, 106, 112, 119-120). For Lévinas' reference to Cassirer see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 119. On the issue of ethical faith, see note 110, below.

³⁹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81.

“the supersensible in the subject” on nature – in clear opposition to the “cognition of nature” (or “in accordance with the concept of nature”).⁴⁰

Given our aforementioned thesis (stated in the previous subsection) that the element of “ethicotheology” – or, more precisely, the subjective principle that lies at its basis (that is, the principle of the “practical” “purposiveness” of the “nature” “of the subject” “as sensible being, that is, as human being”) for the “final end” (the “intelligible substrate of humanity”), which is presupposed in the aforementioned “*determination*” and lies at the basis of the “judgment of the sublime”⁴¹ – is the element of maximum approach between Kant and Lévinas, it is extremely important that Lévinas oppose the “disinterested” “sensitivity” of the “saying” (corresponding to Kant’s opposition of the “sublime” to the “beautiful”⁴²) to a “game.” Lévinas describes the “disinterested” “sensitivity” of the “saying” in terms of “an extreme gravity” that, in opposition to “the fallacious frivolity of play,” “is beyond the measure of being” and “shows now, in a still confused way, its affinity with ethics”⁴³ – and he adds that “[n]othing is more grave, more august, than responsibility for the other, and saying, in which there is no play, has a gravity more grave than its own being or not being.”⁴⁴ Crucial, from this perspective, is the fact that Lévinas disconnects the “disinterested” “sensitivity” of the “saying” in itself from knowledge⁴⁵, as it is also the case with the “subjective ground...of sensibility” of the sublime by Kant, which, in opposition to the beautiful (whose principle is the “transcendental principle” of the “purposiveness of nature,” “for knowledge in general”), has no cognitive significance whatsoever.⁴⁶

Kant talks exactly in this sense concerning this ethicoteleological “determination” of “being” on the basis of “the manner of thinking, or rather,” of “its foundation in human nature” of “*species finalis accepta, non data*.”⁴⁷ This “foundation in human nature” of “the manner of thinking” in accordance with the “idea of humanity”⁴⁸ – that is, the “subjective principle” of the “moral predisposition” of the (“nature” of the) “subject” (the predisposition

⁴⁰ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81 and also note 18 above. According to Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, 383-384, n. 18, the reference of the “Introduction” of the CPJ to the “*determinability*” of the “supersensible substratum” of “nature” corresponds to the second of the aforementioned “three ideas” (see note 31 above). This includes also the “principle of taste” in the sense of the beautiful as “the symbol of the morally good.”

⁴¹ See notes 36 and 37 above.

⁴² See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 128-129.

⁴³ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 6-7.

⁴⁴ Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 46.

⁴⁵ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 62. See also the connection of the “Beautiful” with “ontology,” Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 40.

⁴⁶ See on this Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 129-130, 138 and 142.

⁴⁷ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 160-161.

⁴⁸ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 141 and note 31 above.

of “moral feeling” or “moral sense”⁴⁹ or of its “practical” “purposiveness... consequently to the concept of freedom”⁵⁰ – is most characteristically described as lying in a particularly “obscure” “feeling” that has, however, a “moral foundation.”⁵¹ This description can be understood from the perspective of its relation to Lévinas as laying emphasis on the special kind of “passivity”⁵² that distinguishes this “subjective ground...of sensibility”⁵³ or this “receptivity,”⁵⁴ as the “human possibility” to “hear” the “voice of reason”⁵⁵ or of a “God”⁵⁶ “not contaminated by Being”⁵⁷ (or beyond the “concept of nature”⁵⁸).

⁴⁹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §29 and 145. The reference to “moral sense” is here to be understood in relation to the moral “way of thinking.” It is actually on that basis that the moral interpretation of nature is possible. Lévinas refers to the “disposition” of “the immediacy of the sensible” (“to what” it “would dispose”) beyond knowledge and describes the “sensation” “at the basis of sensible experience” as “sensibility” (that is, as “immediacy of the sensible” beyond knowledge) in terms of “enjoyment and suffering” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 63). See further note 53 below.

⁵⁰ See notes 18, 36 and 37 above.

⁵¹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 172. N.B. The similarity of Lévinas’ expression “shows now, in a still confused way, its affinity with ethics” (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 7) is apparent.

⁵² Lévinas understands the exceptional “passivity” of the “disinterested sensibility” exactly in opposition to the passivity of receptivity as modality of cognition. See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, xlviii, 14, 47, 48, 71, 84, 192, n. 20. “If transcendence has meaning it can only signify the fact that the *event of being*...passes over to what is other than being” (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 3). He refers further to the “metaphysical *hither side*” of being and relates this reference to the characteristic for the Kantian sublime “superlative which exceeds” “the logical order and the being” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 187, n. 5; see also Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 8, 10-11, 47 and 49).

⁵³ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 151-152. Crucial are further from the perspective of the relation of Lévinas’ “disinterested sensibility” to the Kantian sublime. Kant’s references to the violent dimension of the “feeling of the sublime” and its connection with an “inhibition of the vital powers” or a “sacrifice” of “freedom” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 129, 142, 151-152), especially in relation to Lévinas’ theme of the “*breathlessness of the spirit*” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 5, 14, 16, 44). Moreover, “proximity” is being described in terms of “enjoyment and wounding” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 63) and thus in a way that corresponds to the mixed feeling of the sublime. See on this especially Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 123-124 and 126. See further the references of Lévinas to “Paining” as “negative extent” (“grandeur negative”), to “non-form” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 88 and 113), and to the “abyss” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 89 and 93), which are all characteristic also of the sublime by Kant. Very important in relation to the Kantian “dynamic sublime” is also the reference of Lévinas to “the obsession of the neighbor” as an obsession “stronger than any negativity” that “paralyzes with the weight of its very silence the power to assume this weight” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 84).

⁵⁴ Kant refers to a “receptivity to ideas.” See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 148.

⁵⁵ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 148 and 138. On “reason” see also Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 160 and 167.

⁵⁶ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 147-148; 311-312, for the references to religion and God; and 323, for the reference to the “voice that things must come out differently.”

This “ground” (“of *unity*”) refers in principle completely to “the subject” and to “humanity” – that is, to the “nature” “of the subject” and its “vocation”⁵⁹ beyond the “concept of nature,” and also beyond the “concept of freedom” in the sense of the moral-practical necessary “legislation” of reason⁶⁰ – has only moral-practical significance,⁶¹ and establishes (and fosters) an ethical relationship and community among humans (e.g., the realization of the “idea of humanity” on earth through culture)⁶² eventually solely on the basis of “moral faith” or of an argument “κατ’ ἀνθρώπων” “for human beings in general.”⁶³ This application of the argumentative type of the presupposition of “ethicotheology” to the presupposition of the “practical” “purposiveness...of the subject...consequently to the concept of freedom,”⁶⁴ is wholly justified due to the fact that this type of argument is characteristic for a presupposition, which is, in itself (as is, in general, the case with the practical presuppositions regarding the issue of the realizability of the “final end” of practical reason in experience), only a “matter of faith” and not a matter of cognition, neither theoretical nor practical.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 129.

⁵⁸ All the differences between Kant and Lévinas notwithstanding, Kant’s reference to “our moral predisposition as the subjective principle not to be content with natural causes” (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 312) describes in a quite exact sense Lévinas’ understanding of “subjectivity” and of the “human,” so that the latter can be thought as an application of this reference in its extreme consequence, which leads him to his “anarchical” conception of “subjectivity.” See also Lévinas’ references to nature and to causal chain (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 68, 75, 79, 84, 86, 123). It is extremely interesting that Lévinas refers to the “outside of itself, the difference from oneself of this unicity” (that is, of “subjectivity”) as “the non-indifference itself” (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 11, 48, 122-123), that is, as “goodness” or the “Good.” Although Lévinas refers to the “beyond essence” not only as the “excluded middle” of “being” and “non-being,” but also of “freedom” and “non-freedom” and in this sense also as ‘beyond freedom,’ he clearly understands the “openness” to the “other” as an improved answer to the classical problem of mediation between freedom and nature (subjectivity and objectivity). See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 113-129 and chap. V.

⁵⁹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 130, 138-139, 141-142. See on this Lévinas’ references to the “primary vocation” of “subjectivity” as “a sensibility which the other by vocation calls upon” (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 85 and 77). See further Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 104-105, 116, 122-123.

⁶⁰ See Kant’s reference to the “ground of unity” or the “intelligible substratum of humanity” as something that is “neither nature nor freedom,” but that “in which” [worin] the one and the other “form a unity” “in an unknown way” or, better, in a non cognizable way (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 227 and Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, ed., *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. V, 353, lines 30-34), that is, in a way the possibility of which is not a matter of cognition, neither of theoretical, nor of practical cognition, but just a “matter of faith.”

⁶¹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 130, 138, 141, 148, 151-152, 160-161.

⁶² See Loose, “The Dynamic Sublime as the Pivoting Point.”

⁶³ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 327.

⁶⁴ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 69, 73-74, 78, 80, 160-161.

⁶⁵ See, further, Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §91.

Moreover and most importantly, the ethicoteleological “deduction” that Kant offers to the “subjective principle” of the “judgment of the sublime”⁶⁶ is not a “transcendental” one, since it does not refer to “objects of possible knowledge” or “experience” “in general,” but to the human “power of desire,” which “does not belong among the transcendental predicates,” but “must still be given empirically.”⁶⁷ The fact that this principle – that is, the principle of “practical purposiveness of nature”⁶⁸ “(in us as well as outside us)” – is a “metaphysical” one⁶⁹ and, consequently, cannot be reduced to a “transcendental” principle, establishes from the perspective of “transcendental philosophy” and of the “Critique,” the unavoidability of its status as a mere “matter of faith.” It explains, moreover, why Kant does not refer in the CPJ (in opposition to the *Critique of Practical Reason*) to a “transcendental deduction” of the “highest good,”⁷⁰ but talks instead just of an argument “κατ’ ἀνθρώπων” “for human beings in general,” since the principle on which this “deduction” necessarily rests, is a “metaphysical” one. This is the main reason that allows the application of this type of argument to the ethicoteleological “deduction” of the “principle of the sublime”⁷¹ (or to the ethicoteleological presupposition “in the nature (of the subject as sensible being, that is, as human being)” of the “condition of possibility” of the practical reality of the “final end” in experience⁷²), since both refer, as is the case with the ethicoteleological argument “κατ’ ἀνθρώπων,” to the “deduction” of the “highest good,” whose reality is in itself “a mere matter of faith”⁷³ in a non-reducible way. In this context, it is of importance to stress the fact that the subjective “predisposition” for “moral sense” shows its character of referring to the “beyond of essence” under the form of religious iconoclasm, which functions as a structural element that invokes religious pluralism (at least on the linguistic level).⁷⁴

⁶⁶ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 160-161.

⁶⁷ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 69. The reference to the “power of desire” is the main difference between the “Analytic of the Beautiful” and the “Analytic of the Sublime” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 131).

⁶⁸ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 78.

⁶⁹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 68-69.

⁷⁰ See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2002), 144.

⁷¹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 161.

⁷² See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 80.

⁷³ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 334. See on this also Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 158f. and 163.

⁷⁴ Kant refers to the Jewish “Thou shall not make any graven image,” to Islam (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 156), but also to “the inscription over the temple of Isis (Mother Nature): “I am all that is, that was, and that will be, and my veil no mortal has removed” (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 194, note). Jürgen Habermas makes the same point regarding Schleiermacher and in a certain opposition to Kant, but he oversees that Kant’s “iconoclasm” functions exactly as the guarantee of the cultural “pluralism” of the “religion of reason” in the sense that it does not allow for a monism of its cultural expression (or realization). See Jürgen Habermas, “Die Grenze zwischen Glauben und Wissen. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte und aktuellen Bedeutung von

The Problem of the Procedurally ‘Closed’ ‘Passage’ of the CPJ to the ‘Other’: II

Nonetheless, the systematic problem mentioned in the first subsection (see *Kant’s Critical Afterthought...*) of the present section has, from the perspective of the “Critique of Reason,” a crucial consequence that cannot be neglected. The problem lies not only in the antinomic potential of the claim that the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” (a “concept of nature”) unifies solely by itself theoretical and practical reason; most importantly, the fact that this possibility is systematically excluded (since this could lead among other things to a “naturalized” “reason”) raises, as a crucial consequence, a problem of legitimacy concerning the very (“encyclopaedic”) “introduction”⁷⁵ of the CPJ (and of the “power of judgment”) on the basis of its “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” in the overall system of the “Critique.” The legitimation of this “introduction” rests clearly on the function of the CPJ (and of the “power of judgment”) “as a means for combining the two parts of philosophy into one whole”⁷⁶ that is based on this principle – precisely in the sense of an independent confirmation of the realizability of the “final end” of practical reason, that is, of the “highest good” – in experience.⁷⁷

However, this function of the CPJ (and of the “power of judgment”) and consequently also the legitimation of its “introduction,” is crucially endangered by the fact that the full justification of the validity of the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature” presupposes, as the “Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” makes clear, what this principle should independently confirm – that is, the principle of the “final end” of nature and consequently also the “moral faith” in the reality of this principle.⁷⁸ Such an argumentative structure would imply the circularity of Kant’s

Kants Religionsphilosophie,” *Kritik der Vernunft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009), 369ff.

⁷⁵ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 41ff.

⁷⁶ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 64-66.

⁷⁷ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81-82. This is also the way Allison understands Kant’s argument (see Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, chaps. 9-11).

⁷⁸ This can be shown on the basis of §59 of the CPJ – see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 227: “Now I say that the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good, and also that only in this respect (that of a relation that is natural to everyone, and that is also expected of everyone else as a duty) does it please with a claim to the assent of everyone else” – and of the aforementioned correspondence between the last of the “three ideas” of the “deduction” of the “Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” (see Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, 383-384, n. 18) and the “determination,” to which Kant’s argument in the last section of the “Introduction” of the CPJ refers as the pre-condition of the “passage” or the “transition”: “But reason provides *determination* for the same substratum through its practical law *a priori*; and thus [and only thus (as in “only in this respect” of §59 of the CPJ), KP] the power of judgment makes possible the transition from the domain of the concept of nature to that of the concept of freedom” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81).

argument concerning the justification of the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” as an independent confirmation of the realizability of the “final end” of nature. This is suggested also by Henry Allison,⁷⁹ who, however, argues for the independence of the justification of the validity of the “transcendental principle” of “taste” as a pre-condition of its mediating function in the sense of an independent confirmation of the realizability of the “highest good.”⁸⁰

The problem with Allison's argument is that it leads to a clear antinomic consequence,⁸¹ since, if it is to avoid the presupposition of “moral faith,” it must argue for the thesis of the independent cognoscibility of the “final end” of “nature”⁸² and, in this sense, allow also for the unification of “moral teleology” (and “ethicotheology”) and “physical teleology” (and “physicotheology”) under a “concept of nature.”⁸³ Moreover, it would be circular to base the justification of the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” on the epistemological “deduction” offered in the section V of the “Introduction” to the CPJ, since the very function of the “deduction” of this principle in the “Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” (which is undertaken on the basis of the premise that the validity claim of “judgments of taste” is grounded also in the objects⁸⁴) is to secure the “transcendental” and not just “logical” character of this principle – as this cannot be done through a “deduction” of the type offered in the section

⁷⁹ See Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste*, 264-266.

⁸⁰ Allison understands consequently the “determinability” as a “pre-condition” of the “determination” (see Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste*, 208-209 and 247), standing thus in clear opposition to Kant's way of argumentation in the last section of the “Introduction” of the CPJ that points exactly to the opposite direction, as it exactly emphasizes that, since the “sensible cannot determine the supersensible in the subject,” a “passage” or a “transition” from the “sensible” to the “supersensible” is possible only on the pre-condition of the “converse” “determination” (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 80-81). On the opposite to Allison thesis, namely, on the thesis that the full justification of the validity of the “transcendental” “principle of taste” presupposes the “final end” of nature or the “intelligible substrate of humanity” see, among others, Donald Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), Reinhard Brandt, “Analytic/Dialectic,” in *Reading Kant: New Perspectives on Transcendental Arguments and Critical Philosophy*, eds. Eva Shaper and Wilhelm Vossenkuhl (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 179-195 and, more recently, Krijnen, “Teleology in Kant's Philosophy of Culture. A Problem for the Architectonic of Reason,” in *The Sublime and its Teleology: Kant – German Idealism – Phenomenology*, ed. Donald Loose (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 115-132.

⁸¹ See on this the similar remark by Allison himself (see *Kant's Theory of Taste*, 247).

⁸² See for a recent example of that tendency of this type of approach Birgit Recki, “Die Dialektik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft und die Methodenlehre des Geschmacks (§§ 55-60),” in *Immanuel Kant: Kritik der Urteilskraft*, ed. Otfried Höffe (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008), 189-210, here 197-199.

⁸³ That is, it leads to a version of the so called theoretical conception of freedom, which is, as it is well known, clearly denied by Kant (and also by Lévinas) as antinomic. See Recki, “Die Dialektik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft,” 202-205.

⁸⁴ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 160-161.

V of the “Introduction” to the CPJ.⁸⁵ This problem cannot be solved solely on the basis of the equally epistemological presupposition of a “common sense,” since such an epistemologically conditioned presupposition is not able, as a purely conceptual one, to establish a necessary connection to “feeling” and, moreover, it opens up (exactly in relation to the aforementioned ground of the validity claim of the “judgments of taste” in the objects) the problem of the “empiricism” or the “realism” of the “rationalism” of the “principle of taste”⁸⁶ – as Kant’s question, whether this principle is “constitutive” or not, shows.⁸⁷ It is exactly this problem in relation to the justification of the unconditional validity of the “principle of taste” that makes the “Dialectic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment” a necessary part of the “deduction” of the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” as “transcendental.”

Finally, the fact that Kant – although he is fully aware of this problem and offers all the evidence needed for its clear perception – creates, nonetheless, and parallel to that, the clearly antinomic impression that such an independent confirmation (that is, one that is unmediated by the “moral faith” in the “final end” of nature) is possible, intensifies the aforementioned legitimacy problem of the “process” of the “Critique” concerning the (“encyclopaedic”) “introduction” of the CPJ (and the “power of judgment”). Characteristic in this sense is his reference to the “not entirely avoidable obscurity in the solution of the problem” of the CPJ.⁸⁸ This “obscurity” is exactly connected with Kant’s tendency not to make totally distinct the fact that the irreducible element of “moral faith” in the “final end” of nature, is a necessary pre-condition of the allegedly independent justification of this “moral faith” on the basis of the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment,” since it is a necessary pre-condition of the justification of its unconditional validity or of its mediating function.

From this perspective, Kant’s tendency to create nonetheless the impression of such an independent justification can be thought as an application of what he criticizes, in the “Methodology of the Teleological Power of Judgment,” as “deliberate concealment [“perhaps with good intention,” KP] of” the “weaknesses” of the “pseudo-proof” (*Scheinbeweis*) of “natural the-

⁸⁵ See on this Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 15-16, footnote, and 22f.

⁸⁶ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §58.

⁸⁷ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 124. See further on this point Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste*, 145ff. However, these problems are not, as Allison suggests, solved by the “deduction” of the judgments of taste offered in the “Analytic,” as Kant’s relevant comment at the end of §40 shows (see Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 176: “If one could assume that the mere universal communicability of his feeling must in itself already involve an interest for us (which, however, one is not justified in inferring from the constitution of a merely reflective power of judgment), then one would be able to explain how it is that the feeling in the judgment of taste is expected of everyone as if it were a duty.”)

⁸⁸ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 58. Kant localizes the source of the problem in “nature,” but he does this certainly from “a transcendental point of view.” See notes 13 and 24, above.

ology,”⁸⁹ that is also based on the subjective principle of reason “to seek unity of principles as far as is possible.”⁹⁰ The creation of the impression on Kant’s part that the “connection of the legislations of understanding and reason” rests only on the “transcendental principle” of the “power of judgment” (on the basis of which the reality of the “final end” of nature “is cognized”⁹¹) conceals – as it is exactly the case with the argument of “natural theology” – the fact that the argument for this connection consists of “two different parts..., namely that which belongs to moral teleology and that which belong to natural teleology.”⁹² Thus, in both cases, by “fusing the two together,” the argument “makes hard to recognize where the real nerve of the proof lies,”⁹³ namely, in the presupposition of the practical reality of the “final end” of nature that rests on “moral faith.” Since Kant, moreover, actually allows from the perspective of “popular usefulness” the creation of this “wholesome” or “healthy illusion”⁹⁴ (as he calls it), one could understand the creation of the aforementioned impression on Kant’s part in exactly this sense. On this basis, however, the “process” of the “Critique” can consequently with good reason be thought as “suspended” – ‘closed’ – at the very point of its systematic completion through the (“encyclopaedic”) “introduction” of the CPJ, and this affects also the aforementioned “passage” to the “other” (of the argument “κατ’ ἀνθρώπων”) that the CPJ was supposed to keep open.

The MPT as a Supplementary Procedural Re-opening of the “Passage” of the CPJ to the “Other”: Towards a Kantian “Pure Logic of Question”

From this background, Kant’s application in the *MPT* of the methodical procedure of the “issue-theory” of rhetoric or argumentation⁹⁵ can, with good reason, be thought to function as a supplement to the “critical process” that re-opens the “passage” to the “other” and keeps it open in the procedural sense of a “logic of question,”⁹⁶ so that the submission (“respect”⁹⁷) to it

⁸⁹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 325.

⁹⁰ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 326 and 321.

⁹¹ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 81.

⁹² See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 326.

⁹³ See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 326.

⁹⁴ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 326.

⁹⁵ See Kant, *MPT*, 24, the characteristic reference to the issue of “paragraphe” or “metalepsis” (“translatio” or “quaestio translativa”) under the term “*exceptio fori*” that denies the jurisdiction of the procedure and is in this sense self-referential or methodological. See on the “issue-theory” and especially on the issue of “paragraphe” or “metalepsis” D. A. Russel, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 60-63 and 43-44, and George A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 74, 76-77, 82-83, 84-85.

⁹⁶ See Cohen, *Ethik des reinen Willens*, 86-87. The following reflection on the “logic of question” is undertaken from the perspective of the “linguistic turn” and more precisely of the “pragmatic turn” within the “linguistic turn” and goes in this sense beyond Kant. Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik* is important in this sense, because it con-

of “the human being” – that “is justified, as rational, in testing all claims, all doctrines which impose respect on him, before he submits himself to them” – “may be” (as Kant says at the beginning of the *MPT*) “sincere and not feigned.”⁹⁸ Certainly, as Richard Cohen points out,⁹⁹ Lévinas himself declares that it is still “language” in the sense of “logic” (the “Said”) through which the question, “But what is *Being’s other?*,”¹⁰⁰ is being asked; it is “language serving a research conducted in view of disengaging the *otherwise than being or being’s other* outside of the themes in which they already show themselves, unfaithfully as being’s *essence* – but in which they do show themselves.”¹⁰¹ But Lévinas is too quick to identify “logic” or “Logos” with “ontology”¹⁰² and, thus, to reduce (in the sense of a “determinate negation” of “Kantism” – on the basis of the antinomic potential of the effort to oppose the “primacy of practical reason” and of “faith” by drawing on the primacy of theoretical reason¹⁰³) “epoché,”¹⁰⁴ “questioning,” and “critique”¹⁰⁵ to ethics and actually to ethical faith as the foundation of the “openness” to the “other,” of intelligibility and of the rationality of reason and communication.¹⁰⁶ This has, as a consequence, that he neglects (even though he talks of the *allegiance* of [*t*]he questioning to the other¹⁰⁷) the

nects the “idea of humanity” in its function in the CPJ with the problem of language and, moreover, connects specifically the problem of the “rationality” of the “power of judgment” (beyond the “determinative judgment”) that is typical for the “pragmatic turn” within the “linguistic turn” with the concept of “question” (see *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik*, 395). In this sense the argument of the paper, even though it goes beyond Kant, stays within the confines of the “Kant-Forschung.” See note 1, above.

⁹⁷ See Kant, *MPT*, 24.

⁹⁸ Kant, *MPT*. See Kant’s further reference to “honesty in openly admitting one’s doubts; repugnance to pretending conviction where one feels none” (Kant, *MPT*, 33). Lévinas offers a defense of “God” as a “witness.” See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 147-148 and, further, the reference to Job, Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 122, which is a central theme of the *MPT*.

⁹⁹ See Richard A. Cohen, *Ethics, Exegesis and Philosophy. Interpretation after Lévinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 146f.

¹⁰⁰ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 3.

¹⁰¹ Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 6.

¹⁰² See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 37-38. It is remarkable that Lévinas identifies “apophansis” (that is, logic or the “Said”) with the “determinative judgment” (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 78).

¹⁰³ “With what right does the idealist extract the ego from being and confer upon it a transcendental status, when the subject returns to being in the very stability of its status? But the forgetting of ambiguity would be as little philosophical. It is in its exception and expulsion as a responsible one that a subject outside of being can be conceived” (Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 163). See note 11, above.

¹⁰⁴ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 8-9 and 14-15. Lévinas understands the logic of “epoché” under the concept of “negation,” that is, of “apophansis,” and the same holds for his understanding of “question” from the logical point of view (see, further, Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 3, 15, 17-18, 156-157).

¹⁰⁵ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 20, 44, 92, 122.

¹⁰⁶ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 160.

¹⁰⁷ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 23ff.

possibility (the “excluded middle”) of a “pure logic of question” that could function as a foundation for “critique,” for sense, and for the rationality of communication and judgment beyond the alternative of either ontology in the sense of “determinative judgment” or ethics (in the sense of ethical faith or religion – simply in the sense of ethical certainty). By reducing the concept of “question” on the part of logic to the concept of negation – that is, by reducing it actually to the concept of “answer” (“apophansis”)¹⁰⁸ – Lévinas denies the possibility of an autonomous (neither gnoseological, nor ethical, nor aesthetical) understanding of the concept of “question” on the part of logic, and reduces the phenomenon of the “question” either to ontology or to ethical faith.

In fact, the problem rests on the fact that both sides – that is, both the side of those who follow the “primacy of practical reason” like Lévinas and the side of those who like Hermann Cohen oppose the “primacy of practical reason” (and the foundation of rationality in ethical faith), although they both recognize the importance of the concept of “question” – identify the function of this concept with the traditional mediating function of the “power of judgment” (in the sense of “reflective judgment”) between theoretical and practical reason. Thus, by thinking it under the idea of the unity of nature and freedom, which determines their understanding of the “excluded middle” between freedom and nature, they exclude, at the same time, the possibility of an autonomous sense of the concept of “question” and, consequently, reduce it either to ethical certainty, or to theoretical necessity, or to their unity.

Here lies the justification for the concept of a “pure logic of question.”¹⁰⁹ The distinction of the concept of the “question” from the concept of the “answer” is here understood exactly in the sense of the disconnection of the concept of “question” and, thus, also of the distinction of the problem of the “rationality” of the “power of judgment” (in the Kantian sense of “reflective judgment” as opposed to the “determinative judgment”) from the problem of the unity of theoretical and practical reason – since this connection leads to the problematic alternative of either a potentially antinomic ontology, or of a potentially just subjectivist ethical faith.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ See notes 104 and 102, above.

¹⁰⁹ On the problem of the concept of the “question” from the perspective of logic or philosophy of language, see Nuel Belnap, “Declaratives are not enough.” *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal of Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 59, no. 1 (May 1990): 1-30.

¹¹⁰ Lévinas’ effort to overcome this problem through the unity of ethical and theoretical reason under the primacy of ethical reason (see Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 153ff.) corresponds to Kant’s effort to find an independent justification for the “moral faith” in the “final end” of nature on the basis of the “transcendental principle” of “purposiveness of nature.” However this connection does not change the fact that the whole argument rests eventually on ethical faith, especially since Lévinas’ “determinate negation” is overseeing the possibility of a “pure logic of question.” See note 38, above.

As exemplified paradigmatically in the self-referential concept of “metalepsis” of the “issue-theory”¹¹¹ (that is, let us say, the concept of the “introduction”¹¹² instead of Lévinas’ concept of the “foreword”¹¹³), this “pure logic of question” can be used to express the possibility (and just that) of a relation to the other in its radical difference. This “pure logic of question” is, in this sense, not contaminated with being, but should be strictly referred to the possibility of *critical understanding* (*sense-making*) in general as its transcendental condition – or its condition of rationality or universality (in the strict sense, i.e., for ‘all rational beings,’ or for rationality or critical sense-making in general).¹¹⁴ The “necessity of thinking,” or the “rationality” or “universality” “of reason,” would be in this sense not “inscribed” in “the sense of transcendence”¹¹⁵ understood as ethical faith.

Thus, although ethical faith or trust (ethical certainty) is without doubt an irreducible condition of the genesis of conceptual content, of intelligibility, or of communication, ethics should not necessarily be thought as first philosophy or in this sense as the “foundation of theory,”¹¹⁶ of sense, intelligibility, communication, or even of “critique,” as the concept of the “pure logic of question” opens up the possibility of a critical rationality regarding understanding and sense-making or interpreting in general, which (as independent of both gnoseology and ethics) is not reducible either to ontology or to ethical faith. In this sense, the “pure logic of question” would not be “incommensurable” with the “other than being” and with its sense of radical difference, but, on the contrary, as already “beyond essence” open to or for it.

¹¹¹ See note 95, above.

¹¹² See the reference to the institution or constitution of the process itself in Kant, MPT, 24. The concept of “introduction” is here not to be understood in the sense of an “introduction” in a pre-given systematic whole, but in a pure procedural way of critical sense-making or interpretation that is compatible even with the “anarchic” understanding of ethical reason by Lévinas or in general with “pluralistic” approaches to meaning.

¹¹³ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 5.

¹¹⁴ “Taste” or “art” cannot help to solve this problem, since they refer in themselves only to the finite, “human power of judgment” and thus cannot lead on their own “beyond essence.” See notes 40, 45, 46 and notes 15 and 18, above. This was also an issue raised at the discussion following the presentation of this paper at the conference, which helped me realize that Lévinas localizes rightly the root of the problem in the traditional restriction to the finite “human power of judgment.”

¹¹⁵ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 160, and 188, n. 6.

¹¹⁶ See Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 136.

Finding Values in African Traditional Thought and Ways of Life: A Defense of Reconstructionist Ontology¹

Ruth M. Lucier

Introduction

In *Forgotten Truth*, Huston Smith points out that, in all human cultures, the view of reality that precedes modern science is a hierarchy of quality rather than quantity – a hierarchy in which the sacred aspect of life is viewed as an integral part of the whole, precluding any hard and fast distinctions between the sacred and the profane.² Smith’s thesis appears to be borne out in African as well as European traditions. Indeed, the assertion that there is such a spirit-laden hierarchy written into the language systems of peoples who speak languages that share a structure common to the early, indigenous languages of the peoples of central Africa (viz. people who traditionally spoke, and still speak, one of the many languages of the Bantu family) has been supported by two scholars who spent most of their professional lives working within such cultures, namely, Placide Tempels (in the English translation of his book, entitled *Bantu Philosophy*),³ and Alexis Kagame in his book *La philosophie bantu comparée*.⁴ Some have advocated further refinement of Tempels’ and Kagame’s views, while others have objected to their views, arguing that they are a product of unwarranted speculation.

¹ For insights that inspired my initial interest in African Traditional Thought and in many of its related concepts that this essay contains, I am indebted to numerous students and faculty of Bennett College and especially to Ndamono R. Nanjangu of Namibia, Andrea Malone of Antigua, Tamilia Stubbs and Cenora Tompson of the USA, Patrick Idoye of Nigeria, and Dede Adote of Benin, as well as my current colleagues at Bennett College, Valerie Ann Johnson, Johnson Adefila, and Bheki Langa, and Sierra Toney, USA. A deep debt of gratitude is also owed to Huston Smith for guidance and inspiration received during the 1987 National Endowment for the Humanities Seminar on the Great “Chain of Being” (offered under his direction), and to my seminar colleagues who helped me to see important implications of African traditional hierarchies in relation to global perspectives in ethics and religious thought. In the essay presented here, however, any omissions or errors of any kind are totally my own.

² Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth: The Primordial Tradition* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 3.

³ Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1959). I use here the English title of Tempels’ book translated from the French which in turn was a translation of Tempels’ original Flemish text.

⁴ Alexis Kagame, *La philosophie bantu comparée* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1971).

The distinguished African scholar Abiola Irele describes this “Bantu Philosophy” (so-called by both Tempels and Kagame) as involving an “interrelation of forces which is ordained as a felt hierarchy of forces running down from God, the Supreme Incarnation of vital force, through man (including the dead ancestors and the living community of humans) to the animal and inanimate world.”⁵ Irele observes that, in this “African Traditional View,” we have something “...like an African version of “the great chain of being” characterized in this case by a pulsating life of interacting forces – in short, a universal vitalism.”⁶

This perspective that Irele describes as universal vitalism, is presented by Tempels and Kagame in slightly varied forms. Yet neither of these scholars recognize this view as an ontology, and there are no pre-colonial or colonial manuscripts from which to extract an ‘African Traditional View.’ But in both *Bantu Philosophy* and *La philosophie bantu comparée*, the envisioned view can be arguably extracted from the structure of the Bantu-family language systems. These language systems include the term for “*life force*” (“NTU”) as a suffix for four categories of existence, namely, Muntu (persons), Kintu (things), Kuntu (Modality), and Hantu (space and time). These categories are seen as processes through which *life force* flows, rather than as static, enduringly supportive “substances” or as essence-providing changeless “Forms.”⁷ These four categories still exist in spoken Bantu-family languages today; they are present, for example, in Zulu (of Southern Africa), Shona (of Zimbabwe), and Kinyarwanda (of Rwanda).

In Part 1 of this essay, I shall argue that the work of pulling a culture’s probable ontological underpinnings out of its language systems and associated cultural practices is a reasonable and philosophically appropriate approach. The task is, moreover, laudable, especially if the work is done in order to reveal such important, philosophical concepts as (1) a value laden ontology, (2) embedded attitudes or assumptions concerning virtues, and/or (3) an insightful and/or mind-stretching philosophical view. In Part 2, I shall discuss the specific reasons given by philosophers who object to this reconstructive project. I then offer my own replies to three specific and pointed objections. In Part 3, I briefly suggest several beneficial additions to global philosophy that could accrue if the objections of critics are met in the ways which I suggest in Part 2. If my suggestions are persuasive, I will have offered encouragement and support toward the endeavors of those who wish to offer analyses of African Traditional Thought (cast, for example, as “Bantu Philosophy”), to be taken seriously as a positive and useful philosophical perspective.

⁵ See Abiola Irele’s introduction to *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* by Paulin J. Hountondji (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd, 1983), 16.

⁶ Irele, “Introduction,” *African Philosophy*, 16.

⁷ For an exposition of the concepts associated with these aspects of language, see Ruth M. Lucier, “Dynamics of Hierarchy in African Thought,” *Listening: A Journal of Religion and Culture* 24, no. 1 (1989): 29-40.

The Values in the Reconstructed African Great Chain of Being and Thoughts Concerning the Legitimacy of Its Offerings as “Bantu Philosophy”

The account described by Irele as something like an “African Great Chain of Being” – and called “Bantu Philosophy,” by both Tempels and Kagame – is a reconstruction based both on the shared structure of a specific group of languages and on associated cultural practice. This view is not a document-based reconstruction for the very good reason that the concepts discussed within it evolved in an oral rather than manuscript-connected tradition.⁸ At this juncture I will suggest, however, that this reconstruction is nevertheless legitimate in the sense that it is, at a very basic level, an attempt to indicate the probable significance of tradition-laden values and folkways shared by a substantial segment of the indigenous African peoples of central Africa who possess a specific shared language structure. This reconstruction should do this without mentioning (as an anthropologist would) the details of ritual and custom that are not viewed by all of the cultures in question as essential to the values contained in the “world view” of the cultures that the reconstruction aims to display.

The first point I wish to make concerning this kind of reconstruction (namely, a reconstruction based on oral traditions rather than documents), is that it differs in several very important ways from those based on documents. First of all, like reconstructions based on documents (such as, for example, Judaism’s reconstructions of Jewish cultural beliefs and traditions based on ancient manuscripts), both kinds of reconstruction-relevant material, if truly ancient, would have to have been, at some point, only orally conveyed. Second, an oral tradition’s reconstructed ontology offers the same possibility as a manuscript-based one with regard to enabling us to see how the unifying concepts included in the reconstruction might have evolved. Moreover, both would have to have varied pragmatically through extensive periods of time in ways that were needed for the cultures’ survival during periods of adaptation to change. Third, while document-based reconstructions might offer the researcher some sense of security with regard to reference material (simply because a document is likely to last longer than an interviewed human person), the written tradition, like the oral tradition, still would include some traditional views that were themselves adaptations, or even mis-adaptations of much earlier oral views. For every culture there certainly was a time when almost nothing was preserved in any other manner than orally. Also, just as with analysis based on oral traditions, analysis based on written documents often draws out aspects of the culture that are tacitly accepted by the culture’s participants without those participants having previously or consciously recognized those aspects of their culture.

⁸ This point is made by Hountondji (*African Philosophy*, 34, 38, and 49-50) and is also mentioned by Olabiyi Yai in “Theory and Practice in African Philosophy: The Poverty of Speculative Philosophy,” in *Second Order* 6, no. 2 (1977): 3-20, at 16-17.

Thus, for both oral and document connected analysis, the correctness of both oral and manuscript-based reconstruction will have to be tested by checking the reconstruction against that to which persons of the culture are able to offer testimony. The resultant reconstruction may then be judged to be appropriately honest, accurate, and true to the culture itself, depending upon the testimony of responsible, knowledgeable, and dependable persons who testify concerning the truthfulness, accuracy, and appropriateness of the reconstruction.

Tempels and Kagame certainly see the need to test the reconstruction they call “Bantu Philosophy” by reference to what they hope are reliable respondents. However, no such reconstruction can be verified unless it is first fully developed. If, once the reconstruction is made explicit and is shared with respondents, the people say, “Yes, that is what we think and believe,” or “That is what my relative in the past believed,” then the veracity of an oral reconstruction can have the same possibility of being critically judged, corrected, and vetted, as a reconstruction based on documents. Thus, ways of judging a reconstruction based on oral tradition is similar to the ways of judging reconstructions based on manuscripts. Both oral and manuscript-based reconstructions must be critically assessed for accuracy of content, and both are subject to critique and correction.

This should not be surprising. For, after all, human culture, at the most basic level, involves patterns of behavior and thought. Once either a view from an oral tradition or one from a document-based reconstruction is tested and corrected, through the use of empirically-grounded acknowledgements and comment, other modes of recognition, discussion, and analysis of the reconstruction can also be used. And these additional analyses can serve to further clarify what is offered. In this way, self-awareness of deeply held beliefs can be affirmed and self-awareness of positive kinds can be more fully secured and experienced. This work of reconstruction thus fosters “self-awareness” (which involves “knowledge of the self and the self’s commitments to values”). The fostering of such self-awareness is a task philosophers have long focused on while developing all around them a concern for communal responsibility that is supportive of assorted concepts of personal agency – concepts that have surfaced in all traditional cultures’ traditions as parts of those cultures’ value systems. Traditional cultural values have thus been nurtured and perfected with the assistance of philosophical thinking and analysis.

Responses to Salient Critiques of the Reconstructed View

While the reconstructions and scholarly work of both Tempels and Kagame have been well received and widely read, objections have been raised to their work in philosophical circles. Indeed, some philosophers have suggested that Tempels and Kagame made reconstructions too simplistically from oral traditions. It has also been suggested that their reconstruc-

tions are *misleadingly* called “Bantu Philosophy” and/or “African Traditional Thought,” and do not deserve to be taken seriously.

I turn now to a discussion of some well-intended objections to the reconstruction project called “Bantu Philosophy” and its ontological “product.” Among the most forceful objections are these:

(1) The reconstruction project offers a distorted version of traditional thinking that can be used to manipulate peoples of the heritages in question into accepting the spiritual views of the Western tradition,⁹ and so actually may be useful only for supporting colonialist agendas that work against the interests of modern inheritors of the culture.

(2) The reconstructive enterprise may simply fail to achieve its aim, namely, to be “a collective philosophy” common to all persons of the cultures on which the reconstruction is focused.¹⁰

(3) The reconstructive agenda may detract persons of African culture from developing views that are more appropriate for their culture to use within the context of their modern, globally focused, challenges and responsibilities.¹¹

The first objection raises a legitimate concern: Kagame and Temples were motivated by winning the communities they served over to Western Christianity. (Both were Catholic priests as well as scholars.) Could they have distorted what they found in the Bantu family languages that they spoke (Kagame as his mother tongue and Tempels’ as a second learned language of the people he served)? And might both Kagame and Temples have done this to support a religious agenda or goal?

I respond to this criticism by offering an analogy to Western philosophy. Socrates, working to pull young Greeks away from their literal belief in the accepted theology of their culture, aimed to convert them toward a more abstract conception of the Good. Likewise, the work of Kant and Hume aimed at summarizing major cultural beliefs of their respective contexts in ways that would give them a modified understanding of their religious and cultural commitments. Hence, conversion “by philosophical argument” has long been a reason for the development or clarification of ontologies. However, even if this agenda of “conversion” is present, it is surely worthwhile to set out the positive ontological worldview that has been articulated. For, once the view is presented, it becomes a product fully open to debate. Once a view is placed within this critical context of debate, a fruitful discussion can suggest modifications. Thus, this approach can appropriately express and interpret the view to make it reflect more precisely

⁹ Hountondji, *African Philosophy*, 43-47 and 49-50.

¹⁰ E. A. Ruch, “Is there an African Philosophy?,” *Second Order* 3, no. 2 (July 1974): 3-21.

¹¹ Compare H. Odera Oruka “The Fundamental Principles in the Question of ‘African Philosophy,’” *Second Order* 4, no. 1 (1975): 48-49.

the position it offers. Through this process it can be continually improved by the social group to which it is offered. As a result, even views with an agenda can assist in drawing participating philosophers into the process of a search for, and the possible arrival at, truth.

In response to the second objection, one might simply say it is not evidently true. There is no evidence of any major distortion of any view in the work of Tempels and Kagame. Indeed, Tempels himself explicitly argues that there is “a reason for safeguarding, for protecting with every care, for purifying and refining everything that is worthy of respect,” adding that the guiding reason for developing and fleshing out the reconstruction is that true “Bantu civilization” can be shown. Tempels also points out that it is “not our business to pass judgment upon the intrinsic worth of [the view] but rather to “understand” the view.”¹²

Tempels’ own empirical test of his success was to convey salient concepts with such care that acquaintances in the culture would say, “you understand us” or “you now know in the way we know.”¹³ For all philosophical views from anywhere (from East or West, from Central Africa or from the USA), this is surely the test of a successful reconstruction. This verification by recognition shows me why I think as I do and why I see such and such things or practices as good or virtuous things or practices. This is what makes philosophical views and the values they offer long-lived and vital, even when they have parts that prove to be obviously mistaken. (Witness, in Western philosophical culture, Kant’s gaffs concerning the totally different status of the rational capacities of women in contrast to those of men.) But, generally, as the entire philosophical view as a whole is offered, the “bad bits” (once they are made public through analysis and discourse) are drowned out by the music of the good ideas.

A general argument for the traction of the views offered can be found in the fact that in spite of passionate critiques of their work on reconstruction, both Tempels’ and Kagame’s books have been repeatedly published and are still in print today.¹⁴ Kagame, a steadfast amplifier of traditions of the royal house of Rwanda, supports, elaborates, and further advances the reconstructionist process used by Tempels. Moreover, his writings are still referenced in secondary schools where the academic language is French. This persistent presence of materials from Tempels’ and Kagame’s reconstructive efforts may well be evident today precisely because many of the concepts suggested in the reconstruction still ring true. These concepts may continue to ring true, not only specifically of Bantu language systems, but also of human experience as a whole.

The second objection to the reconstruction (which suggests that Tempels and Kagame’s work wrongly purports to be a “collective” mindset in African traditional cultures) deals with the possibility that the implied all-

¹² Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 24-25.

¹³ Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, 35-36.

¹⁴ A facsimile of Tempels’ *Bantu Philosophy* of 1959 has been recently published.

pervasiveness prevents persons of the culture from thinking for themselves. This in turn suggests that free thinking by those in the culture cannot take place. This supposition seems to be deduced from the idea that a shared hierarchical view is built into the language system through its four-fold division of the categories “Muntu, Kintu, Kuntu, and Hantu” and other language-connected, associated, linguistic features. But this suggested “all pervasiveness of concepts” in the language is true of many philosophical explanations. And the criticism surely fails, because the mere fact that one’s language is constructed in this or that way does not entail that one has to accept all of the language-embedded concepts to which one’s linguistic culture has historically ascribed. For example, many of Plato’s philosophical explanations of things may have been influenced by the fact that Plato spoke Greek, an Indo-European language, in which the subjects of sentences reflect the view that the things we see are all rather like ideal marble statues that seem to the naked eye to be enduringly basic substances. Surely, Plato’s language seems to presuppose that perceived characteristics result from essences built into the stuff or from accidental characteristics coming from unfortunate or unanticipated outcomes that impact the said supporting substances. Still the concept of immutable forms that Plato possibly based on the language structure of Greek culture (a language structure that reflects processes that involve thinking in this way), was not a view that all speakers of Greek had to accept.

It is worth noting that Plato’s view, as reconstructed and made consistent by the work of many philosophers over the centuries, is also not necessarily something that would be wrong for speakers of Greek to accept. What Plato’s view gives is still useful as a way of conceiving of values. The values expressed have spread to many European cultures that speak related languages and that share the same basic structure; Plato’s view is still useful to philosophers who express philosophical systems in these languages in spite of the fact that we live in a world that is scientifically much different than the one that Plato knew. Modern science, for example, would not say that there is hard stuff (or substance) modified by “natural” internal and external forces, for we all know now that there are no such “substances” at all. While it takes some explaining to argue that it is reasonable to deny the substance/essence/accident theory that European languages pre-suppose, it is nevertheless possible to do so. And even if I reject these pre-suppositions, I can still use and value the Platonic reconstructions and the value the connected visions they convey.

In the past, the belief in substances did make (and still does make) a difference in philosophical argument. The culture of modern France gave us the “substance based” “Cogito” of Descartes (namely, the classic European argument, ‘I think, therefore, I am’). This works well because French (an Indo-European Language) requires that all well-formed declarative sentences have a subject undergirded by a supporting unchanging, empirically unverifiable, but seemingly – in French – logically required *substance*. In fact, as Kagame points out, the Cogito argument does not work in Bantu-family

language translations of the French argument, because there is no way of saying in such languages that there is a substance to which human thinking must invariably be attached in order for such thinking to occur.¹⁵

One advantage of the knowledge of a possible over-reach of the reconstructed African ontology – where there are activities but no substances at all, and everything is in a state of change (which, according to modern science, is the truth) – is that it might jolt modern Western philosophers into getting around the strictures of Western languages and into a view more compatible with contemporary physics, where everything is force (energy), and where there are ultimately no hard and unchanging empirical substances at all.

If the reconstruction called “Bantu Philosophy” supposes that it is the way all intelligent persons of Bantu language cultures think, then that is a point that must, of course, be doubted. But this alone does not mean that the view is not worthwhile to discuss. After all, writing in the Western tradition, Kant also tells us that all free and rational persons think alike by appeal to rational features of language. Kant asserts, in effect, that (in Indo-European language cultures), we must all know (if we are honest and rational) that we cannot make irrational moral choices – namely, ones that if described in the language will seem to be contradictory – and be content with them. We must think in consistent ways, says Kant, because internally inconsistent choices go against our rational natures and so are not what all free and rational persons can truthfully believe.

Now, at best, what Kant means by the necessity of rational thought is what any rational and free person will regard to be true – at least, all who have learned Western value systems (that have, for example, concepts of lying, private property, and theft) and who are persuaded by Kant’s arguments. But surely ordinary speakers of German, French and Hindi do not intuitively think alike, even if this necessity of rational thought is, indeed, built into their language. Likewise, many speakers of languages in the Bantu family of languages may in reality pay no mind to the suggested ontology – the test may simply be that, if they do, the ontological view offered by Tempels and Kagame would seem to be what is presupposed. They are certainly, as rational thinking persons, able to reject the reconstructed ontology as not appropriate to apply to their lives.

In addition, persons of traditional Bantu-language cultures may even, as free human persons, just quit speaking any language of the Bantu family altogether, if they believe that the traditional language forces upon them views that they do not wish to profess. We often reject the cultural practices of our ancestors, and we certainly have the right to do so. But the fact that we do not accept a traditional view does not mean it was never present as an almost universally-accepted part of our culture in its earliest form.

No German feels condemned for not being Kantian. Likewise, surely no one should feel compelled to accept a world view built into a Bantu-

¹⁵ Kagame, *La philosophie bantu comparée*, 126

language structure just because his culture is one of the many cultures that use such languages. Humans are not intellectually or morally obliged to accept their culture's traditional views. However, in these global times, we are morally obligated as human beings (and global thinkers) to be open to a wide diversity of traditional heritages, and that includes even the false views of those who have preceded us.

The complaint implied in third objection, namely, that the view offered by the re-constructors of Bantu Philosophy is destructive to modern African society, in that it might prevent descendants from accepting more constructive views – appears to be an objection based on a “fallacy of distraction.” For again, as indicated under the second objection, the fact that one's ancestors believed something that had been incorporated into their language's structure does not politically or morally impose on one's self, or anyone else, the obligation to believe the same thing. This third objection's suggestion that the reconstructed ontology basically prevents the acceptance of more scientific views that might be more useful to African peoples themselves is also debatable. For just because a view (1) does not use formal logic¹⁶ and/or (2) is not grounded on the scientific method, does not mean it is not useful in conjunction with and/or compatible with modern science. The view that ontological perspectives cannot be understood to exist along with modern scientific views has traction only if one is fundamentally a radical empiricist. That most of us in real life do not look only to the empirical processes for enduring truth, provides ample reason for not worrying about this objection, so long as one is not given independently good reasons for the rejection of the view.

But perhaps, the assumption underlying this third objection is that a proper worldview must be wholly scientific. In this case the objector is committed to what Huston Smith has called “the one story” universe. The assumption here is that nothing other than the empirical is worthy of investigation. Those who hold the “one story” view, namely, the radical “physicalists” – want philosophers to speculate only about the subjects of science or about empirically documentable physical phenomena, such as spoken sounds or graphically written language. Since pure empirical science deals only with “matter that is perceptible,” such philosophers must therefore focus solely on the physical, regardless of what challenges may be imposed by possible other levels. But, as Huston Smith reminds us, “however far pure science's hypotheses extend...eventually they must be brought back to pointer readings and the like for verification.”¹⁷ And the obvious problem here is that the other levels of reality (which many of us do believe exist) become removed from intellectual discourse. Some of us who are philosophers still strongly resist this move; we will strongly resist it precisely because we believe it truncates a legitimate, more comprehensive, perception of reality.

¹⁶ Kagame, *La philosophie bantu comparée*, 40.

¹⁷ Smith, *Forgotten Truth*, 16.

The final difficulty that I see with the physicalist criticism of the reconstruction called “Bantu Philosophy” is that its own methodology (i.e., radical empiricism) leaves out too much. It seems to me that what the opposing position leaves out causes it to be at odds with not only the reconstructed ontology of African Traditional Thought, but also with metaphysics more generally, that is, that discipline that explores eternal truths that transcend the physical realm. For if, as the perennialists maintain, philosophy’s role is to explore eternal truths that transcend the physical aspects of our lives (and so, perhaps, even transcend this or that culture while getting at some overarching and shared heritage of humankind), then the physicalist’s objection to “Bantu Philosophy” is misguided. The objection would require us to, in effect, bracket off any more expansive view of reality as not worthy of examination. Such “bracketing off” would too strictly reduce the scope of what work philosophers can do.

A Brief Reflection on the Positive Results

I have argued that the fact that the languages available to be worked with in the reconstruction of what Tempels and Kagame both call “Bantu Philosophy” are actually living languages in current use today (rather than unused written ones like Egypt’s priestly hieroglyphics or Plato’s ancient Greek) is irrelevant. For surely philosophers should be free to speculate with reference both to the written and spoken word. Indeed, both written and oral sources are documentable and performable kinds of linguistic heritages. Both exist as empirical artifacts in the material world. Both may contain materials that offer appropriate points for departure that are worthy of philosophical attention; both may offer concepts that do not exactly fit those of modern science. However, values can be found in philosophical discussion that need not fit science in precise ways. The values which are available only from other sectors of human experience may still be discussed.

As we look away from the objections, and toward the core project of Tempels’ and Kagame’s reconstruction, we may again look toward a magnificent vision of the world that leaves room for the appreciation of the sacred dimensions of our lives – sacred dimensions that radical empiricism cannot explain. Therefore, I would strongly recommend the continued examination and analysis of what Irele calls “the Great Chain of Being” in African Traditional Thought. I would also hope for the continued examination of the reconstructed ontologies found other accessible human cultures. For such reconstructive processes can enable the discovery of dynamic ideas that are both worthwhile and applicable to our own times.

The kind of dynamic view offered by African traditions may deserve inclusion in the philosophical canon as humankind moves forward into a hopefully refreshed view of virtue rooted in human connectivity to, rather than in the fear of, the Other. The welcoming of a view from “Bantu” African languages and traditions, globally conceived, might, among other things, help remind us of the variety of historically- and linguistically-

grounded perceptions of “vibrant” moral community – a concept endemic to both traditional and contemporary African culture.

As we face new global challenges, this “openness to the other” might remind us that there are a variety of historically-grounded and value-laden conceptions of morality to be found within the contexts of African traditions. In seeking these out, we might, in turn, encourage the acceptance of many positive, unique, and transforming ethical ways of living that have worthwhile future applications.

African Philosophy, “Unique-Mania,” and Intercultural Philosophy

Anthony C. Ajah

African Philosophy and the Fallacy of Uniqueness

In an article titled “Problems in African Self-Identification in the Contemporary World,”¹ Kwasi Wiredu traced the problem of Africa’s self-identification to the dyad of slavery and colonization, and the politics of recognition which followed these. He highlighted the following:

(a) The question of Africa’s identity problem is one of “whether she is what she ought to be”;

(b) A crisis of identity arises when human dignity is injured and self-confidence sapped – as caused by colonialism;

(c) Point (b) above resulted in cultural and political nationalism: the latter aimed at regaining national independence, the former aimed at restoring to Africans confidence in their own culture;

(d) In so far as cultural nationalism implied a rejection of foreign cultural influences, it tended to take the form of a traditionalism;

(e) Because of (d), the question of identity was structured thus: “Are we what we used to be?” The obvious fact was that we were not. The useless solution proposed was that we should discover what we were previously and take steps to become such again. The premise, according to Wiredu, was: “What we ought to be is what we used to be.”

Wiredu retorted: Suppose that what we are now is better than what we used to be? Thus, he noted:

I hope, that, at its most fundamental level, Africa’s problem of identity is a philosophical problem – a thought which should strengthen our sense of the importance of the current debate [and I add, ‘the current research’] among African philosophers and others about how best to define African Philosophy. This question is, in fact, one to be answered, at this juncture, not with a definition per genus et differentia but rather with a programme for intellectual construction and reconstruction in the service of Africa and ultimately the world.... Af-

¹ Kwasi Wiredu, “Problems in African Self-Identification in the Contemporary World,” in *Africa and the Problem of its Identity: International Philosophical Symposium on Culture and Identity of Africa*, eds. Alwin Diemer and J. Paulin Hountondji (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1985), 213-222.

rican Philosophers will be ipso facto helping to define and establish Africa's identity in the contemporary world.²

The type of definition (or re-definition if one prefers) of African Philosophy that Wiredu referred to, requires first of all, an abandonment of the faulty comparison by Africans of "their" and "our" culture, which is motivated by what Wiredu very rightly termed the fallacy of uniqueness. Against such a fallacy, Wiredu submitted that, in questions of truth or falsity as in questions of what is or is not contributory to human welfare, there is no particular virtue in being different.³

I hold, like Wiredu, that the problem of arriving at some values that have intercultural appeal is a philosophical one.⁴ The urgency of this problem makes the role of the philosopher very important in 21st century global times, when "The diversity and richness of the cultures of the world are better known...than they have ever been."⁵ By implication, the urgency of the problem renders any philosopher who exaggerates cultural uniqueness a saboteur of the primary contemporary social goals of philosophy, such as tearing down unnecessary walls that make human interaction and communication difficult. The general social function of philosophy should include a definition of the world and of one's national identity that takes into consideration the already established character of our time. The established character of our era is one that constructs and fits us into one human family. The contemporary picture of the human family depends a lot on philosophers for its construction and reconstruction. African philosophers, if they are to be true to their intellectual commitments, should be part of this, rather than engaging in distracting, fruitless, and fallacious constructions of a lost African 'haven' or/and of non-existent cultural elements that are (or used to be) unique to Africans. I consider such engagements as signs of mania.

The term 'mania' means here: (1) an extremely strong desire or enthusiasm for something, often shared by a lot of people at the same time; (2) a mental illness in which somebody has an obsession about something that

² Wiredu, "Problems in African Self-Identification," 220.

³ Wiredu, "Problems in African Self-Identification," 222.

⁴ I use the word 'philosophy' here to mean the systematic reflection on presuppositions, which has the task of constantly monitoring (by criticizing) the understanding of reality to ensure that it is 'in order.' This definition is derived from my readings of Carol Nicholson's "Three Views of Philosophy and Multiculturalism," *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism*, ed. William Sweet (Aylmer: Editions du scribe, 2002): 3-9 and Leslie Armour's "Culture and Philosophy," *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism*, ed. William Sweet (Aylmer: Editions du scribe, 2002): 179-196. I therefore define intercultural philosophy as systematic reflection on presuppositions predominant in various cultures/worldviews, which has the task of constantly comparing the understanding of reality in various cultures and philosophical traditions, with a view to suggesting a possible set of presuppositions that are better in ordering our understanding and approach to reality.

⁵ William Sweet, "Introduction: Culture and Pluralism in Philosophy," *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism*, ed. William Sweet (Aylmer: Editions du scribe, 2002), v.

makes him extremely anxious, violent and confused. In the wake of the independence of nation states in Africa, the politics of recognition, which was mainly channelled towards proving to the 'West' that "we are what we are: unique in our thinking, culture, and philosophy," determined the arguments of many African writers, philosophers, nationalists, and poets. Due to the traditionalism to which the sense of cultural nationalism was reduced, many writers and philosophers were (and some still are) interested in highlighting where Africa *is* different, unique. One recalls Senghor's distinction between the human faculties of emotion and intuition (for Africans) and reason (for the West). In line with these, Wiredu presented the example of what preoccupied some people after independence. Many were interested in figuring out what form of social organisation is best suited for Africans. In the spirit of the 'uniqueness project,' some writers, then and now, argued that socialism (African Socialism, whatever they mean by that) was best for Africans because it was a natural development of traditional African communalism.

Accordingly, the term 'African socialism' has been used to contrast socialism in Africa with socialism elsewhere. Unfortunately, serious conceptual problems have arisen in the elaboration of this contrast. The impression is sometimes given that African socialism is different in concept from other socialisms. But there cannot be one definition of socialism in Africa and a different one elsewhere....[T]he suggestion has been made that one distinguishing characteristic of some forms of African socialism is that they give room for a substantial private component in the economy. But in view of the definition of socialism, an economic system, in Africa or outside Africa, which harbours a substantial permanent private component can never be called a type of socialism in any full sense.⁶

The mania has continued, with several scholars and pseudo-scholars using any available dialect of any society in Africa to claim to portray one thing or the other as *the* basis for Africa's uniqueness. Julius Nyerere chose what he termed '*Ujamaa*' (a Tanzanian word). In recent times, one 'Calabar School of Philosophy' is promoting what it calls the '*Ezumezu*' (a word from just one of the dialects spoken in the Igbo part of Nigeria) Logic System. Anthony Kanu is also busy with his idea of '*Igwebuiké*'⁷ (a word from one of the dialects spoken in the Igbo part of Nigeria) Philosophy as *the* basis for political organization in a so-called traditional Africa. All these

⁶ Wiredu, "Problems in African Self-Identification," 222-221.

⁷ See I. A. Kanu, "Igwebuikécracy: An African Democracy," in *Igwebuiképedia: Internet Encyclopedia of African Philosophy*, ed. I. A. Kanu (Makurdi, Nigeria: Augustinian Institute of Philosophy, [n.d.]), accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.igwebuikéresearchinstitute.org/igwebuiképedia.php>. See also Anthony I. Kanu, "African Traditional Democracy with Particular Reference to the Yoruba and Igbo Political Systems," *International Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 2 and 3 (Dec. 2014-Dec. 2015): 147-160.

fruitless efforts are part of what I qualify here as “unique-mania”: an extreme enthusiasm and obsession to ‘show’ how Africa is unique.

Different forms of mania (extreme, or strong enthusiasm/obsession) make communication very difficult, if not impossible. Since the desire for the object is ‘extremely strong’ and the enthusiasm is extreme too; since it is a form of mental illness in which the obsessed is ‘extremely anxious, violent and confused’; this explains why the mental disposition of the maniac makes communication difficult. ‘Unique-mania,’ therefore, would imply an extremely strong desire by such maniacs, which results in their being confused about what they mean by ‘being unique’ – to the level of proudly and shamelessly projecting degrading cultural manifestations as parts of what define them. This implies also some form of anxiety, as the people who have such mania are always not at ease with those to whom they are “proving” that they are unique. These are reasons why the mania is a form of mental illness. It blocks communication, and the enlightenment of persons and mutual enrichment of cultures are made difficult. Meeting points of cultures are unnoticed or sometimes carefully and intentionally blurred.

The prevalence of the mania was more common during the era of “the great debate” that defined the question of whether there is an African Philosophy. During that era, the Senegalese poet and politician Léopold Senghor, like Joseph Conrad, compartmentalised the globe – reason and logic to the West, and intuition and emotion to Africans. For Senghor then, rational knowledge was a preserve of the modern West, and superstition a peculiarity for Africans. The unique-mania philosophers of today, soaked in their ‘cultural traditionalism,’ conceive any criticism of aspects of the philosophical traditions and cultures of their African ancestors as a betrayal. African philosophy is (was) seen by these maniacs as having some unique truths, unique concepts, unique problems, unique logic, unique modes of analysis, and so on. For these reasons, Paulin Hountondji, in his *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, referred to this mania as simply reactionary and unnecessary: the more it attempts to say how it is different, the more it exhibits its inferiority complex. Hountondji noted that these claims are unredeemable. Those raising them are laying too much emphasis on what they call ‘specificity of content’ and a ‘mythologization’ of the concept of Africanness. The ‘cultural particularism’ which they try to showcase is both false and contradictory in its content. It constitutes a block of intellectual impediments and prejudices which have so far prevented many Africans from progressing as far as they might.

Jürgen Habermas on Truth, and the Diagnosis of a Maniac

There is a confluence of truth and reason (rationality) in Habermas’ paradigm of communicative rationality. In his tripartite conceptual division of the world into the objective, the social, and the subjective, Habermas assigns the values raised in each of these worlds to be – truth, normativity, and sincerity. I think that, in the case of the meeting of cultures, an entire

social background can turn into a whole. This whole can take up the subjective world of the individual as it meets other individuals who, from their own perspectives, have formed a whole which subsumes them and enables them to appear, in a larger (global-social) context, as a single individual that has its own subjective world. Because of the context of their meeting, the rules of the social and subjective world merge. In a global encounter among cultures, therefore, there are both the demands of the normative/social world (as individual cultures that meet), which require the raising and redemption of claims based on the norms guiding the context, and the demands of the sincere/subjective world (also individual wholes) which require the raising of claims based on what is true as it is sincerely known by the “individual wholes” in their specific world. Within this – and my – construct, the truth in Habermas’ philosophy is extended beyond the single individual-subjective world to the subjective world made up of a society. Yet, it combines more tightly, with even greater demands, with the concept of reason and rationality. Habermas argued that this concept of rationality requires that one who is predisposed for communication should, in raising whatever claim, be: (a) ready to receive a “yes” *or* “no” response; and (b), because of (a), be patient and ready to offer reasons or foundations or grounds for the claims he has raised. As already stated, mania does not allow communication to flow. More unfortunately, the problems surrounding the question of the politics of recognition among cultures have made, and can make, “individual-wholes” (as adherents to a certain culture) either to present false elements as features of their cultures, or romantically hold on to debased practices as elements of their cultures – simply for the purpose of providing moments of difference or uniqueness. This is possible. It is also problematic, being a disorder. Habermas’ understanding of critical theory serves as an available paradigm of the interdisciplinary service of philosophy and psychology in the case of the social/ideological diagnosis of disorders.

The term ‘Critical Theory’ was coined in the 1930s by Max Horkheimer to describe the stance of the Frankfurt School (Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt). The School was committed to challenging the prevalent denial of contradiction in the social system, by allowing for the possibility of a critically reflexive grasp of history and tradition. Society must not idealize tradition, since it might also include relationships based on deception and distortion. The overall aim of critical theorists was to assess competing accounts of ‘reality’ and to unearth their ideological roots. This is because the three fundamental tenets of critical theory are that: (1) a society must move toward rationality and away from domination; (2) there is the need for the unity of theory and practice; and (3) the critique of ideology is necessary in every society. Jürgen Habermas was one of the proponents of the type of critical theory championed by the Frankfurt School. Taking Hegel and Marx’s ‘logics’ and dialectics of transcendence, and rooted in Plato’s philosophy, Habermas made his own presentations of what critical theory is/should be. In his view, critical theory involves the exploration of ways by which communication is enhanced or limited by social, institution-

al, and structural parameters. Upon proper assimilation, critical theory should enable the individual to work for liberation from domination. On the larger (social) scale, it should lead to rational interpretation and transformation of societies: of their conceptions of the world (metaphysics) and their mode of acquisition and application of knowledge (epistemology). Habermas' idea of critical theory can be presented in two forms: (a) a critique of knowledge (and human interests), and (b) a critique of ideology.

Critical Theory as Critique of Knowledge and Human Interests

Habermas conceived knowledge as a property of the human species. It is a conceptual possession of the reality around human beings. Habermas can be safely classified as a rational realist, since he tries to balance the roles played by the senses and those played by reason in the process of acquiring knowledge and in applying what is known. In his view, some forms of knowledge (in the *objective* and *social* worlds)⁸ can be accessed by any member of a society, while others (in the *subjective world*) remain accessible only to individual subjects. Based on such views, one immediately wonders what his concept of truth is. Habermas maintains both the correspondence and coherent conceptions of truth. His presentation of the validation of claims (of truth, rightness, and sincerity)⁹ are indications of his acceptance of the correspondence theory of truth. Yet, his idea of a 'successful psychoanalytic process' gives a picture of something being accepted as true because it coheres with the mental framework, expectation, and interest of those who qualify it as successful.

In the preface to *Knowledge and Human Interest*, Habermas noted: "The analysis of the connection of knowledge and interest should support the assertion that a radical critique of knowledge is possible as social theory."¹⁰ Later, he submitted that, ultimately, a radical critique of knowledge can be carried out only in the form of a reconstruction of the history of the species, and that social theory (as the articulation of the self-constitution of human species in the medium of social labour and class struggle), is possible only as the self-reflection of the knowing subject.¹¹ His critical social theory presupposes that man is a rational social being and, thus, that whatever he does, is within the context of the society, i.e., in dialogue and communication with other members of the species – to which he belongs. Because of the place of knowledge in whatever human beings do – their knowledge and the methodology of acquiring knowledge influence their

⁸ For example, the cultural elements and norms of the society based on which the rightness or otherwise of an action can be determined.

⁹ These ideas are elucidated in his *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I, Reason and Rationalization of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1981/2008).

¹⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987/1998), vii.

¹¹ Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, 62.

activities and their history – Habermas saw a very important link between a “reconstruction of the history of the species” and a “critique of knowledge.” About this connection he wrote:

Obviously, to speak of the self-reflexion [as a result of a critique] of a formative process [as a social theory]...I claim...that successful self-reflexion is fed back into the self-formative process once it has been made conscious. There are two reasons for stressing the connection between epistemology and social theory. For one thing, the constituent elements of social systems cannot be adequately understood without epistemological clarification of those cognitive achievements which are both dependent on truth and related to action. For another, the epistemological attempts to reconstruct cognitive competence take the form of hypothesis which can be indirectly tested by being used in the construction of social theories of social evolution.¹²

Human history is influenced by, and later turns out to be a result of, the social theory at work in a given society at a given time. Consequently, for Habermas, a critique of the knowledge-based orientation of a society is the basis for any reconstruction of the history of that society. Habermas’ idea of the relevance of knowledge-orientation in social theory was at the basis of his critique of methodologies of knowledge and of interests in knowledge.

In Habermas’ views, there exists an interpenetration of cognitive abilities (knowledge) and action motives (interests). Knowledge-constitutive interests preserve the unity of the system of actions and experience with discourse. They preserve the latent nexus between action and theoretical knowledge. They are responsible for the transformation of opinions into theorems, and of the transformation of theorems into action-oriented knowledge:

This is where we see the connection of knowledge and interest. Statements about the object domain of things and happenings (or about deeper structures manifesting themselves in things and happenings) can only be translated into orientations governing purposively rational action (that is technologies and strategies). Likewise statements about the object domain of persons and utterances (or the deeper structures of social systems) can only be translated into orientations governing communicative action.¹³

The first type of statement is made, and the attendant actions carried out, from the view point of technical control, while the second is undertaken from the view point of intersubjective communication. These two points of view express anthropologically deep-seated interests, which direct our

¹² Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, 354.

¹³ Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, 370.

knowledge and which have quasi-transcendental status.¹⁴ These interests of knowledge result from the imperatives of a sociocultural life-form dependent on labour and language. Therefore, the technical and practical interests of knowledge determine the aspect under which reality is objectified, and made accessible to experience. Interests of knowledge are the conditions which are necessary in order that subjects capable of speech and action may have experience which can lay a claim to objectivity.¹⁵ Defining the concept 'interest' in further detail, Habermas noted that it indicates the unity of the life context in which cognition is embedded. It establishes the unity between the constitutive context in which knowledge is rooted, and the structure of the possible application which this knowledge can have. The interests which direct knowledge preserve the unity of the relevant system of action and experiences in moments of discourse. They retain the latent reference of theoretical knowledge to action by way of the transformation of opinions into theoretical statements and their transformation into knowledge oriented toward action.¹⁶ Habermas outlined three types of human knowledge based on three fundamental interests in knowledge. The three different types of knowledge are: (i) Natural or empirical sciences, (ii) Social or historical-hermeneutical sciences, and (iii) Critically oriented sciences. About these forms of knowledge and their underlying interests, Habermas held that the approach of the empirical sciences incorporates a technical cognitive interest; the historical-hermeneutic sciences incorporates a practical interest; while the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the emancipator cognitive interests.¹⁷ Of the three forms of knowledge-constitutive interests, emancipatory interest is the one in which knowledge coincides with the fulfilment of the interest in liberation, including liberation from counter-productive ideologies.

Critical Theory as a Critique of Ideology

The other side of Habermas' critical theory is a critique of ideology. He was deeply impressed by Marx's overall emancipatory interest. Building on Marx's views, Habermas defended the thesis that action oriented toward reaching understanding is the fundamental type of social relation. Its rationality is the communicative rationality based on an ideal situation that gives room for discourse aimed at arriving at mutual understanding between hu-

¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. John Viertel (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1973/1996), 9.

¹⁵ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 8-9.

¹⁶ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 9, 20.

¹⁷ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 308. The interest of those seeking knowledge merely for the purpose of showing that they are different/unique, does not qualify to be included within the historical-hermeneutic. Such an interest is too lowly. On a similar note, an interest to return to traditions that are no longer relevant in contemporary times cannot also be included within the emancipator-cognitive interest because such an interest will, in due course, prove to be unnecessary in the first place.

man beings. From the perspective of this rationality, the instrumental manipulation of human beings is an ideology that should be criticized. On his view, critical social theories are necessary because the theorists, as enlightened members of a society, would offer viewpoints different from those defined by pre-existing, un-reflected, social interests: they help to “reorient social needs and declared goods”¹⁸ through consistent criticism which alone will transcend the *status quo*, leading to self-reflection at the individual and social levels. Psychoanalysis was, for Habermas, a good model of therapy for realizing emancipation/liberation through the critique of knowledge and ideology in human societies.

Reflexive Science and Psychoanalysis

In the view of Habermas, the most important point in social philosophy is how the conditions of human life could actually be improved on by putting theory into praxis.¹⁹ Reflexive science, as the best of the three forms of knowledge, gives room for finding the relationship between theory and praxis. It provides the theory and weapon (of rationality) for a practical critique of ideology. Besides, it elicits self-reflection, which has the task of releasing “the subject from dependence on hypostatized powers. Self-reflection is determined by an emancipatory interest. Critically oriented sciences share this interest with philosophy.”²⁰

Philosophy (particularly social philosophy) is one of these ‘critically oriented sciences.’ According to Habermas, philosophy is preserved in science as critique because, since the heritage of philosophy is in the critique of ideology, outside of critique philosophy has no rights, no clear objective. Its ability to criticize places itself as a critically-oriented, or a reflexive-science. Being critically oriented, working to force society into self-reflection and reconstruction, this science leads the society to acquire the knowledge necessary to liberate and emancipate itself. Habermas has at hand a model of self-reflection as a paradigm of this critically reflective science. This model is psychoanalysis. Presenting his reconstructed concept of psychoanalysis, Habermas holds that, in the self-reflection that results when the critics are active, critical reason gains power analytically over dogmatic inhibition. Reason takes up a partisan position in the controversy between critique and dogmatism, and in each new stage of emancipation it wins a further victory. In this kind of practical reason, insight and explicit interest in liberation by means of reflection converge.²¹ The possibility and effectiveness of psychoanalysis is based on the “penetrating ideas of a persistent critique.” Such persistence is necessary because the dogmatism being

¹⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *Towards a Rational Society, Student Protest, Science, and Politics*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1970), 73.

¹⁹ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 81.

²⁰ Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, 310.

²¹ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 253-254.

fought against poses much constraint and error. This is why “the reason which defends itself against dogmatism” needs to be “a committed reason.”²² When (this) dogmatism assumes the form of false ideology, the reason committed against dogmatism becomes active as the critique of ideology. Psychoanalysis serves, then, as therapy. Related to self-reflection, psychoanalysis brings to consciousness those determinants of a self-formative process of cultivation and spiritual formation which ideologically determine a contemporary praxis of action and conception of the world.²³ But one is not in the wrong to ask how it is possible for a society, comprised of many individuals, to undergo self-reflection in its psychoanalytic character of the patient-doctor relation. Another related question is whether the psychoanalytic dialogue is misleading as a model for discussion within a politically organized group.

We need to point out, before we answer these questions, that the process of self (social)-reflection through psychoanalysis is meant to lead to enlightenment. Enlightenment for the masses needs to be organized. Because psychoanalysis requires a (communicative, that is, successful) dialogue as discourse between the analyst and the patient, Habermas described it (psychoanalysis) as ‘therapeutic discourse.’ The internal assignment of roles in the dialogue creates no difficulties in thought. The positions of the partners in the psychoanalytic dialogue are asymmetrical. They change in many ways during the course of the communication, and only terminate in a symmetrical relation – which exists between participants in discourse from the very outset – at the conclusion of a successful treatment.²⁴ Psychoanalytic dialogue is possible as a model of discussion among the members of a politically organized group. In the wider social context, Habermas argued, critical social theorists can, at one time/context, take the position of the patient and, at other times/contexts, the analyst. As knowledgeable and enlightened individuals, they can have access to the ideological/cultural base of the society, and make available the social experiences of their culture – through historical and hermeneutical interpretations – for further analysis and metapsychoanalysis. As analysts and therapists, they relate to the not-very enlightened masses – taking the asymmetrical position as therapists. While they move towards resolving some of the social complexes and fixations, they are repositioned, as members of the society, to take a symmetrical position with others. This is because, considering the society as a unity, “the self-reflection of a lone subject therefore requires a quite paradoxical achievement: one part of the self must be split off from the other part in such a manner that the subject can be in a position to render aid to itself.”²⁵

However, a problem still persists: there is the common presupposition that, for all that in social life, there are possibilities of the resistance of the

²² Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 258.

²³ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 22.

²⁴ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 28.

²⁵ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 28.

opponent and of resistance against the opponent. There is the possibility that the oppressed class not only doubts the ability of the ruling class to conduct the dialogue, but also has good reasons for assuming that each attempt on its part to enter into dialogue is an opportunity for the latter to strengthen the security of the domination it already has. A successfully organized enlightenment initiates a process of reflection. The theoretical interpretations which enable the subjects to come to know themselves and their situation are retrospective, that is, they bring to consciousness a process of formation.²⁶ Psychoanalysis, as a reflection in the social life and system, through enlightenment, toward the goal of emancipation, has practical consequences necessary to consolidate the liberation realized, or at least in close view. These practical consequences are changes in attitude which result from insights into the causalities of the past, and, indeed, of themselves. The changes in attitude are possible because, unlike the mere technical application of scientific results, the translation of theory into praxis is faced with the task of entering into the consciousness and the convictions of citizens prepared to act – based on the appropriate emancipatory interest.

And So?

The politics of recognition, which is at the root of the unique-mania in African Philosophy, is also the core interest behind the efforts of many African philosophers. Understood this way, it becomes clear why so many of the maniacs are satisfied with relativism: of philosophy, of method, of truth, of logic, of epistemology, and so on. “Because,” they seem to argue, “there is a political struggle ‘to be’ or ‘not to be.’ If we argue that philosophy, because it is culture-bound, is necessarily relative, then African Philosophy, emanating from our specific *culture*, is relative *to us* also.” There is no doubt that there will be much emotional satisfaction in such a position.²⁷ But, where does it lead? My take is that such a stand renders intercultural philosophy unnecessary in the first place. But intercultural philosophy *is* necessary, particularly in the 21st century. The implication is that the maniac needs to be helped to realize that her/his interest and the satisfaction she/he hopes to gain from it, are of less value than an open-minded attitude that will make interaction among philosophers from various cultures more enlightening, with enrichment to each culture in the long-run.

The process of the psychoanalysis which is required to save *the* maniac would be based on truth and rationality. The first element will enable the members of any society to go beyond resentments to be able to answer honestly the question: “Were we really better *then* (say, in the 16th century) than

²⁶ Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, 38.

²⁷ Mary Lefkowitz made a similar remark about Afrocentrism and the spread of myths as history. According to her, “Appealing mythologies about the past bring satisfaction in the short run, but in the end they damage the very cause they are intended to promote.” Lefkowitz, *Not out of Africa – How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 155.

now (the 21st century)?” Imagine that one answers in the affirmative. The rationality requirement expects that one who really wants to, goes into the process of considering the horizon of consistency of the claims, and the actual usefulness, of the cultures under analysis. How can cultural contexts of four centuries ago enable people to cope productively in the 21st century? There should, therefore, be a continuous dialectical movement whereby philosophers on Africa, as critical social theorists, reflect more critically on the interests that direct their positions about philosophy in Africa. This is necessary since it is only by the penetrating power of criticism that the unreflective ties to interests and irrational claims to uniqueness, can be brought into the lime light, and reconstructed. Deep and consistent criticism, with its demand for self-reflection, is inevitable for intercultural research in philosophy.

Intercultural philosophy is a programme to intellectually construct and reconstruct worldviews and ideologies around the world, as Wiredu desired.²⁸ A necessary condition for any such programme is the mutual critique of cultures, worldviews, and philosophies, both from ‘inside’ and from ‘outside.’ Such a programme will not be possible in any region where the intellectuals who are supposed to lead the construction and reconstruction are merely busy with romanticism, and at the most, defensive or protective of what they describe as traditional ways of living, because they desire to be seen as unique. Thus, if African philosophers are to contribute in (rather than constitute hinderances to) research in intercultural philosophy, they need to abandon the fallacious claims to uniqueness in order to be able to communicate more meaningfully with others from other cultures, reflect more critically on the many cultures in Africa, and be better for it in these challenging global times.

²⁸ “I hope, that, at its most fundamental level, Africa’s problem of identity is a philosophical problem – a thought which should strengthen our sense of the importance of the current debate [and I add, ‘the current research’] among African philosophers and others about how best to define African Philosophy. This question is, in fact, one to be answered, at this juncture, not with a definition per genus et differentia but rather with a programme for intellectual construction and reconstruction in the service of Africa and ultimately the world....African Philosophers will be ipso facto helping to define and establish Africa’s identity in the contemporary world.” Wiredu, “Problems in African Self-Identification in the Contemporary World,” 220.

The Subaltern Perspective on Social Justice

Ramesh Chandra Sinha

Subalternity

The term “subaltern” requires explanation, especially in its relation to social justice. In critical theory, the subaltern is defined as the social group that is socially, politically, and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structure. The term subaltern is derived from the work of Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci on cultural hegemony, which identified the social groups who are excluded from established societal structures. Derived from the Latin root *sub* (below) and *alternus* (all others), subaltern is used to describe someone of a low rank or class, but the term is also used to describe someone who has no political or economic power, such as a person living below the poverty line. Thus, the subaltern is the social group that is socially deprived, and who struggles to come to the centre of the power structure. Gramsci, attempting to counter the Fascism of the 1920s and 1930s, employed the term for the proletariat.

In India, the term has been brought to the centre of critical philosophy by a group of thinkers referred to as the Subaltern Studies Collective. From 1982 to 1996, the subaltern collective has published substantial volumes on South Asian history and society from a “subaltern perspective.” Subaltern morality attempts to redefine moral values. Subaltern Indian philosophy attempts to rethink Indian morality and values afresh. Here, I will deal with the subaltern value system in relation to social justice in an Indian context. By the expression “subaltern,” I mean all marginalized people including “untouchables” (dalits) and women. In the Preface to *Subaltern Studies*, volume I, Ranjit Guha proposes the following definition: “The word “subaltern” stands for the meaning as given in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, that is, “of inferior rank.” It will be used as a name for the general attitude of subordination in South Asian Society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way.”¹ In a clarificatory note, at the end of the same Preface, he further states:

The terms “people” and “subaltern classes” have been used as synonymous throughout this note. The social groups and elements included in this category represent the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the elite.²

¹ Ranjit Guha, “Preface,” in *Subaltern Studies*, 1, *Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranjit Guha (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978), viii.

² Guha, “Preface,” 8.

Here, “the philosophy of the subaltern” attempts to rewrite philosophy, and, in the process, write about society from the point of view of the people. The philosophy of the subaltern contemplates how to bring marginalized people to the mainstream. For this purpose, we must change the value system.

First, we move away from the homogenization of the subaltern which clumps all categories of differentiation together, i.e., class, caste, age, gender and office, and any other way. At one level, many groups that share in a multiplicity of disadvantages are subject to oppression. However, to unify collectives and attempt to maintain their own particularity is to fall prey to the fallacy of hasty and unwarranted generalization. Gayatri Spivak, an eminent thinker on the subaltern, appropriately warns those involved in the subaltern studies project in India to not essentialize the multiple identities of the subaltern as if it is “a single underlying consciousness.” In keeping with this, we have tried to concentrate on fleshing out the caste dimension of subalternity and its value system. The subordination that marks the lives of untouchables or dalits and women in India bring them into the center of a particularly contextual assembly of subalternity: “untouchables (dalits) have retained their identity as a subordinated people within Indian society, and by this we mean to identify a condition that is far more severe than merely being bottom of an inevitable hierarchy.”³

This is not to deny that collectives held together by commonalities of age, gender, class, and office, share in the state of subalternity. Rather, this paper takes seriously the specific manner by which the institution and ideology of caste engenders a contextual manifestation of subalternity, which is intrinsically tied-up with social justice in India. Thus, the subaltern are the communities (the dalit and women) that are comparatively disadvantaged and subordinated through the caste and gender system, which operates to benefit the dominant caste communities and male perception. The words of Partha Chatterjee are relevant here: “no matter how we choose to characterize it, subaltern consciousness in the specific cultural context of India cannot but contain caste as a central element in its constitution.”⁴

Subaltern consciousness is concerned with the justice to subordinated or deprived people. Subaltern justice postulates that subaltern communities are not entirely controlled by the dominant communities. The term “subaltern,” in Aristotelian logic, denotes the relationship between two propositions. That is, the proposition is subaltern to another if it is implied but does not itself imply. In this relationship, if the universal proposition is true, then the particulars must be true, but not vice versa. This means that universal implies particular but particular does not imply universal. So subaltern is implied but does not imply any other proposition. Aristotle does not consid-

³ Oliver Mendelsohn and Upendra Baxi, eds., “The Untouchables,” in *The Rights of Subordinated Peoples* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 115.

⁴ Partha Chatterjee, “Caste and Subaltern Consciousness,” in *Subaltern Studies*, 6, *Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranjit Guha (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169.

er the relationship of sub-alternation as a relationship of opposition. In this relationship, two propositions can be true together and also false together. The subaltern is the relation between two propositions having the same subject and predicate but that differ in quantity and not in quality.

Subaltern social justice may be considered as resistance to the elite class and the emancipation of the subordinate class. According to John Rawls, social justice is the well-being of the subaltern. I have tried to pinpoint that the term subaltern has been first used in Aristotelian logic, which has not been taken into consideration by historians. Aristotle, while explaining the relation of the opposition of propositions, used the term subaltern to explain the relationship between universal and particular.

In an Indian context, the upper caste and subordinate caste may be symbolized as A and I. A stands for the upper caste and I stands for the subordinate caste. A implies I, but I does not imply A. If A is true, I must be true, but not vice versa. This rationale is best exemplified in the following excerpt from *The German Ideology*:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.⁵

The emerging school of “Cultural Marxism” seems to be a more relevant framework within which to interpret subaltern social justice as encountered among Ambedkar and Periyar. This complex interweaving of domination and subordination on the one hand, and compliance and resistance on the other, is capable of realistically holding together the camouflage of submissiveness, which characterizes the overt behavior of subaltern class. Untouchables (dalit) and women are trying to come to the center of power. According to the traditional system, untouchables and women were subordinated. The idioms of domination, subordination, and revolt are often inextricably linked together. If this is true, it follows that subordination and domination is seldom complete. The process is marked by struggle and resistance.

Justice

In order to understand social justice, we must understand justice first. As D. D. Raphael puts it:

⁵ D. D. Raphael, *Moral Philosophy* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 68.

Justice and liberty are the two basic ideas of all political thought. Every society needs some sort of concept concerning that structure. Justice is the basic concept of social values; it is what holds a society together.⁶

Most social philosophers think in ethical terms – public interest, social justice, freedom from oppression, or freedom from want. Differences of ideology and multiplicity of values crystallize especially around the two concepts of justice and liberty. Everybody is in favor of justice, but not the same interpretation of it. Raphael further observes,

Left-wingers give priority to “social justice” with an intention to reform society in the direction of greater equality and the removal of poverty. A right-winger’s concept of justice (he is unlikely to use the phrase “social justice”) sets more store by the virtues of law and order, of stability, of reward for enterprise and merit.⁷

I take Raphael’s contention here as only partly acceptable. It is true that left-wingers attach less importance to liberty, but it is not true that right-wingers attach less importance to social justice. A democrat, whether right wing or left wing, attaches equal importance to “social justice.” I strongly contend that for Indians it is a fundamental value. We want to retain it as a social goal. Raphael’s contention may be true of people who do not believe in democracy. For a democrat, justice is a social virtue. It appears both in law and in ethics. But the morality of a society is distinct from its legality. However, I contend that principles of social justice are akin to principles of morality. Social justice becomes the meeting point between morality and legality. The administration of social justice in that case becomes the administration of a morality accepted by that society. The administration of social justice, within this context, need not evidently be identified with the administration of law, for law may or may not be in conformity with the concept of social justice. Justice in law and justice in ethics are distinct but not completely separate concepts. Raphael writes:

The idea of justice always has an ethical tinge and when it is used in law or is applied to the legal system as a whole, it is a reminder that law, as commonly understood, is not simply a set of any old rules subject to enforcement; law has an ethical purpose and is normally expected to use ethical methods.⁸

However, the principles of social justice are nothing but principles generated by human reason in its application to social contexts. Justice, for Plato, is one of the four virtues, the others being wisdom, temperance and

⁶ Raphael, *Moral Philosophy*, 67.

⁷ Raphael, *Moral Philosophy*, 68.

⁸ Raphael, *Moral Philosophy*, 68.

courage.⁹ Justice is the practice of virtues. Virtue is the right condition which enables each man to do his own job. He is free to follow that activity for which he is best qualified by his nature. Justice, for Plato, consists of the rulers, the guardians, and the artisans in their proper order in the state, and the practice of their particular virtues: wisdom for the rulers, courage for the guardians, and temperance for the artisans.

Here justice has a purely metaphysical connotation, implying a life where people conform to the rule of functional specialization. The underlying principle here is that each individual should practice one thing only, which is the thing to which his nature is best adapted. Plato pinpoints that each individual should do what nature intends of him – one individual to one work – and then everyone would do their own business, and the one and not many. From the above, it may be inferred that justice, as conceived by Plato, has both individual and social aspects. It asks the individual to take only that office to which his nature is best suited. It is also required that society must assign that office to him. The highest good of both the individual and society can be achieved if we understand that there is nothing better for a man than to do the work that he is best suited to do.

The philosophical interpretation of justice takes an empirical direction at the hands of Aristotle, who argues that injustice arises when unequals are treated equally. Aristotle came to lay down the foundations of what is now called the doctrine of “distributive justice.” The implication of Aristotle’s explanation is that justice is either “distributive” or “corrective,” the former requiring equal distribution among equals, the latter applying wherein the remedy for a wrong is provided. With the penetration of democracy into social and economic spheres, the meaning of justice has expanded into social justice. In the process, a new subaltern consciousness has developed. It urges that the rights of an individual should be reasonably restricted in the wider interest of the subaltern community, namely, untouchables (dalits) and women – so that the ends of social justice are properly achieved. In other words, it is widely recognized that the well-being of society depends on the coordination and reconciliation between the rights of the individual and interests of the subaltern community.

John Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice*, contemplates that justice is the well-being of the disadvantaged.¹⁰ Social justice relates to the balance between an individual’s rights and social control, ensuring the fulfillment of the legitimate expectations of the individual under the existing laws, and to assure him benefits thereunder and protection in case of any violation or encroachment of his rights. Social justice must be consistent with the unity of the nation and the needs of society. It is evident that the context of social justice is very wide. It covers within its fold everything pertaining to the norms of “general interest,” ranging from the protection of the interests of the subaltern, to the eradication of poverty and illiteracy. In India, the idea

⁹ Plato, *Republic*, Book 4, 423 (Stephanus).

¹⁰ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1971), 3.

of social justice enjoins upon the state to make an effort to improve the conditions of downtrodden and weaker groups.

We must take note of a dichotomy between justice as both a conservative and a reformative principle. Conservative justice protects the established order of society with its established distribution of rights and, in the event of breaches, it requires restitution of the status quo, so far as that is possible. Reformative justice calls for revisions of the social order and the redistribution of rights to suit current ideas of fairness. The second of these concepts is, I think, what people usually have in mind when they speak of "social justice." The term "social justice" tends to issue from the mouths of reformers, and to be looked upon with suspicion by those who are satisfied with the existing order. In my opinion, it is not pertinent to say that reformative justice is social while conservative justice is not. Justice always has a social reference because it concerns the order of society as a whole.

Legal and moral justice are each concerned with an equitable order of society and, if need be, with protecting the rights of individuals against the demands of society as well as against other individuals. Again, each of the two has its conservative and its reformative aspects: both law and morals regard it as unjust to violate expectations based on long-standing arrangements, yet both recognize that an established order is always liable to ossify conceptions which have become out of date, and that change in the character of human life, both national and spiritual, requires the change of social structure. Finally, it is obvious that the distinction between conservative and reformative justice is quite different from that between justice of the social order and justice for individuals. Conservative justice is concerned both with the preservation of established social norms and with the protection of the freedom, person, and property of individuals. Reformative justice is undoubtedly intended to produce a more equitable society, as the common term "social justice" implies, but it is equally intended to secure for needy or meritorious individuals the rights to which it thinks they are entitled.

Undoubtedly, the idea of social justice requires the sacrifice of certain individual rights at the altar of the general interest. However, viewed in a wider perspective, the idea of social justice not only aims at the proper reconciliation of the interest of an individual with the overall interest of the community. It also stipulates the prevalence of the community interest over the individual interest in the event of any conflict. It also constitutes an essential part of the great complex of social change for which something may have to be sacrificed for the greater good. The concept of social justice covers within its fold everything pertaining to the norm of general interest. It protects the interest of the subaltern, and aims at the eradication of poverty and inequality. It also relates to the liquidation of the vested interest of elites. The idea of social justice enjoins upon the state to make efforts for the improvement of the downtrodden sections of society. John Rawls conceives of social justice as fairness. Indeed, he observes, "I then present the main idea of justice as fairness, a theory of justice that generalizes and car-

ries to a higher level of abstraction the traditional conception of the social contract.”¹¹

Rawls’ aim is to work out a theory of justice that serves as a viable alternative to the doctrine which has long dominated our philosophical tradition. Although a society is a cooperative venture for mutual advantage, it is typically marked by a conflict as well as by an identity of interest. This identity of interest exists because social cooperation makes possible a better life for all. But there is a conflict of interest, since persons are not indifferent as to how the greater benefits produced by their collaboration are distributed, for in order to pursue their end they prefer a larger to a less share. Rawls further observes:

A set of principles is required for choosing among the various social arrangements which determine their division of advantages and for underwriting an agreement on the proper distributive shares. These principles are the principles of social justice: they provide a way of assigning rights and duties in the basic institutions of society and they define the appropriate distribution of the benefits and burdens of social co-operation.¹²

Conclusion

In post-modern society, the subaltern consciousness and social justice are interconnected. The marginalized untouchables and deprived women strive for equality. Moreover, feminism has also upset the entire male-dominated social structure. Post-modernism is an attempt to deconstruct the old social structure. In the Indian context, the elite or Brahmanical social system is under threat. By Brahmanical social structure, I do not mean any particular caste like that of the Brahmin but, instead, the “elitism” prevalent in Indian society. The marginalized classes can be termed as the “other,” who are on the margins of society. They struggle for their rightful place in society. As a matter of fact, it is said that in the project of modernity, the subaltern was not restive to come into the mainstream. In the post-modern project, the subalterns are trying to be liberated. Western social philosophers pinpointed the concept “otherness.” Indeed, the “other” is part and parcel of social development. The feminist movement and subaltern consciousness are chief marks of post-modern society. The subaltern consciousness is growing, and marginalized people demand equal treatment. Post-modernism highlights difference: the hallmark of post-modernism is plurality. It is a project that relates to subaltern morality and social justice, in which marginalized classes, in the scheme of social justice, get their fair share of benefits and burdens.

¹¹ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 4.

¹² Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 10.

Sri Aurobindo's *The Renaissance in India*: A Study in Spiritual Regeneration

Thummapudi Bharathi

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), a creative writer and professor of English literature, participated in India's struggle for freedom. Being an ardent nationalist, he was imprisoned in 1908. During this imprisonment, he stated that he had a mystic experience of *Narayan Darsan*. This resulted in Aurobindo's conversion from activism to introspection, which was a turning point in his life. After his release from prison, he went to Pondicherry and founded an *Ashram* (hermitage), known even today as the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. From there he began working toward the spiritual liberation of the nation. Certainly, this period helped Aurobindo to produce his best poems and plays. Critics cite Aurobindo as a philosophical poet with a strong message to mankind.

The Renaissance in India, the primary text for the present study, was first published serially in the monthly review *Arya* between August and November 1918. Later, this lengthy prose piece was published as a booklet in 1920. At the end of the first paragraph of the essay, Sri Aurobindo states its central idea: namely, that the renaissance – or new birth – of India must be understood in a broad perspective, that is, of the Indian Renaissance's contribution to the human race. The essay starts with the question of whether “there is really a Renaissance in India.”¹ Aurobindo, while agreeing that there is, says that it is nevertheless different from the European Renaissance. India has always been awake, hence there is no need for re-awakening. But, under “the pressure of a super-imposed European culture,”² India now needs its own renaissance. Aurobindo then states that “the beginning of this process of original creation in every sphere of her national activity will be the sign of the integral self-finding of her renaissance.”³

India could always be characterized as a spiritual culture. The sense of the infinite is very strong in the Indian worldview. Indeed, neither the physical nor the supra-physical alone can provide answers to the search for meaning in human life. Rather, it is the physical life in its proper relationship with the spiritual or infinite that will give a meaning to life:

Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. India saw from the beginning, – and, even

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, 1920), 1.

² Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 4.

³ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 6.

in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight, – that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of externalities.⁴

Human beings should realize the kaleidoscopic experiences in life. Man is basically good and has the potential to become still better. This is possible when a human being realizes the dignity and divinity to be found within himself. The purpose of life is to “...become the spirit, become a god, become one with God, and become the ineffable Brahman.”⁵

However, it should be said that the Indian worldview does not rely solely on spirituality. To lead a meaningful life on the earth, one should achieve a balance between earthly life and spiritual life. Indeed, this is the belief of Indian philosophers: “When we look at the past of India, what strikes us next is her stupendous vitality, her inexhaustible power of life and joy of life, her almost unimaginably prolific creativeness.”⁶ A person becomes a materialist if he lives in a world of the present, the expedient, and the customary pursuit of self-interest. Conversely, a person becomes an idealist when he believes only in the world of eternity and of the love of beauty and goodness. Hence, India emphasizes both the earthly and spiritual worlds. Neither materialism nor absolute idealism alone will provide answers about the purpose of life. As a solution, India finely combined both of these worldviews. As Aurobindo states:

Thus an ingrained and dominant spirituality, an inexhaustible vital creativeness and gust of life and, mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence combined of the rational, ethical and aesthetic mind each at a high intensity of action, created the harmony of the ancient Indian culture.⁷

Aurobindo warns that spirituality does not necessarily flourish in an impoverished country. He says “it is when the race has lived most richly and thought most profoundly that spirituality finds its heights and its depths and its constant and many-sided fruition.”⁸

Aurobindo then expresses the significance of the Indian mind. He says “the ideals of the Indian mind have included the height of self-assertion of the human spirit and its thirst of independence and mastery and possession and the height also of its self-abnegation, dependence and submission and self-giving.”⁹

He then points out that the caste system was the worst evil in the history of India; indeed, the “the human soul and the human mind are beyond

⁴ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 6.

⁵ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 7.

⁶ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 7.

⁷ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 11.

⁸ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 11.

⁹ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 12-3.

caste.”¹⁰ Swami Vivekananda also vehemently criticized the hideous practices of the caste system in India. He said:

[The caste system] was intended to be a very scientific system allowing everybody to develop his aptitudes fully, but it ended up being a most heinous machinery of torture for a vast number of people. Its worst feature was branding a section of people as untouchable. According to him, the day India started using the word ‘Untouchable,’ its downfall began. ‘No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism.’¹¹

The presence of Narayan – the supreme absolute – in all human beings is the doctrine of Indian philosophy. Therefore, it is meaningless to retain any distinctions based on caste. Even the American Transcendentalists were advocates of this idea. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the founder of Transcendentalism, emphasized the ideas of self-trust and self-reliance, because the human spirit receives inspiration from the Divine Spirit. Further, Emerson declared that the presence of God in every human being should be the supreme revelation. Emerson, being a believer in American democratic ideals, discovered this idea of the presence of God in every human as the primary idea of true democracy. He articulates this idea in a journal entry (December 9, 1834):

Democracy, Freedom, has its root in the sacred truth that every man hath in him the divine Reason, or that, though few men since the creation of the world live according to the dictates of the Reason, yet all men are created capable of so doing. That is the equality and the only equality of all men. To this truth we look when we say, Reverence thyself; Be true to thyself. Because every man has within him somewhat really divine.

Certainly, the significance of Indian philosophy is in the “...fusion of the knowledge it has gained and to a resulting harmony and balance in action and institution.”¹² But this significance disappeared from the Indian soil, and Aurobindo searched for the cause of this loss. He found that after the age of Spirit came the age of Dharma, and then the great classical age of Sanskrit dominated. The spiritual truth is at the backdrop of all these ages. “The great classical age of Sanskrit culture was the flowering of this intellectuality into curiosity of detail in the refinements of scholarship, science,

¹⁰ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 13.

¹¹ Swami Lokeshwarananda, ed., *The Perennial Vivekananda: A Selection* (Calcutta: Sahitya Akademi, 1988), xx.

¹² Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 14.

art, literature, politics, sociology and mundane life.”¹³ In the later, post-classical period, the *Puranic* and *Tantric* systems dominated. During this period, impressing the values of the spirit upon lower life was given further importance. The last fine flower of Indian spirituality is *Vaishnavism*. From this point onwards, the Indian mind witnessed retrogression in its spiritual truths. The past knowledge was not understood in the right way.

At this juncture, when the Indian mind was in complete confusion, “the European wave swept over India.”¹⁴ Sri Aurobindo has argued, in opposition to this European influence, that there is a need for an Indian Renaissance. A renaissance in India is necessary for the recovery of lost spiritual knowledge. There is a pressing need to rediscover and reemphasize the presence of the spirit in every human being, for the general state of the human spirit is dead. Hence, there is a need to wake this spirit up, revive its potentiality, and make it “a dominating power in the world.”¹⁵ To become a world power, India needs to overcome certain weaknesses. Those weaknesses, according to Vivekananda, are “poverty, neglect of the masses, caste, denying women their basic rights, and a faulty system of education. He wanted India to take full advantage of modern science and technology to fight poverty and unemployment.”¹⁶

By coming into contact with European ideals, India radically reconsidered some of the prominent elements of its traditions, even by denying the basic principles of its own culture. Yet another important factor in this connection is that, despite the process of European influence, the Indian mind adopted true and useful modern ideas and the foreign principles slowly disappeared.

The first generation of Indian intellectuals who were products of Western education earnestly hoped for a radically modernized India in mind, spirit, and life. Under the influence of the Western spirit, they even questioned the validity of India’s traditional culture. Though they looked back at ancient India with prideful sentiment, they could not reconcile its traditions with Western thought:

They sought for a bare, simplified and rationalized religion, created a literature which imported very eagerly the forms, ideas and whole spirit of their English models, – the value of the other arts was almost entirely ignored, – put their political faith and hope in a wholesale assimilation or rather an exact imitation of the middle-class pseudo-democracy of nineteenth-century England, would have revolutionized Indian society by introducing into it all the social ideas and main features of the European form.¹⁷

¹³ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 16.

¹⁴ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 15.

¹⁵ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 20.

¹⁶ Lokeswarananda, *The Perennial Vivekananda: A Selection*, xx.

¹⁷ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 24.

The result is that these intellectuals remained as copyists only. This blind aping of foreign ideologies, and the denial of the original Indian spirit, still proves to be a bane in Indian life. In the name of globalization, Indian leaders are Americanizing the Indian soil and soul. Our cultural and social values are at stake. India is in the process of losing its traditional culture. Values like hard work, discipline, concern for fellow beings, tolerance, respect for elders, honesty, and sacrifice are slowly fading away. The Indian joint-family system – the locus of values – has been disrupted in the present society; indeed, it has disappeared. The newly acquired, Western notions of independent living and individual thinking are leading us away from the joint-family system towards the nuclear family. Hence, children forgo the love, affection, concern, and care for their grandparents, uncles and aunts.

Under these circumstances, children sometimes develop anti-social attitudes. The education system, which concentrates on the character building of a student, is currently being replaced with a grade and grade-point system. Personality development is giving way to professional success without professional ethics. The advancement of technology in the world has driven the people of India toward a materialistic worldview, making them slaves to machines. Modern luxuries have turned people into puppets, and this has resulted in corruption, crime, and violence. With so much advancement in electronics, people would rather live in the world of electronics than with human beings. When ethics are displaced by electronics, that is the end of all civilized behaviour. The people of India are now covetous of wealth, and so get involved in all sorts of crimes. Criminalization of politics is yet another evil grown in full in the second half of the 20th century. By the foolish aping of Western culture, India has started to lose its place in the world of knowledge and spirituality. Hence, to retain its own identity, India must emancipate itself from the clutches of globalization.

Any development in the fields of science and technology must be tempered with moderation and discipline, those great classical virtues characteristic of the Indian ethos: Nothing in excess (*ati sarvatra varjayet*). As a result of this ethos, Indian spirituality has always sought to turn the Indian mind away from material happiness.

A few great movements that started in the Pre-Independent India are essentially based on “new spiritual thought and usually a new religious activity.”¹⁸ It must be noted that “the instinct of the Indian mind was that, if a reconstruction of ideas and of society was to be attempted, it must start from a spiritual basis and take from the first a religious motive and form.”¹⁹ The seers and saints are behind these great movements. They try to herald a new era in history, as, for example, the older ones like Sikhism and Jainism or the later *Brahma Samaj*, *Arya Samaj*, *Prardhana Samaj*, *Ramakrishna Mission*, etc. These movements indicate that Orthodox Hinduism has undergone revision and revival many times. It is perhaps the case that those movements

¹⁸ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 30.

¹⁹ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 31.

tried to add a new social dimension to Hinduism. As Aurobindo rightly remarks: "India is the meeting-place of the religions and among these Hinduism alone is by itself a vast and complex thing, not so much a religion as a great diversified and yet subtly unified mass of spiritual thought realization and aspiration."²⁰ Rajmohan Gandhi, in his address at the annual international convention of the Theosophical Society in Adayar, Madras in 1993, expressed that "somewhere in the Indian soul has always lurked a feeling that India had something to contribute to the world."²¹

Presently, Indian society is in a chaotic state: "for the old forms are crumbling away under the pressure of the environment, their spirit and reality are more and more passing out of them."²² Both the old forms and the new suffer severe confrontation. The old order is slowly crumbling such that its destruction is hardly perceptible. At the same time, the new order is not yet ready to be born. What W.B. Yeats has said seems to be happening in India. Things are falling apart; the centre does not hold. The centre in India is the spirituality shorn of rituals, religious dogmas, and other exclusivist tendencies. Perhaps a new pattern based on the suitable old form may be an ideal solution. Spirituality is not theocracy. Aurobindo, explaining spirituality, put forward his theory of humanity which acts, perhaps, as a better solution for the turbulent human race. He states:

Spirituality is much wider than any particular religion, and in the larger ideas of it that are now coming on us even the greatest religion becomes no more than a broad sect or branch of the one universal religion; by which we shall understand in the future man's seeking for the eternal, the divine, the greater self, the source of unity and his attempt to arrive at some equation, some increasing approximation of the values of human life with the eternal and the divine values.²³

Our emphasis on economics and the corresponding exclusion of ethics has engendered a cultural tendency toward possessiveness and selfish behavior. When Mammon and Manmatha (*artha* and *kama*) sway the human mind, it loses sight of *dharma* and *moksh* and sinks into the materialistic slough, so much so that it wallows in the quagmire itself and puts the others into it too. As the *Brihadarnayaka*, quoted by T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land*, aptly says: Men should cultivate three qualities, giving (*datta*), control (*damayata*), and compassion (*dayadhavam*). These qualities will make manifest the kingdom of God here and now, and avoid the transformation of the world into a wasteland. As Swami Vivekananda has always said, ancient civilization has always emphasized that the noble side of the human mind and soul has much to give to the entire world.

²⁰ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 32.

²¹ Rajmohan Gandhi, *Does India Have a Future?* (Adayar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1994), 12-13.

²² Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 40.

²³ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 44.

Ancient Indian culture emphasizes the “soundness, growth and strength of the mind, life and body as the old Hellenic or the modern scientific thought, although for a different end and a greater motive.”²⁴ The ultimate goal of man is the awareness of god in him, and to live with respect for the divine and human values. Hence, the success of an individual or a nation depends on this idea that god lies within every human being. Undoubtedly, every human being has potential for virtue and power. “Spirituality is not necessarily exclusive; it can be and in its fullness must be all inclusive.”²⁵ As Rajmohan Gandhi rightly proposes, the mission of India is “to bring man the world over face to face with his conscience; to bring man closer to his fellow man in every corner of the earth; to evoke each man’s best and noblest; to take the world closer to the justice and harmony that men may find when they make God their master rather than their servant.”²⁶ India should be a torchbearer in this mission to save the human race from moral degeneration.

²⁴ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 45.

²⁵ Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, 45.

²⁶ Gandhi, *Does India Have a Future?*, 12-13.

The Jaina Philosophy of *Anekantavada* as a Way of Life for Communal Harmony and Social Peace

Rekha Singh

According to Jaina philosophers, every object has innumerable characteristics. An object is what it is because of its positive and negative qualities. The positive characteristics of an apple, for example, are its size, colour, shape, weight, taste, smell, etc., but also the countless relations it bears to the numberless other objects of the universe. The negative qualities that determine the apple consist of what it is not. We can know an apple fully only when we can distinguish it from everything else. We know, for example, that an apple is not a banana, nor an orange, nor a guava, nor a mango, etc. The negative attributes of an apple constitute its differences from all other objects in the universe. Therefore, the number of negative characteristics of an object is far greater than the number of positive characteristics. If we consider any object in light of its positive and negative characteristics taken together, the object no longer appears to be a simple thing having only a limited number of qualities. The object, on the contrary, turns out to be one that possesses unlimited and infinite qualities. Moreover, an object takes on new qualities with change, through the passage of time. Sometimes new qualities are discovered in an object with the development of knowledge. This leads the Jainas to conclude that an object really possesses an infinite number of characteristics.

Jaina philosophers observe that we can have full knowledge of an object only when we know everything else. It is practically impossible for a finite person to have comprehensive and complete knowledge, both positive and negative, of even a tiny object. Only an omniscient person can have such knowledge. An omniscient being can have an immediate knowledge of a thing in all its infinite aspects. But a finite being can comprehend only a particular aspect of a thing. Such partial knowledge of an object having innumerable characters is called a 'Naya' by Jaina writers. 'Naya' is a judgment based on partial and incomplete knowledge of any object.

The metaphysics of Jaina philosophers is realistic pluralism. It is called *Anekantavada* or the theory of the manyness of reality. Every object possesses innumerable positive and negative characteristics. It is not possible for a finite being to know all the qualities of a thing. A man can know only some aspects of an object. To mistake any one-sided and partial view as the whole truth is to commit the fallacy of *Ekantavada*. As Jainism accepts different aspects of an object as only partially true, it is called *Anekantavada*.

According to *Anekantavada*, change and permanence are both real. As far as the essential nature of the ultimate substance is concerned, the world is permanent. Keeping in view all the accidental characteristics, the world is momentary. A thing is regarded as real from the point of view of its own matter, form, space, and time. When a thing is considered from the viewpoint of another's matter, form, space, and time, it is unreal. The Jaina philosophers, therefore, hold that philosophers like the Buddhas – who say that there is nothing really permanent in the universe, and that everything changes from moment to moment – are one-sided and dogmatic. Similarly, monistic philosophers, like the Vedantins, who assert that change is unreal and that reality is absolutely unchanging, are also mistaken. Each of these schools of philosophers looks at only one side of reality and thus commits the fallacy of exclusive predication. Change and permanence are both real. It is not contradictory to say that a particular object, or even the universe, is both subject to change and is also free from it. Change is true of it in one respect, whereas permanence is true in another respect. The contradiction evaporates when we realize that each predication is relative and not absolute.

The judgment that we pronounce in our daily life about any thing is, therefore, true only in reference to a particular aspect of that thing. When we forget this limitation, and consider our judgment as unconditionally true, we often disagree and come to quarrel with one another. The old story of the six blind men and the elephant is quoted by the Jaina writers to elucidate the many-sided characters of an object. According to this story, six blind men put their hands on the various parts of the elephant and tried to describe the whole elephant on the basis of the different experience each had. The blind man who touches the ear says that the elephant is like a country-made fan; for the person who touches the leg of the animal, the elephant is like a pillar; the person catching the trunk says that the elephant is like a python; the holder of its tail says that the elephant is like a rope; the person touching the side of the elephant says that the animal is like a wall; and for the man who touches its forehead the elephant is like the breast. Each of the six blind persons have only partial characteristics of the elephant correct, which they mistake to be the whole animal. Each one asserts that his description alone is correct. But he who sees the whole elephant easily knows that each blind man experiences only a part of the animal, which he mistakes to be the whole truth about the elephant. Similarly, almost all philosophical, ideological, moral, religious, and social disputes are because of mistaking a partial truth for the whole truth. All our judgments portray various characteristics of the many-sided reality and are only partially true. Thus, the doctrine of manifoldness of reality, *Anekantavada*, is very tolerant. It teaches us to respect others' points of view.

The doctrine of Jainas is in conformity with the view accepted by Western logicians that every judgment occurs in a particular universe of discourse, and can be understood only in that context. The universe of discourse is constituted by various factors like space, time, degree, etc., which

are left unmentioned, partly because they are obvious and partly because they are too many to be stated exhaustively. If these conditions cannot be accurately enumerated, as some logicians like F.C.S. Schiller also admit, it is good for the sake of precision to qualify the judgment by a word like 'somehow' (Syat). This theory of the Jainas is known as *Syadvada*. It is the view that every judgment holds good only of the particular aspect of the object or the point of view from which the judgment is passed.

The principle underlying 'Syadvada' shows that Jainism is very open and tolerant in approach. It entertains the views of other philosophers as various possible versions of the universe seen from different viewpoints. The only thing that the Jainas dislike in other thinkers is the dogmatic claim of one who claims that he alone is right. This claim amounts to the fallacy of exclusive predication (Ekantavada). Against this fallacy a protest has been raised by the Neo-realists who have called it the fallacy of exclusive particularity. But no Western or Eastern philosopher has so earnestly tried to avoid this error in practice as the Jainas have done.

Lord Mahavira (6th c. BCE) put forward this doctrine of many-sidedness (Anekantavada). He advised his disciples to discover the truth after taking into account all aspects and giving them due weight. This widens one's outlook and trains the mind to accommodate the feelings and the ways of life of other faiths and communities. Differences in outlook create a situation of conflict in society. The result is that the constructive tendencies in man suffer a great deal. If we take things in the right perspective, we shall find that differences in outlook appear as a result of the use of creative faculties inherent in man. If this fact is not adhered to, these differences become the cause of conflict and confrontation between men, the consequence of which is the disruption of unity and cohesion in society. Mahavira, by his deep insight, could see the waste of social energy on account of the incorrect understanding of the nature of things. There are different aspects of truth. A person grabs only a particular aspect of truth, regards it to be the whole truth, and this leads to conflict. But keeping in mind the innumerable characteristics of an object, a person should think that his way is not the final one, his version is not the only version, and his truth is not the ultimate truth. There are several ways and diverse paths to reach the truth. Each in its own right is legitimate. We suffer in life, for we make absolute statements about others and ourselves.

Anekantavada encourages interpersonal and communal harmony by promoting tolerance in community. The same principle of tolerance can be extended to intellectual, social, religious and other fields of activities. Tolerance will end inter-caste strife and communal violence. Anekantavada is, thus, the pillar of religious, social, and global harmony. It ensures peaceful coexistence of all shades of philosophical and religious opinions, as well as of those of their followers.

Syadvada says that everything is relative and nothing is absolute. Whenever one expresses an opinion about a person or an object or an event, and makes it absolute, he stops seeing the person or object or event as flow-

ing. But nothing is static; every one is a flowing being; every event is a flowing reality. To make any absolute statement about a thing is to destroy the basic quality of it as a flowing reality. This can be illustrated by an anecdote. A beautiful horse strayed onto the farm of a farmer. The king was informed about this wonderful horse by his spies. The farmer was offered a huge amount of money for the horse. But the offer was humbly rejected by the farmer. The friends and relatives of the farmer told the farmer that he was a fool in rejecting the offer of the king. The farmer answered 'Maybe.' After a few days, the horse disappeared from the stable. The friends again told the farmer that he was really stupid in rejecting the offer from the king. The farmer's reply was 'Maybe.' With the passage of some days, the horse appeared in the farm house with a horde of horses. The relatives now told the farmer, 'You did the right thing by not selling the horse.' The farmer again replied 'Maybe.' As the farmer now possessed so many horses, his only son started training the horses and, in the process, fell down and broke his legs. Meanwhile a war broke into the country and all youngsters had to go to war. The farmer's only son was exempted because he had fractured his legs while training the horses. The villagers said that the farmer was lucky as his only son was saved from compulsory recruitment in the war. The farmer's reply was yet again 'Maybe.'

We suffer in our lives by making absolute statements. We can set ourselves free by practicing 'Syadvada' which says 'Maybe' or that 'Things are relative.' When we operate on a relative plane, we are open to other possibilities and perspectives. This puts an end to the dogmatic and one-sided perspectives of things.

For the development of society and of nations we should work with team-spirit. But the ego and selfishness of human beings force them into disputes and quarrels instead of tackling problems. No great work can be done by one individual alone. We have to learn to work together. Only then can we solve our pressing economic and social problems. Only by working together can we improve the lot of the people. This can be best achieved if we shed our partial way of looking at things. The philosophy of *Anekantavada* can serve as a panacea in this regard, if truly made part of our thought and life. It develops the human capacity to work together in a team with cohesion, love, and feeling of service. It promotes communal harmony and social peace. We should give up our narrow ideas and try to become broad-minded in all spheres; receive ideas from other castes, creeds, communities and nations; and assimilate the progressive ideas for the prosperity and peace of the country and global society. This is possible if we take into account all other aspects and give them due weight. This widens one's outlook and trains the mind to accommodate the feelings and ways of life of others.

Democracy cannot prosper if life and rights of others are not protected. Respecting the life and rights of others is the bedrock of democracy. Mahavira explored this principle to the utmost. One should not impinge upon one another. Truth is multifaceted. So, no one is absolutely right or absolutely wrong. We may be right from our point of view and our opponents from

theirs. Hence, we should not be intolerant towards others. These principles are the life-source of democracy. The UN was formed with this end in view. This democratic philosophy has been carefully expressed in Anekantavada.

Today, we see violence, intolerance and strife in all parts of the globe. The world is full of conflict, wars, terrorism, violence, cruelty, misery, poverty, hunger, and so on. One wonders why weapons of mass killing have been invented. There must be a way to deal with such problems in a peaceful way by turning to non-violent means. There must be enlightened people across the globe who aspire to tackle the problem of terrorism and war by making recourse to peaceful means and adopting a path of non-confrontation. More effort is needed to put into the hearts and minds of men that we all are one, sparks of the same divinity, and are all linked together with the golden thread of Divinity. We all come from the same source and our happiness, peace, and salvation lie together. This is possible when we follow the philosophy of Anekantavada in our lives.

The De-estrangement of Metaphysics

Gholamreza A'avani

We are of the opinion that metaphysics came as a stranger to the Western soil and has ever since lived as a stranger – and blessed are the strangers. We could also say that metaphysics started as a reality without a name and, in the course of time, it became a reality with a name and, gradually, turned into a name without any reality.

Kant, doubting metaphysics to be a science at all, asks the question why it cannot – like all other sciences – attain universal acclaim. How is it that pretending to be a science, it “strings along the human understanding with hopes that...are never fulfilled?” Why do other sciences make continuous progress, and metaphysics always runs on the same spot? For Kant, metaphysics had lost many of its adherents, so much so that no intelligent person risks his reputation in this domain.¹ There is no doubt, then, that for Kant metaphysics has turned to be a name without a reality, and this is the case with most of Kant’s successors in modernity. Now is time to inquire into the question of why such a respected and prestigious science has fallen into disgrace and ignominy. It is our hope that, by tracing the causes of this decline, we may rehabilitate it to some extent and, by diagnosing its symptoms, restore it to its original salubrity.

In very ancient times, in the West, as well as in the East (before becoming acquainted with the peripatetic philosophy), metaphysics was a reality without a name. This is quite evident in the pre-Socratics and even in Plato, for whom philosophy itself was virtually a veritable metaphysics.²

If metaphysics, not construed in the very limited Aristotelian sense, involves the vision and grasp of reality and its elaboration in human terms, why should not such classical masterpieces as Hesiod’s *Theogony* be reckoned as great works in metaphysical cosmology, albeit in poetic and symbolic terms? Taken in this way, some of the great classics such as the Upanishads, the *Tao Te Ching*, and even the works of Sufi masters such as Rumi and Ibn Arabi and many others, could be expressions of pure metaphysics even though in academic circles they are not deemed worthy of even the name philosophy. But nonetheless they belong to the category of metaphysics, understood as “the reality without a name.” which had a short life in the West, but greater longevity in the East.

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, trans. Gary Hatfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5-6.

² We, like some Muslim philosophers, consider Plato to be the culmination of metaphysics in Greek culture. See, for example, Shihabaddin Yahya Sohrawardi, *Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques*, ed. Henry Corbin (Tehran: Academie Imperiale Iranienne de Philosophie, 1945), II, 10.

Let us for the moment confine our attention to the pre-Socratics as examples of metaphysicians without a name, and delineate some of their main intellectual features. The Pre-Socratics were mostly concerned with one main question – which in my opinion is the most primary metaphysical question, that is: *Ti esti he arche?* (What is the first principle?) This is not a question about the material cause as Aristotle misinterpreted it, but about one ontological principle from which everything has issued forth. Ours is a world of indefinite multiplicity which cannot be conceived of without the prior Unity. Tracing out the relation of the world of multiplicity to that one and unique *arche* from which everything has come into being and of which it is an aspect, and expounding and explaining how things have emanated from that primordial source, were the main tasks of the pre-Socratic philosophers.³ This *arche* or the primal source of all entities is called by different names by different philosophers: it is the Boundless (*apeiron*) in Anaximander, the *logos* or the one (*hen*, as in the expression *to hen panta*) in Heraclitus, Being itself in Parmenides, the one as symbolized by the number one in the numerical series by Pythagoras, and the one (*to hen*) or beyond-being (*epekeina tes ousias*) in Plato.

The procession of things from that singular and primordial source is explained by what we may call “appearance” and “reality” or what they called “phenomenon” (from the root *phainesthai* = to appear) and “noumenon” (from the root *nous* and *noein*, that is, what can be grasped by intellection). The principle is manifest, present, and apparent in all phenomena, or, in other words, everything is an appearance of that principle, in the sense that it manifests in its own particular way or in its own peculiar aspect from that principle. Hence it follows that, for every phenomenon, in order for it to be a phenomenon, it must not be viewed as an isolated and independent fact as it is shown to us in ordinary consciousness, but rather as a translucent symbol, referring and leading us back to that primordial principle.⁴

Moreover, if the principle is apparent or manifest in phenomena, we as perceivers are also present to them and perceive them without the intervention of intermediaries, such as concepts. This direct and immediate knowledge of things without an intermediary was called “*noein*” by the Pre-Socratics.⁵ It is to be distinguished from the indirect and mediate knowledge of things through concepts or hypotheses, called “*dianoia*” (mediate intellection) by Greek philosophers. Making this distinction is of utmost importance for understanding the Pre-Socratics. It is both emphasized by Plato

³ See for example, Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th ed. (Hildesheim: Weidmann, 1952); John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 4th ed. (London: A. & C. Black, Ltd., 1920); G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁴ The Pre-Socratics and Plato always refer to things as “phenomena.” This word, in order to have meaning, must be based on “*phainesthai*” or the appearance-reality relationship.

⁵ “*Nous*” and “*noein*” are key epistemic terms in Plato and the Pre-Socratics, which are more related to direct intellectual vision or intuition, rather than rationalization.

in his ‘divided line,’ and by Parmenides in his famous dictum as related by Plato “*tauto gar estin to einaikai to noein*” (for it is identically the same thing both to be and to be in intellect).

Noein, in the usage of the pre-Socratics, was also a superior kind of knowledge, which we might call knowledge by realization (as distinct from knowledge by abstraction or conceptualization); we might also call it knowledge by intellectual vision, by which we see things as manifestations of their primordial first principle. It is interesting to note that the Greek infinitive *idein* (like the Latin *videre*) means both to know and to see.⁶ Philosophy, in other words, was a way of life as well as a way of seeing reality, which enabled the sage not only to know the truth but also to realize the reality in himself. Philosophy, therefore, was a way of realization. It was the supreme method (from the Greek *meta hodos*, i.e., to be on the way to realization). In Parmenides, it was the way (and the only way) of attaining the Truth (*aletheia*) as distinct from opinion (*doxa*). Having realized the reality of *nous* in himself by traversing the road to truth through intellectual exertion, the sage was entitled to become the supreme exegete of being. According to Heraclitus, whereas the common people share nothing in common – with each person experiencing his own peculiar dream – the philosopher is awakened to the reality of logos which has disclosed itself in everything. It is the philosopher who can read the language of logos and who can speak as the logos speaks (*homo-legein*).

The second phase of the development of metaphysics is the one where it receives becomes a reality with a name. But we should be on our guard because, according to metaphysicians, to be “named” is necessarily to become “determined” and to rob something of reality in its absolute and universal nature. This is what happened with Aristotle, who is accorded with the unprecedented privilege of founding it by giving it its name, definition, principles, and laws, and by specifying its problems.

By giving it a name and founding it as a science (*episteme*), Aristotle turned away from metaphysics as a reality without a name, best represented and carried out by his master, Plato. To be named is to be determined and to be determined is to change orientation and probably one’s foundations and principles.⁷ Here, we should not forget Aristotle’s own statement that the slightest change in principles will necessarily end in the greatest differences in the consequences. Now let us hint at some of the changes he effected in metaphysics.

To start with the subject matter of metaphysics, Plato considered it to be *on he on* or being as being, and “being” itself construed as *ousia* or substance, the divinity itself being the first substance (*prote’ ousia*). For the

⁶ See, for example, Henry George Liddel and Robert Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

⁷ For metaphysicians without a name, to be named is a determination and every determination is a privation. See Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

Pre-Socratics, the first principle was not a substance. Plato considered it to be beyond the determination of substance and accidents. For Aristotle, however, the Divinity was an intelligible substance, contemplating itself, an idea which would not have pleased Plato and many of the pre-Socratics.⁸ Consider again the classification of the Aristotelian categories which, as attributes of being *qua* being, can be applied to all beings in different degrees. But for Plato, the categories predicable of the world of being are different from those of the world of becoming, and neither can be applied to the first principle which is beyond the determination of the categories.⁹

On the other hand, for Aristotle, the only method for the attainment of truth is that of rational demonstration, which is equally valid in all the kinds of the sciences as well as in metaphysics. For Plato and the pre-Socratics, the science of demonstration (called *dianoia* in Plato) is not valid for philosophy, which requires a superior type of knowledge (called *noesis*),¹⁰ which takes the end result of the sciences as its starting point and, through a kind of dialectical and intellectual ascent, enables the philosopher to rise to the intellectual vision of the first principle which shines and illuminates the intelligible world, as does the sun in our visible world.

As we have mentioned, for both the pre-Socratics and Plato, the main question was how the one principle has manifested itself in multifarious phenomena and how the phenomena point the way to that ultimate reality. In Aristotle, this becomes possible through abstract and conceptual demonstration in which the phenomena lose their symbolic transparency. Short of the vision of the Reality in phenomena, the philosopher is in need of the science of deduction to prove the existence of that reality through phenomena. In other words, Plato's ascending dialectics is superseded by the Aristotelian science of logic.

The metaphysics of Aristotle, however, unlike that of Kant, consists of reality with a name. In Book Alpha of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle tries to prove and establish the reality of metaphysics as the supreme science.¹¹ Knowledge is possible, because all men desire to know. We take delight in our senses, such as the sense of sight, apart from their usefulness, because they aid us in the knowing of things. Sensation itself is not knowledge, because it gives us only the appearance of things. Animals live by sensation and hence by appearances, and those animals which have memory, have little of the connected experience. From memory, experience arises in men,

⁸ For a good discussion of the subject matter of metaphysics in Aristotle, see Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978).

⁹ For Aristotelian categories see Franz Brentano, *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, trans. Rolf George (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1975); Sir David Ross, *Aristotle* (London: Methuen & Company, 1956).

¹⁰ See the analogy of the Divided Line, *Republic* VI, 510 et seq.

¹¹ See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Sir David Ross, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard Mckeon (New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2001), 689-693 (980a-983b Bekker).

for several memories of the same thing finally produce a single experience. But human beings live by art and reasoning. The arts and sciences arise when one universal judgment about a class of objects is produced from many notions gained through experience. But the question is: how do we obtain a universal from many particulars? Aristotle and his followers would answer the question by saying that, in order to have a universal, we must answer affirmatively three questions: (1) Is there something? (*hoti*, that it is); because non-being cannot be an object of knowledge, (2) What is it? (*tiesti*); this is a question about the essence of things and is raised only when we have answered the first question in the affirmative, and (3) Why is it so? (*dioti*); in answering this question we discover and mention the cause or the reason of the judgment and, by stating the cause, the judgment becomes both universal and necessary.

We should bear in mind that all three questions are asked and answered by reason and not by the senses, which provide us with appearances alone. By answering the second question (about the essence of a thing), the concrete individual becomes universal by defining it. By answering the third question, the particular judgment (such as “this medicine is good for my headache”) becomes a universal and necessary judgment by stating the cause. Phenomena or appearances only provide us with opinions (*doxa*), but knowledge (*episteme*) can only be gained by satisfactorily answering those three questions. First philosophy (*prote philosophia*) or the Divine science (*theologike*) or wisdom (*Sophia*) – the three expressions Aristotle uses in lieu of “metaphysics” – has distinctive characteristics, not shared by other sciences.¹² The wise man knows all things as far as possible, although he does not know each of them in detail. He is more exact and more capable of teaching the causes. This science is desirable on its own account; it is desirable, not for its results, but for the sake of knowing. It is the superior science in the sense that it does not serve any other science, and all other sciences serve it as ancillaries. In other words, it is a science which orders and is not ordered. It does not obey and is obeyed. This science is, moreover, the most universal because it deals with first principles. But, on the other hand, this most universal science is more difficult to learn because it is far removed from the senses. This science is, further, the most exact, because a science which can be demonstrated with fewer principles is more exact than those which involve additional principles.¹³ This science is the most knowable, because it is pursued for its own sake and the science which deals with the most universal principles is the most knowable. And the science which knows to what end each thing must be done is more authoritative than any other science: “Judged by all these tests we have mentioned then the name in question falls to the same science. This must be the science that investi-

¹² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980a-983b.

¹³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980a-983b.

gates the first principles and causes; for the good, i.e., the end, is one of the causes."¹⁴

We said that Kant is the paragon of metaphysicians who understand metaphysics as a name without reality, but we should pose the question whether Kant had any immediate predecessors. Were there any trends in medieval or modern philosophy which were or might be conducive to such anti-metaphysical trends? Generally speaking, any philosophical doctrine that calls into question, doubts or denies the authority of reason, and hence undermines the possibility of rational knowledge, is inimical to the possibility of there being an authentic metaphysics. Such tendencies and their adherents were legion in the late Middle Ages and in the early modern period, such as the following:

(1) Double Truth Theory. Modern philosophy is the revival of a sort of philosophical dualism which can be witnessed in some prominent philosophers of modernity such as Descartes and Kant. Can it be considered a residual resurgence of ancient Manicheism prevalent in the classical period? Anyhow, one of its medieval versions is the Double Truth Theory attributed to Averroes and propounded by the so-called Latin Averroists. It holds that there are two quite independent ways for the discovery of truth: philosophy and religion. One is, of course, free to accept or reject religion on philosophical grounds, but to posit a double standard theory of truth with an unbridgeable gap between them seems to be irrational.¹⁵

(2) Voluntarism is the belief in the essential priority of will over reason. According to this theory, something is true because an agent (Divine or human) wills it and not because it is good in itself. This problem was raised by Plato in the *Euthyphro*, where Euthyphro defines piety as that which all gods love, and Socrates immediately asks: "So is what is pious, pious because gods approve it or do they approve it because it is pious?"¹⁶ In other words, do gods (or God) choose and do something because it is good in itself (in Divine knowledge), or do things become good only by Divine or human choice? The first alternative was adopted by all philosophers and the second by the Sophists of the Greek tradition and by some dogmatic theologians in Islam and Christianity.¹⁷

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982b 5-10.

¹⁵ For the revival of Averroism and its impact on modern philosophy see Etienne Gilson and Thomas Langan, *Modern Philosophy: Descartes to Kant* (New York: Random House, 1968), 3-4.

¹⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 16a.

¹⁷ It is worthy of note that the notion of voluntarism was absent in Greek and Islamic philosophy, because it makes knowledge of eternal realities subject to the arbitrary whims of an external agent and, hence, knowledge becomes impossible. As we shall see, a strong dose of voluntarism is injected into Descartes and some other modern philosophers. Voluntarism was the theological foundation of many anti-rationalist and dogmatic theologians, such as the Asharites.

(3) Fideism is related to voluntarism: it is the priority of faith over reason, best represented in Christianity by Tertullian, who said that he believed because it was absurd (*Credo quia ineptum*). Fideism was rejected by Christian philosophers such as St. Anselm who said he believed in order that he might understand (*Credo ut intelligam*).¹⁸

(4) Nominalism is the denial of the real existence of universals and the belief that they exist as mere sounds (*flatus vocis*). According to philosophers, knowledge is based on universal concepts or judgments. Nominalism is a major trend of thought in the modern era.¹⁹

(5) Humanism is the belief that man is the measure of everything, in contrast to the traditional belief of some, such as Plato, that God is the measure of everything. As we move away from the Renaissance toward the contemporary era, humanism becomes so predominant that, in certain philosophies, God is superseded by man.

(6) Reductionism is to reduce Reality to some of its very limited aspects, such as the reduction of knowledge to science and the intellectual faculty to reason. Such again is the interpretation of reality from a very limited viewpoint, as seen in positivism, materialism, historicism, psychologism, biologicism, and many others which are the stock-in-trade of modern philosophy: each of these positions might be partially true. For ancient philosophers, for example, sensation, experience, imagination, and reasoning were complementary functions of the soul, and each had its proper limit. But, in modern philosophy, there is an exclusivist tendency which tries to reduce all the functions of the soul to a particular faculty.

(7) Skepticism. Where Averroes revived a pure and unadulterated Aristotelianism, an attempt was made to bring to life other schools of ancient philosophy;²⁰ one of the most successful revivals was skepticism, which is a strong thread running through and stringing together some main schools of philosophy. Was modern philosophy able to rid itself of Descartes' hyperbolic doubt?

Having briefly traced and delineated some trends in modern Western philosophy which precipitated the breakdown and decline of metaphysics, it is also opportune to briefly pinpoint some of the main philosophical barriers impeding the foundation of a robust structure of metaphysics in three great thinkers of modernity, i.e., Descartes, Hume and Kant. These are but a few points out of many which have to be carefully considered if this Divine Science of the ancients is to be rehabilitated. First, we begin with Descartes:

¹⁸ Some kind of fideism is again rampant in modern philosophy, as we can see in Kant's claim that he closed the gate of speculative reason in order to open the way for faith.

¹⁹ For a very brief account of universals in modern philosophy, see W. Stegmüller, *The Main Currents in Contemporary Philosophy*, trans. A. E. Blumberg (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publ. Co., 1969), 68 et seq.

²⁰ See Gilson and Langan, *Modern Philosophy*, 3-5.

(1) The non-commensurability of being and knowledge. For knowledge to be possible, it should be commensurate with being: they should be the same, as mentioned in Parmenides' famous dictum. But this commensurability was jeopardized by Cartesian hyperbolic doubt, and has never been restored to its pristine purity.

(2) Subjectivism. Cartesian certainty is conducive to an implicit subjectivism because, no matter how much the cognitive subject doubts (irrespective of the object known) whether the object exists, the subject is sure to exist, otherwise doubting would be impossible; "*dubito ergo sum*" or the first certainty of Descartes is the reversion of the subject back on itself.

(3) Dualism. According to Descartes, each substance has only one essential attribute. Substances which have totally different attributes cannot interact. So mind and body, that is the thinking and the extended substances, cannot interact, and so his postulation of the pineal gland is redundant. Plato's principle of Triad postulated an intermediary to connect the two substances, which is missing in Descartes.²¹

(4) Occasionalism. In order to explicate the causal interaction between the two disparate substances, Descartes resorts to Divine agency. Now, the question is how God can do something impossible in itself. This is a negation of the principle of causality and an arbitrary reversion to a sort of Asharism.

(5) Descartes talks about substance and the modifications of substance. But he does not mention at all how substance is modified, supposing that no substance is able to modify itself. Again, considering that secondary qualities cannot be rationally explained and, hence, are phenomenal, it would have been better for him to explain why this particular flower, for instance, has this particular aroma, color, beauty, and so on.

(6) Descartes is a voluntarist in an eminent sense by believing that God creates the eternal truths and that he could have created them otherwise. In an interesting article on Descartes, Émile Bréhier gives several examples of the createdness of eternal truths in Descartes, a fact which is inconsistent with his rationalism.²²

(7) Modern science is distinguished from classical Aristotelian science in that it is mathematicized, that is, expressed in mathematical formulae. Matter, being quite independent of the mind and perfectly quantifiable and expressible in mathematical terms, is construed mechanistically, and this mechanistic explanation supersedes the traditional version of efficient, formal, and final causality. Needless to say, the Pythagoreans, Plato, and neo-Platonists had a deeper explanation of mathematical entities.²³

²¹ See James Grote, *Medieval Literacy* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2011), section on cosmology. There is a good deal of discussion about the intermediary stage (Barzakh) in Islamic philosophy. See Qaysari's introduction to Ibn Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam*, chap. 6.

²² See Émile Bréhier, "The Creation of the Eternal Truths in Descartes's System," in *Descartes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Willis Doney (London: Macmillan, 1968).

²³ See Gilson and Langan, *Modern Philosophy*, "Introduction."

Hume and Kant dealt a very severe blow to metaphysics, so a few words about what we consider to be blatant metaphysical blunders are in order, if we are eager to save metaphysics from being a name without a reality. According to Kant, no event has been more decisive to the fate of metaphysics than the criticisms of Hume, who called into question one important concept in metaphysics, that is, the connection between cause and effect. Kant claims that Hume asked by what right

something could be so constituted that, if it is posited, something else necessarily must thereby also be posited, for that is what the concept of cause says. He [Hume] indisputably proved that it is wholly impossible for reason to think such a connection *a priori* and from concepts because this connection contains necessity....From this he concluded that reason completely and fully deceives herself with this concept, falsely taking it for her own child, when it is really nothing but a bastard of imagination, which, impregnated by experience, and having brought certain representations under the law of association, passes off the resulting subjective necessity (i.e., habit) for an objective necessity (from insight). From which he concluded that reason has no power at all to think such connections.²⁴

In my view, both Hume and Kant are mistaken in their interpretation and evaluation of the function of reason and its significance to human knowledge. I have here no choice but to make very brief remarks as to what I consider to be their logical blunders.

(1) Hume is avowedly an empiricist, reducing all human cognition to sensory experience and rejecting the validity of reason. Now all judgments and all universal concepts can be apprehended by reason alone; senses can never grasp a universal nor do they have the right to pass a judgment – two functions which belong exclusively to the domain of reason. Now, to pass a judgment about causality or being *a priori* and *a posteriori* is solely within the jurisdiction of reason, and, if an empiricist like Hume is to explain them, he has no choice but to explain them away by reducing them to sensory phenomena. The senses as such perceive nothing of causality except contiguity in space and simultaneity in time and, internally, by a sort of association of ideas. Hume is not here self-consistent, because first all of these are judgments of reason and, moreover, they are not enough to explain causality because there are many simultaneous and contiguous events which we have been habituated to observe but which have no causal connection.

Moreover, Hume constantly makes deductive arguments, which as an empiricist he is not entitled to make and which moreover contradict his claims about causality. Kant, not being aware of Hume's surreptitious illogicalism, and rightly believing that his skepticism about causality could be

²⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 6-7.

extended and applied to all philosophical, metaphysical and even scientific propositions which claim universality and necessity, tried to find a way out of the dilemma; finally, he found it in his so-called transcendental philosophy. Now, to be brief, we can make the following remarks about Kant's proposed solutions.

(2) Kant's transcendental philosophy is based on his Copernican revolution in epistemology. This is a weak argument based on an argument from analogy which mostly leads to non-conclusive results. While, in astronomy, the Copernican revolution has been satisfactory, in epistemology, by changing the respective functions of the knower and the known (called the subject and the object of knowledge), knowledge is impossible.

(3) It is the function of theoretical reason "to know" and the function of practical reason "to act." It is very difficult to accept that theoretical reason cannot operate in its own proper sphere, but can function properly in the practical sphere – particularly given that all of Kant's discussions in all of the Critiques are theoretical. Moreover, in every disjunction, the term common between the disjuncts should have the same meaning, as when we say every number is either even or odd – which is not the case in Kant's application of reason.

(4) Kant labels his philosophy sometimes as "transcendental" and sometimes as "critical." But these two labels are contradictory, because criticism requires objectivity and because a transcendental reason, in Kant's phraseology can never criticize itself, because criticism demands that it should ponder over itself as an object, something impossible in Kant's transcendental scheme. In other words, a reason which can criticize itself by endeavoring to discover its bounds and limitations can never be transcendental in the Kantian sense.

(5) As we said, Hume, being a thoroughgoing empiricist, tried to reduce all judgments of reason to sensory experience and, consequently, he was not able, on his purely empiricist principles, to account for *a priori* and necessary propositions. Kant tried to find a solution for synthetic *a priori* propositions. Kant was quite right in classifying propositions into analytic and synthetic and the latter into *a priori* and *a posteriori* propositions. But he was not able to find the logical relation between the mentioned propositions. That is why he called all analytical propositions explicative and tautological, and all synthetic judgments expansive in the sense that they add something to our knowledge. But, logically speaking, we can never have *a priori* synthetic judgments without analytic propositions. To give an example in geometry: we define a triangle by saying that "a triangle is a geometrical figure having three sides." This definition is analytic and *a priori*, and its status as *a priori* depends on the definition and not on our minds; without this definition, we can have no other propositions about the triangle such as: "a triangle has three angles" or "the sum total of the angles of the triangle is equal to two right angles." These two latter propositions are synthetic *a priori*, but their validity depends upon the definition of the triangle, which is an analytic proposition. All problems of the apodictic sciences should be both

synthetic and *a priori*; to prove something for something means that they should be conceptually different, and to prove apodictically, that is necessarily and universally, means that they should be *a priori*. But for Kant, not all the propositions of an apodictic science can be synthetic *a priori*, or else there would ensue an infinite regress, to avoid which, at least one or some analytic propositions are necessary.

(6) Both Kant and Hume are mistaken about the nature of judgments and propositions. A judgment is true when it is identical with its referent. As Aristotle has analyzed, it is because you are sitting that I say you are sitting, and not the other way around. For knowledge to be true, it is necessary that the knower (subject) should know the object as it is. Many a time we waver in a decision or judgment, and it is an experiment (the object of knowledge and not the subject) which decides the case. To transfer the categories of being to subjective categories in the mind would turn knowledge into ignorance. If the categories were purely subjective, they would not be knowable.

Conclusion

(1) Metaphysics has become, in our modern age, a name without reality. To rehabilitate it we should go back, first, to metaphysics with a name and, then, to metaphysics as a reality without a name.

(2) Metaphysics without a name existed among the pre-Peripatetics and still exists, especially in oriental cultures. Therefore, in our global age, acquaintance with oriental metaphysics would be salutary to metaphysics.

(3) Islamic philosophy, being the true inheritor of both Greek *sophia* and oriental and revelatory wisdom has been successful in bridging the gap between the first two types of metaphysics, and it can be very fruitful for solving many paradoxes encountered in Western metaphysics.

Metaphysics as the Way from Phenomenology to Theology

Olivia Blanchette

It used to be that metaphysics was the only way of doing philosophy on the way to theology of any kind, rational or faith-based. Short of metaphysics, science, philosophy of nature, and even logic, epistemology and philosophy of science remained confined to the immanent order of nature and reason, without reference to anything that transcends the order of being that we experience. Now, however, it seems that phenomenology is not only moving into a place of dominance of its own – relative to the other particular sciences in the order of immanence – but is also about to replace, or has replaced, metaphysics as the only legitimate way of doing philosophy on the way to a theology of the Transcendent.

This shift away from metaphysics and toward phenomenology goes back to the early 19th century. It can be traced back, in the first instance, to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (or of Absolute Knowing in its appearing), which responded to the untenable presuppositions of agnostic critical philosophy. At the turn of the 20th century, Husserl further promoted the turn toward phenomenology as a response to the crisis of the sciences in their modern form. This turn had a marked influence, not just on Heidegger but also on much of French philosophy, including on Lévinas' idea of ethics as first philosophy, as a way of moving beyond the crisis of modern science and to transcend its confinement to some subordinate order of purely natural or historical phenomena.

I do not claim to be an expert on how all this has come to be in phenomenology, nor on all that is currently going on in phenomenology, especially in what has been termed the “theological turn” in French phenomenology that has been brought into question by phenomenologists who are opposed to any such turn as alien and alienating to phenomenology. But I would like to argue that there remains room for metaphysics as a necessary component for any transition from phenomenological discourse to theological discourse. Such necessity cannot be met critically except by stepping out of phenomenology, and stepping into metaphysics as a higher kind of scientific knowing that is neither merely immanent nor merely historical, let alone merely natural or rational, in its scope. Instead, it is systematically open, not only to God as transcendent Creator, but also to whatever this Being may offer to the universe of rational beings, as an added gift to that of Creation of such a systematically open rational universe to begin with, such as the gift that St. Paul speaks of in Colossians 1: 15-20:

...the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

To make the case for the necessity of metaphysics over and above phenomenology, with the aim of creating a properly theological discourse of a totally transcendent Principle and End of all that exists, I shall proceed in three steps.

First, I shall argue that, in order for us to come to the scientific question of whether there is a God as totally transcendent first and most universal cause of the entire order of being as we know it from experience, we have to have come to an end of all the particular sciences and to the questioning we have with regard to the universe as we know it in all these particular sciences, and to have on hand the results of those particular investigations about the different orders of being in the universe, including those of phenomenology, in order to raise the further question of a First and Most Universal Cause, which cannot be raised in any particular science, as Aristotle supposed at the beginning of his own metaphysical discourse in search of the first and most universal causes that remained to be investigated, long before he could come to any answer as to the question of God at the end of his discourse, and even before he was able to indicate being as being, not God, as the subject of inquiry for that discourse on the First and Most Universal Cause of all things natural and historical we know of in all the particular sciences, theoretical and practical.

Second, I shall indicate where I think phenomenology takes its stand in this constellation of the particular sciences and among the particular orders of being we find in the universe – not to tear phenomenology down, but to boost it up to its proper stance as transcending the lower order of the empirical and statistical sciences, though still in a particular order or in a series of particular orders, to which it tends to reduce the universal order of being, as we see, not just in Heidegger with his idea of *Sein* as finite and as *menschliches*, but also in J-L Marion with his idea of “God without being,” not to mention Hegel’s idea of a World Spirit taking shape in different National Spirits in World History without reference to anything truly Divine or totally Transcendent.

Third, I shall argue briefly for a certain necessity of robust immanence in phenomenological discourse as a preamble, not to theology directly, but rather to metaphysics, which alone stands as a direct preamble to theology of any kind, whether rational or faith-based, natural or supernatural. Even

though metaphysics is irreducible to phenomenology, it still requires some phenomenology of history or of culture, or some philosophy of nature, to go from the third-person mechanistic or atomist forms of natural science to the more first-person humanistic forms of socio-historical science or phenomenology.

Here I would cite Maurice Blondel as an excellent example of one using a phenomenology of action as a necessary preamble for raising the question of the Necessary Being of Action, and even of a hypothetically necessary supernatural gift, at the very heart of the human willing and being, where one's eternal destiny is at stake, and as an example for conceiving the order of the universe as twofold – one order being natural to things as created and the other being supernatural as an elevation to a higher order of being, willing and knowing; one order being rational and historical and the other being supra-rational and eternal – each distinct in itself and heterogeneous to the other, where the human and the divine unite, without confusion and without reduction of either one to the other, through a humanization of the divine in view of a divinization of the human, thanks to the clear affirmation of a totally transcendent Being who remains totally transcendent, and therefore totally mysterious to reason, even in becoming part of the human historical phenomenon, affirmed by St. Paul in the letter to the Colossians, cited above.

Metaphysics as Necessary Preamble to Theology

Let me begin by clarifying in what sense I speak of theological discourse here. I think of theology as having to do with God as totally Transcendent and totally Simple in his Transcendence and Perfection, transcendent to not only one particular order of being or another, but to the entire order of being as a whole, or as being, and as remaining totally transcendent even when God chooses to enter into this historico-social order in a new or supernatural way with its exigencies of its own for all those who are caught up in this universal movement of the created order as spoken of in Colossians 1. Even when there is incarnation of the divine in something created, the incarnate God remains totally transcendent and simple, so that what God is in God's self and what God is doing in the world as God, remains not only beyond our understanding, but also beyond our capacity to understand, even though God is the principle of light for all understanding, as can be and was demonstrated in metaphysics by St. Augustine as well as by Aquinas and Blondel.

This is not to say that there is no understanding in theology. We have entire *Summas* of theology that exhibit understanding of the highest kind with regard to God and to Creation and to Incarnation of the divine, but such understanding is derived from what are called articles of faith in religion or from some metaphysical understanding of the universe as a whole and from an understanding of different orders of being in the universe, es-

pecially the human order, which I shall refer to as the historico-social order we know concretely in our experience.

Proceeding from articles of faith alone as ikons in a purely extrinsic and dogmatic fashion, just repeating ancient formulae, will not take us very far in understanding anything about God and God's action in the universe. Nor will proceeding from particular empirical sciences such as physics, biology or economics help us much directly in understanding God in God's total transcendence or as lending a providential hand to the initiatives of our historical consciousness. Without metaphysics to bring these two orders of understanding and insight together in a single, total order of questioning and understanding, there will be only disparity, lack of understanding, reductionism to only one form of understanding or another with contempt for every other form. If there is going to be any reconciliation of the different understandings that come from religious articles of faith and from particular empirical and social sciences, there has to be a metaphysics that takes the entire universal order of being as being as its subject in order to demonstrate the total transcendence of God, and to show how the immanent order of the universe can be coordinated with a totally transcendent presence of the divine in the human order, where phenomenology has its say, not about the divine hidden to it in history, but about how the human is or may be affected by the divine order that reveals itself in human communities.

Now my reason for insistence on metaphysics as necessary for bringing these two types of consideration together in the elaboration of a theology that takes in the created universe along with God as totally transcendent, as I have said before, is that we cannot come to any understanding of total transcendence except in relation to our understanding of the order of being or of the universe as a whole, as we see, for example, in the 'five ways' that Aquinas adumbrates for proving the proposition that God is and in his follow-up of these 'five ways' in the argument for the total Simplicity of this God in God's Perfection. The few short lines Aquinas devotes to these two questions at the beginning of his *Summa Theologiae* say a lot about the necessity of metaphysics to get to the understanding of the theology that follows from this necessary metaphysical introduction. Without metaphysics, none of the questions that Aquinas self-consciously indulges in, much as phenomenologists do, would make sense as theology if there were not this mediation of metaphysics that runs through the entire *Summa*, including the Third Part, which is about the Incarnation of the totally transcendent Son and the sending of the totally transcending Spirit, co-creators and redeemers of the universe with the Father.

The question that arises for me, then, is whether phenomenology can carry such a burden for rising to the question of total transcendence and for operating within that rarefied realm that is both natural and supernatural in the real order of history as well as in the hereafter. There have been many phenomenologists who have not only failed to carry this burden, but who also have refused to shoulder any such burden, not to mention those that have gotten stuck in a kind of reductionist and atheistic phenomenology that

allows for questioning and understanding only in phenomenology, and not in any other science, natural or supernatural, rational or faith-based.

Heidegger is perhaps the most prominent and most influential example for many of these shortcomings of phenomenology with regard to the question of being that remains as the task at the end of philosophy. Coming out of a Scotist medieval background, where being as being or as a whole was still in the forefront of philosophical questioning, he turned to phenomenology as the only way of approaching or conceiving the question. After announcing the ambitious project of a systematic philosophy of being at the beginning of *Sein und Zeit*, he turned to a phenomenology of *Dasein* that took him a long way into a philosophy of being, but only as conceived by man, who is the only one to raise the question of being. The systematic sequel that was to follow after this initial phenomenology of *Dasein*, never came. The only being Heidegger got to was his own being, or the being of man in the world, hence finite being, beyond which there was no further question, no *Dasein Gottes* over and above the *menschliches Dasein*. The only way the question of God could be interpreted in his phenomenology was as a question of onto-theology, without any thought that the dash (i.e., ‘-’) between ‘onto’ and ‘theology’ might entail some rational distinction and connection of dependence between the two. Heidegger was unable to read the metaphysical tradition he tried so hard to destroy, because he was phenomenologically mired in a conception of being that could not be anything but human and finite, from which no twist and turn in his later philosophy could free him.

Now that may have been good phenomenology on the part of Heidegger, but it was not metaphysics, a metaphysics that had answers to questions being raised about the entire order of being and about what I call the analogy of being that we have to think of in that entire order. Heidegger may have been right in giving human being or *Dasein* priority in his treatment of being, but that priority cannot be exclusive of other orders of being, some lower and some higher. Even if we take human being as the primary analogate of being in our experience, as I do in my own book in metaphysics,¹ it is not the only kind of being that a metaphysical investigation has to take into consideration. There are lower kinds of being that we have to take into consideration as being, and there may be higher orders of being as well, different orders of spirit or culture, that could lead us to a consideration of some totally transcendent First or Highest, or the One, as conceived in Neo-Platonism, for example.

I may not be doing justice to Heidegger and his philosophy in all of this, but it is important to understand that, as good as he was in phenomenology, he was not good in the kind of philosophy that lends itself to the analogy of being and ultimately to theology, or in a metaphysics geared to an analogy serving as the necessary transition from philosophy into theolo-

¹ Oliva Blanchette, *Philosophy of Being: A Reconstructive Essay in Metaphysics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2003).

gy, and again, conversely, from theology into philosophy as *fides quaerens intellectum*, in the case of a *Menschwerdung* of the Divine, who remains totally transcendent as It elevates the phenomenologically human.

Along with Heidegger, I would also cite two other excellent phenomenologists, who have done exemplary work in phenomenology and who have systematically excluded any question of God from their scientific work: Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Dominique Janicaud, phenomenologists for whom the question of God simply does not occur, and one might say cannot occur in any such phenomenology of human existence. These are not militant atheists. Nor is Emmanuel Lévinas, in his positing of ‘ethics’ as first philosophy. They are systematic philosophers of human existence, but only of human existence. They were the shining lights in French phenomenology when I first started studying philosophy, including metaphysics, in Louvain in the 1950’s, and they were hardly the kind of philosophers that theologians were likely to cite in order to shed light on their own approach to questions of human existence. In those days there was only silence about God at the Collège de France, not a word about God or about the human being’s relation to God from Merleau-Ponty, who was taking phenomenology all over the world.

Since then, after would-be phenomenologists started turning toward God, Janicaud did not cease chiding anyone in phenomenology for taking this “theological turn,” questioning always whether there can be such a turn in phenomenology. My question here is whether there can be such a turn in phenomenology without transcending everything that phenomenology can take into consideration, without turning first to metaphysics and considering the necessity for a totally transcendent Being for the entire order of being as we know it in the universe.

Phenomenology is concerned with all that the rational animal is able or capable of, to use the expression of Paul Ricoeur, another phenomenologist well worth consulting in our debate. It shows all that the rational animal is capable of in its transcendence of the world as given in our existential situation. But it does not show all that the rational animal aspires to in its transcendence of the merely given, the kind of equality it is seeking in its infinite power of willing and knowing and saying that cannot be found in itself, let alone in any other object it is capable of willing and knowing and saying in the world. Whenever human willing and knowing and saying settles on a finite object, or even on itself, as equal to its power of willing and knowing and saying, it lapses into superstition or idolatry of one kind or another, by taking something out of the series of things it has to contend with, and making it the end all and be all of its aspiration. The only way to avoid this aberration that can take the shape of as many ikons as human ingenuity can fabricate in the wide diversity of its endeavors, is by a total reversal of perspective, starting from the affirmation of a totally Transcendent Being and taking all its cues from the Being so affirmed at the end of metaphysics.

Is the absence of such a turn at the end of phenomenology endemic to it as a science, so that it will never be able to make the turn legitimately and

rationally, or is it just a matter of time before phenomenology breaks through this final veil that remains for it and that holds it back from taking any metaphysical turn whatsoever? Answering this question will depend on how we conceive the different sciences, how these sciences relate to the universal question of being as being, and how the universal question itself relates to the particular sciences, which, as sciences, are sciences of being, including for us here, the all-important science of phenomenology.

Phenomenology as Particular Science of Human Being in the World

We should first take for granted that phenomenology is a science, not in the narrow sense usually allowed for the use of this word with reference only to the empirical sciences, the reductionist sense that all phenomenology rightly tries to get away from, but in a much more open sense, which it tries to get into systematically and scientifically as the subject of a more critical examination that both surpasses and transcends anything defined as the subject of empirical or statistical science in experience. A complete technical elaboration of this would take us too far afield here, but it is clear that any phenomenologist worthy of the name makes some such presupposition of openness concerning his or her subject of inquiry – whether it be Hegel in his “science of experience,” Blondel in his “phenomenology of action,” Husserl in his idea of ‘Phenomenology *als strenge Wissenschaft*,’ or Merleau-Ponty in his “phenomenology of perception” – and many others who have followed along this line of reasoning on human experience as a whole.

What I take to be common to all these practitioners of phenomenology here is the idea that their subject is the human itself as being in the world and the world itself as that which the human itself refers to in defining itself as being in the world. In phenomenology, there is no consideration of the human apart from its being in the world, and no consideration of the world apart from its being the world of human beings. All of this together constitutes an order of being that, as metaphysicians, we can focus on as a particular order of being, distinct from other orders of being, such as one in which there are no humans, or a world in which there is no rational consciousness. The point here is not to start fantasizing about what such orders of being or such possible worlds might be apart from the world we actually know with ourselves in it, but rather to see how closely bound together are the conception of self and the conception of a world – or what Merleau-Ponty speaks of as the perceiving subject and the perceived object. For it is in this unity of consciousness and world, or of perceiving subject and perceived object, that phenomenology takes shape as a science.

It is also in this unity of consciousness and world that phenomenology begins to open the way to a further transcendence, and to relate itself to metaphysics or to Being as the subject of metaphysics. This is where the plot thickens quite considerably concerning the way that phenomenology and metaphysics relate to one another on this side of theology. Not all phe-

nomenologists are opposed to the idea of an ontology underlying the world of objects as determined in phenomenological science. Some talk of an ontology here, in phenomenological science, in much the same way as analytical philosophers talk of different ontologies underlying the different empirical sciences, such as physical science, chemical science, or psychological science, each one with an ontology of its own, ranging from a purely 'third person' ontology to a 'first person' ontology.

In this view, for every distinct shape of consciousness as science there is an ontology, an underlying conception of being that grounds each particular science absolutely, even if that ground is not known as such in the science it grounds. I take this to be an oversimplified view of both particular sciences and of the subject that specifies them as particular sciences in a broad sweep of consciousness running through the world as a whole, each piece taken neatly and abstractly in isolation from every other, in the absence of analogy ordering them in relation to one another and to a first or primary analogate. We could call this kind of phenomenology a sort of dogmatic ontology, something like the dogmatic metaphysics Kant found in Christian Wolff, and dismissed as critical science of any kind. But this is not the kind of phenomenology I wish to speak of as relating to metaphysics, as if there were some ontological presence we could peer into directly in our experience, whether that of lifeless objects or that of selves.

The kind of phenomenology I have in mind is one that is much more critical as a science, that raises much more fundamental questions about human experience, and that is much more radical in its elaboration of a theory of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, as well as one of objectivity, one that holds the question of being in suspense, puts it in parentheses (as we are told at times), while it examines the very essence of things themselves along with the very essence of consciousness of those very things. Holding the question of existence or of being in suspense, as is done in phenomenology, is an important part of any particular science for bringing out the fullness of an object in its essence and for keeping that essence in its context with all the other essences that make up its world. In fact, we could say that, putting the question of existence into parentheses for the essences it considers, enables phenomenology to transcend the naïve ontologies of the empirical sciences that we spoke of earlier, and to enter into a realm of science that it could not otherwise – a realm that some may be too quick to identify as metaphysics, but that nonetheless is really transcendent with respect to the empirical and statistical sciences and to their way of conceiving objects.

We see here the reason why the realm of phenomenology should not and cannot be identified simply with the realm of metaphysics on our side of theology. No matter how transcendent phenomenology may be with respect to our immediate experience of the world, it can never be anything but a particular science, having to do with a particular order of being, essentially that of the rational animal in its world. Aristotle had a very simple expression for this entire realm: the quiddity of sensible things, of which the rational animal was an essential part, no matter how open and how trans-

endent that order might be conceived. We have seen why, even conceived in this way, as open and transcendent, the human realm of consciousness and world cannot be made the equal of what is necessary to bring us to the idea of the totally transcendent Being we aspire to in our infinite power of willing and knowing. But we also have to keep in mind that any attempt to make anything in the human realm equal to the totally transcendent realm of the Divine will result, not in a stronger affirmation of the divine in its Transcendence, as some phenomenologists would have us think, but in what Blondel has shown to be a mere superstition at the heart of human consciousness endeavoring and satisfied to assert itself in the world as absolute. The metaphysical question of the fullness of Goodness and Truth for the worldly rational consciousness comes only after phenomenology has reached its culmination.

The transcendence of phenomenology is not the transcendence we associate with what has been spoken of as the “theological turn” or with what I am calling total transcendence here. It is the transcendence of the human or the rational order over the merely natural, the transcendence of the historical order constituted by human initiatives in the world, which is only one order of being in the universe, relative to other orders of being in the universe, some lower and some possibly higher, and therefore transcendent relative to any conceivable human order in the universe. The universal order of being in the universe is not reducible to the anthropological or the historico-social order, even when we take the human being as our primary analogate of being. Theology cannot be reduced to anthropology of any kind or to any other form of natural science. The totally Transcendent it starts from remains totally transcendent with regard to any exercise of human willing, knowing, and saying, even when it lends itself to this exercise of willing, knowing, and saying, and when it chooses to present itself in the human form, as Christians believe when they say that Jesus is the Lord. This faith in Jesus as the Lord is not a warrant for making of Him a worldly idol or ikon, something still merely human or of this world. It is an acknowledgement of a new transformative presence of the Divine already at work in the world, still and ever something to be wondered at, more than to be taken over by any human power of willing, knowing and saying.

Phenomenology as Necessary Preamble to Metaphysics

Does this mean that phenomenology has no place in the ascent of the particular sciences from the lower orders of being to the higher orders of being that we speak of as spiritual? Not so at all, for a non-reductionist metaphysics takes the rational animal or the human being as its primary analogate, rather than what are called “the basic entities and processes of mathematical physics”² by physicalists who take them as their primary analogate of being and take human beings as lesser beings rather than as higher kinds

² Cf. John Post, as cited in Blanchette, *Philosophy of Being*, 133.

of being. Phenomenology has everything to do with overcoming this sort of reductionist metaphysics and with establishing the priority of the spiritual character of self-consciousness and culture as a higher order of being – even when it is embedded in the material from which we start in our rise to higher forms of existence. In this respect, phenomenology represents an enormous step forward and upward in the way of transcendence, even as it limits itself to the human order of being. Without expansion of scientific enquiry into the realm of the human and the rational as such, there could be no metaphysics of being as being to cap the realm of all the particular sciences of being, going from the physico-chemical to the living, and from the sentient all the way up to the rational and intellectual, including the realm of phenomenology itself.

Even in the key role that it has to play in the elaboration of rational consciousness and its world, however, phenomenology remains a particular science, at least in the sense that it has to do only with a particular order of being, that of the rational animal in its world. It opens the way for metaphysics, but it does not and cannot become metaphysics itself, which is a kind of science different from the other particular sciences and which is the only one to bring us to the question of a total transcendence of a first and most universal Cause of being as being. If there is a theological turn to be taken in human science, that is where it is to be taken and only there, where God is taken to be the Principle and the End of the entire order of being, including the robust immanence of the rational consciousness and its world.

Theological discourse is a science that proceeds from what we know of God either rationally by demonstration or by faith in a revelation from God. It proceeds from the top down, once a metaphysical stand has been taken about God regarding God's total transcendence. Phenomenology can only be part of the way up from the bottom, even if and when it serves as a handmaiden to metaphysics and natural theology, as in the treatise on human consciousness or the treatise on virtue and law in Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. It is not phenomenology that turns itself around into theology. It is theology and metaphysics that turn phenomenology around to elucidate how God presents Himself to human consciousness in the world.

Beauty, Pleasure, Perfection: On the Theological Constitution of Consciousness

John Panteleimon Manoussakis

In this paper, I offer a phenomenological retrieval of the metaphysical tradition that understands the mind's own capacities as traces of a divine transcendence (such as with St. Augustine and the *vestigia dei*), making the human mind *capax dei*. The principle lying herein is that of an analogy between the divine *Logos* and His reflection and dispersion in humanity's *logoi* (e.g., the Dionysian tradition that culminates in St Thomas Aquinas and the *analogia entis*). Even modernity echoes this tradition, where the concept of infinity functions as a dim yet certain figuration of the existence of an infinite God (see Descartes' *Third Meditation*). What could phenomenology contribute, liberated as it claims to be from any metaphysical allegiances, vis-à-vis the philosophical tradition sketched here? In the discussion that follows, I attempt an analysis of the phenomena of beauty, pleasure, and perfection, and claim that their phenomenological consideration demonstrates them as portals that open up the being of consciousness towards transcendence.

The Beautiful as a Call from the Future

In the first formulation of his own "broadening" of the phenomenological reduction, Jean-Luc Marion discovers a horizon more essential than, and thus anterior to, transcendental consciousness (Husserl) and being (Heidegger). What constitutes phenomena and, by extension, what constitutes the self as the recipient of these phenomena, is neither the intending character of consciousness paired with the phenomenon's intuition, nor is it the opening of Dasein to the nothingness of Being disclosed by anxiety and boredom, but rather the claim addressed to me by "the pure form of the call." Thus, Marion writes "that which gives itself gives itself only to the one who gives himself over to the call and only in the pure form of a confirmation of the call, which is repeated because received."¹ Marion's discussion of the call is indebted to Heidegger's analysis of the character of conscience as a call that calls Dasein to itself, a call that "comes from me yet it calls from beyond me," as section 57 of *Being and Time* famously states. Yet, Marion radicalizes Heidegger's analysis by emphasizing that the very

¹ Jean-Luc Marion, *Reduction and Givenness*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), 197-198.

receptivity of the call is constitutive of a subject without subjectivity (for it is neither a being nor a consciousness). It should be noted that the subject does not even exist prior to the call, for “giving himself over to the call” means, first and foremost, to “be given a self by the call.” The self that gives himself over to the call does not have even himself; in order, then, to give himself over to the call he has to be given that self. In fact, this is not to be understood as a sequence, logical or chronological: the self is not first given in order to be later given up, but rather the self is given as much and insofar as it is given up. For the self too, or rather the self above all, must be given.

Indeed, the gifted (*l'adonné*) is called to existence as a response to a call (*l'interloqué*) that calls it to being. “Thus is born the gifted,” writes Marion, “whom the call makes the successor to the ‘subject,’ as what receives itself entirely from what it receives.”² The summon of the call, the resulting surprise, the call itself, and its truth – the fourfold of the phenomenology of givenness – collectively imply a self that is given to oneself by an origin that precedes and predates it and, at the same time, imply the paradox of a self who, in receiving itself, precedes also and predates itself.

The call, exemplifying what is known as an inverse intentionality, summons me to myself. It summons me, neither to a diluted subjectivity where no particularity can be detected, nor to the ontological uniformity of one-size-fits-all, but rather to myself, that is, to the irreducible, irreplaceable specificity of my thisness. “The passage from the nominative [of the subject] to the objective cases (accusative, dative),” Marion notes, “inverts the hierarchy of the metaphysical categories.” But how? And what may be the implications of such an inversion? Is the project of Marion’s reduction based only on a grammatical whim? Certainly not. What is at stake here is by far more radical than any Copernican revolution. Marion explains it in what, in our opinion, might be the most far-reaching claim of his phenomenology: “Individualized essence (*ousia prote*) no longer precedes relation (*pros ti*) and no longer excludes it from its ontic perfection. In contrast, relation here precedes individuality” and, as he adds a few sentences later, it results from it.³

Similar to Dionysius’ *Divine Names*, we could say that the self is like a name. A self is given as a name is given, and is never assumed by an individual. I cannot name myself unless the Other first gives me my name – my parents after my birth, the priest in my baptism, the abbot in my tonsure – thus, giving my ‘self’ to myself. In the absence of others there is neither a name, nor is there a self. To be given a name indicates one’s beginning. In my naming, I acknowledge that I am generated, derived, and dependent; the fact that I have a name by which the Other can call me implies that the Other has laid a claim over me, that I belong not to myself but to the Other from

² Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given*, trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 268.

³ Marion, *Being Given*, 268.

whom I received not only my name – my name, after all, is a constant confession of this debt – but also my self. A name is always given and therefore it can be never a proper name – for my name does not belong to me, not only insofar as it is given to me, but also insofar as it has named others before me and will name others after me. However, “in this way, the baptismal given name, the ‘proper’ name par excellence, results from a call (one calls me with the name of such a saint) because, more essentially, this name constitutes a call in itself – I would not be called simply *by* this name, but indeed *to* this name.”⁴

But, the foregoing analysis of the call might be misleading. That is, it might give the false impression that the call is restricted to the category of religious or ethical phenomena, for instance, the “call of conscience” or vocation as a “calling.” Against this assumption, we must emphasize that the call is above all a property of the *visible* or, better yet, is most noticeable as the visible. By this I mean not that everything that appears to us is the call, but rather that whatever appears (from everyday things, like chairs and books, to ideas, emotions, and states of things) appears because it addresses a call to us. A silent face in a café, a painting in a museum, an exam that I need to take, all of these appear by means of a certain call, a call to which I can respond in different ways. The call is not only what calls our attention but also what fails to do so, the unnoticed and the unnoticeable; the call is not only the pleasing or the interesting but also what one finds unpleasant or boring. Therefore, to identify the call with the beautiful becomes all the more a paradox.

Of course, since Kant, the beautiful is not to be identified with pleasure – and von Balthasar does not hesitate to take even ugliness as a manifestation of God’s glory (the unsurpassable example of such paradox is, of course, the cross) – but what does it mean to say that the call is the beautiful? Indeed, what else can the beautiful be than what calls? And, how else is one to understand the ability of the call to call if not by means of beauty? Language tells us that much when it indicates that the derivation of “the beautiful” (*to kalon*) comes from the verb “to call” (*kaleo, kalein*). Naturally, if we understand beauty as symmetry or proportion, as harmony of color or sound, it would be difficult, indeed impossible, to explain the universality of the beautiful as the call that calls through the visible, even when it is not a question of harmony or symmetry. These “scientific” explanations, as Socrates somewhat scornfully calls them in the *Phaedo*, are descriptive at best of the ways in which beauty is perceived, that is, they explain only the “mechanics” of the aesthetic phenomenon, but fail to answer why we call something beautiful or, worse, fail to answer what beauty is in itself. Plato, therefore, rejects such explanations as insufficient and confusing, Kant rejects them as threatening beauty’s universality, and phenomenology rejects them as imposing limitations that are inadmissible within the reduction.

⁴ Marion, *Being Given*, 292.

The only two answers to the question of beauty that merit some consideration are those given to us by Plato in his *Phaedo* and Kant in his *Critique of Judgment*. For Plato, “what is beautiful is beautiful by the beautiful” (*Phaedo* 100d, 7-8). Of course, this statement needs unpacking. In this answer to the question of beauty, Plato invokes the theory of forms. Anything called ‘beautiful’ inheres in the form of beauty; the form of beauty is that by which anything becomes beautiful. This implies that what makes something beautiful is not so in itself, that is, the source of beauty comes from beyond, and is other than the beautiful that is perceived.

Surprisingly, Kant gives a very similar answer when he refuses to assign beauty as the property of a thing.⁵ For him, too, beauty is external and a sign of exteriority. Both Plato and Kant seem to converge on another point: that beauty is teleological. It is needless to rehearse here the movements of Kantian teleology – suffice to say that it is solely the teleological character of the beautiful that maintains the coherence of an otherwise disparate *Critique*, divided, as it is, between aesthetic and teleological judgments. To see a similar notion in Plato’s treatment of the beautiful, we need to remind ourselves of the context within which he discusses beauty: it is the famous episode where Socrates gives a brief account of his philosophical autobiography and, in particular, of his encounter with Anaxagoras’ teleology. Socrates believes that, in Anaxagoras, he has found the only tenable answer as to the cause of things, that is, *perfection* (“for if one wished to know the cause of each thing...one had only to find what was best for it” 97c). His later disillusionment with Anaxagoras leads him to the famous “second sailing” that consists of an investigation into the *logoi* of things, which consists of their final causes. (Thus, every form for Plato ought to be understood as a final cause.) In the rest of the dialogue, Plato singles out one particular form – the form of beauty – which, by calling everything to itself, makes beautiful everything that heeds its call.

Dionysius (the Pseudo-Areopagite) occupies a position between Plato and Kant. His beautiful is no longer as impersonal as Plato’s form, nor has it been yet depersonalized as Kant’s *a priori* idea of purposiveness. For Dionysius, the beautiful is God Himself:

The beautiful [*kalon*] that is beyond all being is called beautiful [*kallos*] on account of its own beauty that it transmits to each and every thing and for being accountable for the harmony and brilliance of all as the light that shines to everything its radiating rays and for calling [*kaloun*] everything to itself and gathering everything and in every respect, for which reason it has been called beautiful [*kallos*].⁶

⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 62, 64 and 221.

⁶ *On the Divine Names*, IV 7, 701C.

Therefore, if the beautiful is recognized as beautiful, it is because it renders itself visible (i.e., it “calls” to itself) and, by the same token, what is visible – what appears in appearance and by appearing “calls” to itself – is only the beautiful. Dionysius’s passage distinguishes between these two (simultaneous) movements clearly: the beautiful radiates “like the light” – thus it renders everything visible, indeed it is the condition of visibility – but it also recollects everything to itself, now strictly in its capacity as the “beautiful,” that is, as a call from the future.

It is this double movement of the beautiful/visible that Marion’s phenomenology of saturation retrieves. What these phenomena are saturated with is the excess of the givenness of the phenomenon itself – it is an excess of intuition, a surplus of information, we would say, that saturates them. This, however, does not mean that we have to look far for saturated phenomena and not, for sure, among the exotic, the extraordinary, and perhaps the bizarre. Saturated phenomena are not a special group of phenomena, but every phenomenon when seen without the protective glasses of regulatory concepts and preconceived intentionalities. Every phenomenon is inexhaustible – there is no viewing of a painting that is ever final, as there is no performance of a composition that is definitive. There is no event that can be transfixed into a single interpretation and, above all, there is no Other that would fit comfortably in one of my categories. We now understand that saturation is complemented by and, indeed, results in some kind of negation (negative theology). The task of the phenomenologist to abundant givenness is similar to the theologian to divine names: never-ending, or, as one could say after Gregory of Nyssa, *epectatic*. Everything always gives more than one can receive – it is this generosity of phenomena that necessitates revision, repetition, interpretation and, finally, what gives rise to philosophy itself, wonder. This fecundity of intuition surrounds every phenomenon as if it were a halo of excessive visibility – a metaphor often evoked by Husserl himself in his *Ideas* – a mandorla of light, that transforms phenomena or, better yet, renders them visible. For, phenomenologically speaking, in order to see what is seen, one must also “see” what one cannot see, what remains unseen and, as such, shows the visible. There is no doubt that the theme of the abundance and irreducibility of donation, as well as the chiasmic intertwining of the visible and the invisible, bear strong affinities with a theological worldview. For, ultimately, the phenomenon of revelation conditions the revelation of the phenomena.

Perfection

If, indeed, only the end (in the double sense of *telos* as finality and purposiveness) makes things perfect (*teleia*), then purpose keeps reminding us of such perfection amidst incompleteness and imperfection. It is as if the human mind were made in such a way as to understand only the perfect and the complete. For even if this is lacking in the present state of things, *and it can only be lacking*, then the mind feels compelled to supply it by itself.

Memory and anticipation are both mediums of “idealization,” that is, of bestowing perfection upon the thing remembered or expected that, once presented, the thing lacks. Hence, we have the disenchantment that follows every realized expectation.

As Husserl observes, the perception of any physical thing, that is, any perception in space, “involves a certain *inadequacy*.”⁷ In other words, what I see is necessarily partial, for I can never fully grasp what I see, from every single angle and every possible manner, of an object that can show itself to me. This partiality or imperfection, endemic to perception itself, is a limitation necessitated by restrictions imposed on both me, the perceiver, and the object of my perception, on account of our respective embodiments. However, the same imperfection perpetuates a series of inexhaustible possible perceptions “which can always be continued” and “which are never completed.”⁸ This characteristic alone is enough to become the criterion by which we can distinguish between two kinds of beings: being as a physical thing, and being as an act of consciousness (for example, the distinction between the perception of a thing and the consciousness of that perception). The former is always given through a multiplicity of adumbrations, the latter can never be perceived adumbrated.

Yet, even if the act of perception can never be completed, what is perceived cannot but be comprehended *as if* it were complete. For I never see the book that lies on my desk as the one-sided, two-dimensional patch of blue color on my visual field – *that* would amount to not seeing the book at all – but as an object, in which all its characteristics, properties, and angles are somehow presented in a unified way, such that my gazing alone can never discover, and not of any shortcoming on its account, but precisely because at no given instant, at no given perception, could any object be so presented. From where does such completeness come? The answer can only be: from consciousness itself.

As Heidegger points out, “When I perceive simply, moving about in my environmental world, when I see houses, for example, I do not first see houses primarily and expressly in their individuation, in their distinctiveness [and thus, in their incompleteness]. Rather, I first see universally: this is a house.”⁹ What Heidegger alludes to here is the eidetic intuition of “the essence of any empirically possible or impossible house” that is given together with the intuition of that particular house in front of me. In reference to this passage, Marion explains: “I see *the* house, *as* house, before seeing (and in order to see) *a* house; or rather, the *as* of the house precedes a particular house and allows it to appear as such.”¹⁰ Indeed, intuition always gives

⁷ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book*, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982), 94.

⁸ Husserl, *Ideas*, 91.

⁹ Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 66-67.

¹⁰ Marion, *Reduction and Givenness*, 14.

more than one suspects – for it presents us the world in at least *two ways*: in its particularity and in its universality, and in its particularity *through* its universality. When I perceive, then, what I see is never the particular thing in itself, but the thing in its eidetic horizon without which that thing in itself would be, strictly speaking, invisible. What allows things to appear as the things they are is the surplus of such eidetic intuition, an intuition that regards their *eidōs*. Yet such a regard is not a gaze upward, as it supposedly was for the Platonic philosopher in search of his forms, but a gaze forward to the eschatological perfection of things. The *eidōs* of a thing is the thing as given within a horizon of perfection and completion, that is, a state that a thing can have only at the end when completed and perfected. We read in St Augustine:

True equality and similitude, true and primal unity, are not perceived by the eye of flesh or by any bodily sense, but are known by the mind. How is equality of any kind demanded in bodies, and how are we convinced that any equality that may be seen there is far different from perfect equality, unless the mind sees that which is perfect? If indeed that which is not made [*facta*] can be called perfect [*perfecta*].¹¹

A little more needs to be said to explain the role of temporality. Even though it has been implicit throughout the foregoing analysis, it has not yet been thematized as such. The very notion of perfection implies, on its most basic, etymological level, a terminus or a *telos* reached over a period of time and by means of such time (*per-factum*), and, thus, *finished*. Perfection is a category of the end-of-time. To say this does not necessary imply an absolute, “end of times” (in plural) scenario, although all teleologies draw their meaning from within such an eschatological scheme. It simply means that perfection as a finishing that has been now finished cannot be searched for at the beginning. No beginning *qua* beginning can be perfect. Perfection is inseparably connected to the notion of time and, more particularly, to time as time passed. To the phenomenological eye, perfection is not presented by the things themselves – which, as we have seen, are always and necessarily given through inexhaustible, albeit partial, *chiaroscuro* of perception – but is supplemented by consciousness, a consciousness for which all of its cogitations are always equally presented in the flow of time:

In itself *every mental process* [*Erlebnis*] is a flux of becoming, is what it is in a generation originaliter of an invariant essential type; it is a continuous flow of retentions and protentions mediated by a flowing phase of originarity itself in which there is consciousness of

¹¹ Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, in *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, ed. J. H. S. Burleigh (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1953), 253.

the living now of the mental process in contradistinction to its “before” and “after.”¹²

The “continuous flow of retentions and protentions” that characterizes consciousness does not simply move in a linear fashion – as our naïve conceptions of time might have it – from past to present to future (or inversely), but forms a highly complex pattern where the three dimensions of time are interwoven perichoretically within each other, such that every “now” contains a retention of the “having been” as much as a protention of the “about to be.” In turn, each retention as well as each protention is pregnant with a similar tripartition of the now, the before, and the after, and so on. We could give the comprehension of poetry as an example: obviously one cannot utter all the syllables that make up any given verse – let alone all verses – of the poem at once, but, during each one of them, as one sound is followed by another, the words spoken are retained in the words one now speaks, and the words yet unspoken are anticipated in the words one now speaks. The example is a favorite of St. Augustine, who used it in order to illustrate the passing of time in his discussion of time in Book XI of the *Confessions*. Yet we find the same metaphor more aptly employed in Augustine’s other works. For example, in *De Vera Religione* he writes:

A line of poetry is beautiful in its own way though no two syllables can be spoken at the same time. The second cannot be spoken till the first is finished. So in due order the end of the line is reached. When the last syllable is spoken the previous ones are not heard at the same time, and yet along with the preceding ones it makes the form and metrical arrangement *complete*.¹³

That St Augustine is using some proto-phenomenological skills in his observations is confirmed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty who, centuries after Augustine, used this very metaphor about signification: we understand the beginning of a sentence from its end, Merleau-Ponty reminds us, as we understand movement in light of its teleological direction.¹⁴

Excursus: An Example of Eschatological Teleology in Music

One of phenomenology’s preferential examples of time has been music. As we have seen, Augustine used the example of music in his discussion of the enigma of time; but also, more recently, this same example has been employed by Husserl, Sartre, Emmanuel Lévinas, and Jean-Yves Lacoste. There are good reasons which support music as an ideal experience of time: indeed we know, as Kierkegaard writes, that “all other media have

¹² Husserl, *Ideas*, 179.

¹³ Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, 245.

¹⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le monde sensible et le monde de l’expression: Cours au Collège de France, Notes 1953* (Paris: Métis Presses, 2011), 205.

space as their element. Only music...occurs in time.”¹⁵ Thus, in respecting this long tradition in the history of philosophy, I would like to offer an example in support of the foregoing analysis by means of a brief analysis of a well-known composition.

I am guided in my analysis by a seemingly irrelevant question: that of the classification of Beethoven’s composition that is known as his Ninth “Symphony.” Let us assume a complete unfamiliarity with this work – bracketing out, so to speak, the countless times of listening to it and the very fact that it is now impossible to approach this work without knowing already too much about it, for example, that it is a “symphony.” And let us try to re-create an introduction to it as if it were our first time experiencing it. Let us imagine that it is Friday, May 7 of the year 1824,¹⁶ and that we have taken our seat at the concert hall and, before the program has begun, the work has opened the question of its classification to us. We do not know what to expect, what *kind* of music we are about to hear – for the members of the chorus have taken their position in front of the orchestra.¹⁷ In the universe of well-defined musical genres, one knows that a symphony is an orchestral piece of music, yet, here, we have a chorus and four vocal soloists sitting patiently. At the beginning, what we had assumed to be a symphony to be played in four movements by an orchestra, has now become “a symphony with chorus,” that is, *more* than a symphony. But can it still be called a symphony, then? It is as if one wanted to be clever and called an opera “a symphony with performed songs.”

The work has now begun. Once more it surprises us, for what lies at its beginning and as its beginning is the lack of a beginning. We hear, instead, a sound that in so many ways is reminiscent of the sound an orchestra makes *before* it has begun. The beginning sounds like an orchestra tuning, getting ready to begin. Has it already begun? The distinction between the before and after of the beginning (and no distinction can be sharper than this) is here blurred so much as to leave one suspended for a while in the uncertainty of knowing whether the work has begun. It is a beginning that begins after it has already begun: it is the amorphous sonority of its first bars that gives the impression of pure sound – of sound without articulation, of sound without form.

¹⁵ S. Kierkegaard, *Either/Or: Part I*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 68. And he continues: “Music does not exist except in the moment it is performed, for even if a person can read notes ever so well and has an ever so vivid imagination, he still cannot deny that only in a figurative sense does music exist when it is being read. It actually exists only when it is being performed” (Kierkegaard, *Either/Or*, 68).

¹⁶ This is the date of the work’s first performance. In re-constructing this experience, we are aided by Thomas Forrest Kelly’s informative account in *First Nights: Five Musical Premieres* (New Haven, NJ, and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 108-179.

¹⁷ Nowadays the chorus is placed behind the orchestra, there is, however, speculation that at the premiere of the work the chorus was arranged before the orchestra (see, Kelly, *First Nights*, 154).

So far, we have a symphony that is not a symphony (or, at least, not *only* a symphony), and a beginning that lacks all the decisiveness of a beginning. As the work progresses, we can recognize a more traditional arrangement of its movements, until we reach the final movement, where once again we are confronted with some notable perplexities. For, at the beginning of the “symphony’s” end, we hear again the beginning, and still more than that: all three preceding movements are rehearsed one by one at what is supposed to be itself a beginning of the final movement. In this rehearsal within the performance of the work, the orchestra seems to engage in a dialogue with itself, suggesting and rejecting a retrospective look of the work’s past. But if this movement is to be the finale of this enigmatic work, then it cannot return to its beginnings. Rather, its end must constitute something new, something that the three preceding movements, in all their originality and variety, could not have anticipated. We imagine the cellos and basses speak as they dismiss, one by one, the orchestra’s suggested themes, until the famous melody of the *Ode to Joy* is foreshadowed in the tenderness of a pianissimo. When, later in the fourth movement, the cellos’ voice renders in human language, they will indeed speak thus: *O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!*

From the nebulous beginning of formless sound and the explosive articulation of the first movement, to the introduction of language in the finale, we can begin to appreciate that what Beethoven offers us in this composition is, indeed, “a work of cosmic proportion”¹⁸ – for the scope of the work is no other, in the opinion of this listener, than that of creation, from its beginning to its culmination which, as the chorus reminds us in the climax of its song, is “before God!” [*vor Gott!*]. Indeed, what we have here is an unconventional *cantata*, or, if you wish, an *oratorio*, cleverly disguised under the guise of a symphony: a very ambitious – as one would expect from Beethoven – oratorio whose narration is not any particular event of sacred history, but the history of creation itself.

Nevertheless, Beethoven is not alone in undertaking such an ambitious project. St. Augustine seems to have a similarly cosmic perspective in mind in his discussion of the scope of his *Confessions*: “from the beginning when you made heaven and earth [the subject matter of Books XI and XII of the *Confessions*] to that everlasting reign when we shall be with you in your holy city [the topic of Book XIII].”¹⁹ Curiously, this is a book which, like the fourth movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, begins by rehearsing previous beginnings, in particular, the beginning of Book I (“Great is the Lord, and exceeding worthy of praise”) – itself a non-beginning, as it is a text in a number of psalms (thus, echoing what has already begun) – and the beginning of Book II (“that it is out of love for loving you that I do this”). The parallels between these two great works of art do not stop here, yet for our purposes it will be better to leave the analysis of Beethoven’s music

¹⁸ Kelly, *First Nights*, 114.

¹⁹ Augustine, *The Confessions*, XI. 2.3., trans. Maria Boulding, O.S.B. (New York: New City Press, 1997), 286.

behind us at this point, and move to what Augustine's work has already suggested: the teleological character of the mind.

Conclusion

How are we to understand this ability of the mind to see perfection when perfection is lacking? It is precisely at this point that we need to turn to a phenomenological inquiry of teleology. It would seem that the first (that is, the most fundamental and the most readily available) intuition of eschatology is that of awaiting or expecting ("the hoped for" or even the "unhoped for," as in the work of Jean-Louis Chrétien²⁰). But what could such an intuition be without the idea of purpose, that is, the fulfillment of one's anticipation, even if we cannot know for what or for whom we are waiting? More fundamental than waiting is this waiting-for, that is, the structure of a purpose. Whence can we phenomenologically derive such a structure? First of all, from the very character of intending. Intentionality, even prior to intending this or that, always intends a purpose.²¹ In every fulfilled intention, one can observe the structure of the teleological. For, since Plato's discussion of pleasure in the *Philebus*, it has been recognized that pleasure must involve not only the present but also the past, by means of memory (*Philebus* 21c), and, most importantly, the future, by means of the soul's capacity to anticipate and expect (32c). Kant spoke of pleasure precisely on these terms,²² and we believe that it is the joy of the kingdom to come that is foreshadowed in the feeling of satisfaction that every fulfilled anticipation yields. "All pleasures," after all, "have within themselves some feeling of perfection"²³ and, as we have seen, perfection is a teleological category. The very passage from an empty intention to a fulfilled one, that is, the passage from absence to presence, is such a teleological indication, for, in all these common structures of anticipation, the absolute anticipation, i.e., the anticipation of the absolute, is reflected.²⁴ We are reminded of this truth in the liturgical language of the Church when, at the end of the day, the goods which one has enjoyed during the day are seen as the very pledge of the promised kingdom.²⁵ Thus, the expectation of the eschatological future is ascertained by the present's enjoyment, for without the former, the latter

²⁰ Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Unforgettable and the Unhoped for*, trans. Jeffrey Bloechl (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002).

²¹ Husserl, *Ideas*, §86.

²² Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 68, 31.

²³ Freiherr von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E. M. Huggard (Charleston, SC: Biblio Bazaar, 2007), 145-146.

²⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), §22.

²⁵ The sixth Vespereal prayer in the service of the vespers, currently in use in the Eastern Churches, speaks of God as the one who "has given to us the worldly goods as gifts, and pledged to us the promised kingdom through those goods already bestowed on us" (ὁ καὶ τὰ ἐγκόσμια ἀγαθὰ ἡμῖν δωρησάμενος καὶ κατεγγυήσας ἡμῖν τὴν ἐπηγγελμένην βασιλείαν διὰ τῶν ἤδη κεχαρισμένων ἡμῖν ἀγαθῶν).

could not have existed. The logic here is precisely that of analogical participation: if there is the good, it is because of the best – the daily good can only be the promise of the future best. So we meet again with Socrates' insight in the *Phaedo* that what is presently beautiful can only be the effect of a future perfection, the beautiful itself.

Teleology is, of course, one of the oldest “proofs” for the existence of God: from St Thomas Aquinas' fifth way to Leibniz's “principle of the best.” Nevertheless, it was believed to have been entirely discredited as an argument when it was shown that purposiveness cannot be objectively found independently of the human mind. It must, therefore, *only* be a thing of the mind. The supporter of this conclusion might have thought to have delivered a decisive blow against teleology, without realizing that he had furnished it instead with its strongest defence. For to say that teleology is a property of the mind is to elevate it, as we have tried to show, to a universal structure of human consciousness. Consciousness, first, projects perfection in the world and, only then, on the basis of such projection, discovers a teleological perfection in the things themselves. So far, consciousness had failed to recognize purposiveness as its own essential characteristic and had, therefore, mistook it as a property of a world assumed to be external to itself. Let this mistake be corrected by the Copernican Revolution that phenomenology brings about, and let teleology, so understood, become the first indication of what could be called the *theological constitution of consciousness*.

Homo Orans

Wilhelm Dancă

The itinerary of prayer in Blessed Vladimir Ghika's life was not an easy one.¹ After a period of dramatic quest in his youth, with moments of tension within his family, he eventually came to comprehend what prayer means, why he had to pray, and how he had to pray. He was fortunate enough to have had some exquisite masters, which in time led to him becoming a widely-known man of prayer – or, rather, an expert in praying – and, as such, a composer of several types of prayers. One could say that he lived in prayer as a fish lives in water. He prayed alone and he prayed with others. He was always asking for prayers for himself and for various noble causes, for “*God to be triumphant*.”² He was firmly convinced that God, before anything else, expects us to pray, and that the universe itself would be less rich without our prayers. He had the courage to pray continuously and he encouraged others to pray as well. One of his spiritual children, Jean Daujat, said that only those who saw and heard him could understand “the measure in which this man was radiating prayer, in which he was completely prayer in his gestures, in his behaviour, in his words and especially in his moments of silence; he made others pray, it was almost impossible to be in his presence or to hear him and not to pray.”³

In order to pray, one does not only need a propensity and the courage to do so, but also living models and a certain art or knowledge of it. I sometimes wonder who inspired him with this taste for praying? Could it have been his mother, Princess Alexandrina, who belonged to the Orthodox Church? Could it have been his French *au pair*, who was a Protestant? In 1961, Michel de Galzain wrote a book in which he recalls that Ghika inher-

¹ Vladimir Ghika was born on 25 December 1873 into the princely Ghika family at Constantinople (today Istanbul, in Turkey). He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1902, at Rome, Italy. He was ordained a Catholic priest and was incardinated in the diocese of Paris in 1923, having pontifical permission to celebrate the Holy Mass in Latin and in the Greek-Orthodox rite. One of his best friends was the French philosopher, Jacques Maritain. After his conversion to the Catholic Church, he used to say: “I became Catholic in order to be a better Orthodox believer”; throughout the rest of his life he believed that all Christians must be united by Christ's charity in the Catholic Church. He returned to Romania in 1939 to support his so-long-tested Romanian people during World War II, and to face the persecution against the Catholic Church in Romania which started in 1948. He died on 16 May 1954, while imprisoned at Jilava. He was beatified on 31 August 2013 in Bucharest.

² Yvonne Estienne, *O flacără în vitraliu. Amintiri despre Monseniorul Ghika [Flame within Stained Glass. Memories of Monsignor Ghika]*, trans. Mihaela Voicu, with notes by Luc Verly and Emanuel Cosmovici (Bucharest: Editura ARCB, 2013), 89.

³ Jean Daujat, *L'Apôtre du XX^e Siècle. Monseigneur Ghika [The Apostle of the XXth Century. Monsignor Ghika]* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1956), 85.

ited the spirit of prayer neither from his mother, nor from the Greek-Orthodox family in which he had been born,⁴ nor from his *au pair*, nor from the Protestant faithful among whom he spent his university years in France.⁵ Yvonne Estienne reached the same conclusion, stating that the religious model of his parents, who were “so profoundly religious,” had hardly any spiritual effect on him.

Ghika passed through a crucial point in his spiritual life during his youth, while with his brother Dmitrie in Rome. There, he discovered something that he had never encountered before: a spirit of prayer and of reverence towards God – present in some of the Catholic churches in Rome⁶ but still more in two professors of Theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum), which Ghika attended between 1902 and 1906. The first was the Dominican friar Alberto Lepidi,⁷ the Master of the Sacred Apostolic Palace – today called the Theologian of the Pontifical Household – whose responsibilities included granting the *imprimatur* for books printed in Rome and presiding over the College of Theologians. Lepidi was his Professor of Theology at the Angelicum, where he taught until his death in 1922. It was in front of him, on 15 April 1902, in the Church of St. Sabina in Rome, that Ghika professed his Catholic belief. The second was the Dominican Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange,⁸ under whose guidance Ghika completed his doctoral studies at the Angelicum in 1906. Starting from the role which these two priests – both professors of Theology – played in his life, and especially from the support offered by Garrigou-Lagrange as his academic supervisor in theology and also as his confessor,⁹ Ghika’s spiritual life bears a clear Dominican influence. While this did not exclude his being influenced by other charisms as well – he was

⁴ Elisabeth de Miribel cites Prince Vladimir’s words about his mother who, although very attached to the Greek-Orthodox Church, “had a fundamentally Catholic mentality. She diligently used to read Catholic writings among which she mostly treasured Bossuet’s *Elevations (Elevations)* and *Meditations (Meditations)*, as well as *Imitation de Jesus-Christ (The Imitation of Christ)*, assimilating their essence. With these inner feelings she raised me since my first years” (cf. Elisabeth de Miribel, *Memoria Tăcerilor. Vladimir Ghika 1873-1954 [The Memories of Silences. Vladimir Ghika 1873-1954]*, trans. Stela Ciungan (Bucharest: Editura ARCB, 2004), 15-16.

⁵ Cf. Michel de Galzain, *Une âme de feu. Monseigneur Vladimir Ghika [Soul of Fire. Monsignor Vladmir Ghika]* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1961), 19-20.

⁶ Cf. Estienne, *Oflacără în vitraliu*, 27-29.

⁷ Cf. Francisca Baltaceanu, Andrei Brezianu, Monica Brosteanu, Emanuel Cosmovici and Luc Verly, *Vladimir Ghika. Profesor de speranță [Vladimir Ghika. Professor of Hope]* (Bucharest: Editura ARCB, 2013), n. 72, 91.

⁸ Baltaceanu, Brezianu, Brosteanu, Cosmovici and Verly, *Vladimir Ghika*, 95.

⁹ Prince Vladimir Ghika had the opportunity to meet him often, either directly in Rome, or at the prayer weeks conducted by Father R. Garrigou-Lagrange at Jacques Maritain’s invitation addressed to the members of the Circle of Thomist Studies. In a journal entry made on February 24, 1922, J. Maritain wrote: “We could ask Father Garrigou-Lagrange to conduct the annual spiritual exercises. Prince Ghika’s sense of diplomacy helped us a lot.” Jacques Maritain, *Carnet de notes [Notebooks]* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1965), 196.

a Dominican tertiary, Benedictine oblate, and Franciscan tertiary, and felt very close to the Carmelite Order¹⁰ – these inter-connected aspects are not our main interest here. Rather, we will focus on the Dominican spirit dominant in Ghika’s life. We will draw a parallel between the theology of prayer of St. Thomas and that of Ghika, so as to understand their common points, and also the life trajectory taken by Ghika.

What Is Prayer?

In the spirit of Thomistic theology,¹¹ in order to comprehend something we first ought to know its definition. Thus, for the Dominican Fathers, prayer means the lifting of one’s mind towards God.¹² However, in our case, the “lifting of one’s mind” does not mean a speculative or intuitive activity, but rather a practical one. St. Thomas Aquinas draws a distinction between the speculative reason, which perceives reality as being and which manifests itself in science (e.g., physics) and wisdom (e.g., metaphysics), and the practical reason, which perceives reality as action and expresses itself through the production of things and instruments, and the formation of themselves; the practical reason introduces a power of causality and action within reality. Starting from the etymological definition of prayer in Latin (“oratio” – “oris ratio,” “spoken reason”) given by Cassiodorus,¹³ Thomas claims that

one thing is the cause of another in two ways: first perfectly, when it necessitates its effect, and this happens when the effect is wholly subject to the power of the cause; secondly imperfectly, by merely disposing the effect, or the reason that the effect is not wholly subject to the power of the cause. Accordingly, in this way the reason is cause of certain things in two ways: firstly, by imposing necessity; and in this way it belongs to reason, to command not only the lower powers and the members of the body, but also human subjects, which indeed is done by commanding; secondly, by leading up to the effect, and, in a way, disposing to it, and in this sense the reason asks for something to be done by things not subject to it, whether they be its equals or its superiors. Now both of these, namely, to command and to ask or beseech, imply a certain ordering, seeing that man proposes something to be effected by something else, wherefore they pertain to the reason to which it belongs to set in order. For this reason, the Philosopher says (Ethic. I, 13) that the *reason exhorts us to do what is best*. Now in the present instance we are speaking of prayer as sig-

¹⁰ Cf. Daujat, *L’Apôtre du XX^e Siècle*, 38-39.

¹¹ Cf. Battista Mondin, “Preghiera,” in *Dizionario enciclopedico del pensiero di San Tommaso d’Aquino* [*Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*], ed. Battista Mondin (Bologna: ESD, 1991), 488-490.

¹² “Oratio est ascensus metis in Deum.” Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In Epistola ad Colosenses*, c. 1, lect. 3, nr. 18.

¹³ Cf. Cassiodorus, *Expos. In Ps. 38*, 13, PL 70, 285.

nifying a beseeching or petition, in which sense Augustine says that *prayer is a petition* and Damascene states that *to pray is to ask becoming things of God*. Accordingly it is evident that prayer, as we speak of it now, is an act of reason.¹⁴

The practical reason is the origin of prudence, of law, and of prayer. The prayer or request which the practical reason addresses to beings equal or superior to itself unites intelligence and will, but nevertheless intelligence remains the first. Thomas places prayer above feelings and tries to safeguard it from either voluntaristic, legalist, or intellectualist attractions. Prayer is an act of the whole person, as it implies and engages one's feelings, mind, heart, and will. Undoubtedly, prayer is connected to feelings, but the affective participation depends on the type of prayer, which can be offering praise, or gratitude, or beseeching help, or imploring for forgiveness, etc. Finally, according to Thomas, prayer belongs to the *virtue of religion*, which is to offer God the respect and honour He deserves; in part, this can be accomplished by the means of prayer. By praying we adore and venerate God, that is we obey Him and admit that we need Him, as He is our benefactor from all the points of view.¹⁵

Ghika considered the expression "the lifting of one's mind" as insufficient to express the force and complexity of prayer. If mental prayer is above the spoken one, total prayer, as an act of the whole being (heart, mind, will, feelings), is above mental prayer.¹⁶ Unlike the Thomistic perspective, which seems to lay the emphasis on the practical intellect, Ghika's definition of prayer has personalistic accents. Thus, in *Convorbiri spirituale* [*Spiritual Conversations*], he said that prayers are "the daughters of our heart and of God."¹⁷ This whole, personalistic perspective shapes the difference between prayer in Thomas' sense and in Ghika's own conception.

For Ghika, the term *prayer* has a general meaning, comprising more than one type of spiritual activity: a request addressed to God or to one's neighbour, devotion, adoration, veneration, the free consent of one's soul towards grace, an awareness of receiving the word of God, the active presence of God in one's soul, forgiveness, etc. By means of praying, we connect ourselves to the divine activity and, at the same time, our freedom becomes meaningful by participating in the course of the universe.¹⁸ Of course, God does not change but, from the perspective of our changing

¹⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, a. 1.

¹⁵ Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, a. 3.

¹⁶ Cf. Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Fragmente postume* (*Spiritual Writings. Posthumous Fragments*), special texts from the Archive of the Vladimir Ghika Institute, Romanian translation by Doina Cornea (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Ecou Transilvan, 2013), 388.

¹⁷ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Convorbiri spirituale. Suferinta* (*Spiritual Writings. Spiritual Conversations. The Suffering*), Romanian translation by Gheorghe Lascu and Vioreca Lascu, 214.

¹⁸ Cf. Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Convorbiri spirituale. Ora sfanta* [*Spiritual Writings. Spiritual Conversations. The Holy Hour*], trans. Gheorghe Lascu and Vioreca Lascu, 216.

mind – and within proper limits – the Lord can give his consent to our prayers and change anything. From the perspective of an intercession made in favour of changing the world for the better, prayer is defined by Ghika as “the only language that the whole universe can understand.”¹⁹ He is attracted by the extraordinary power of prayer, by its speed of moving and pervading, by the essential character of this spiritual activity; prayer is faster than light in reaching any corner of the universe. Moreover, as prayer is a synthesis of the most inner parts of our person, Ghika wondered what more can God expect from us than the awareness of prayer. Prayers are of different natures – some are prayers of request, of spiritual or temporal nature, and of devotion – but that which most interested Ghika is the grace of our replying as adequately as possible to God’s love by praying well.²⁰

How Shall We Pray?

For Thomas, a good prayer should meet the following requirements: it should first ask for spiritual benefits and only afterwards for material ones; it should be characterised by perseverance; be said together with others; with filial affection; with humility; and with trust – even if we do not receive the grace we prayed for. We should also pray for ourselves, not only for others.²¹ For Ghika, prayers should be made arduously, with passion, with all of our being. One of his spiritual sons said that Ghika “did not pray, but he himself *was* a prayer, completely and in an absolute manner.” He prayed “unceasingly,” whenever he did not have something else to do.²² The intensity of his prayers not only reached others, but had beneficial effects on himself as well. His way of praying was discreet, as the man Vladimir Ghika himself used to be; although as a prince he knew how to hide himself from the eyes of the world. In the same way, his prayer, which in a certain way was a hidden one, was as powerful and pervasive as the blood in a living body.²³ His prayer was the expression of both his human and his religious experience. As the expression of one’s inner feelings, prayers should be made with deep inner attention, and without any outer distractions away from the sacred or divine person to whom one is addressing oneself. The story of his first saying of the Rosary prayer, which he said immediately after his conversion (15th April 1902), is well known. He prayed one third of the night, repeating the *Hail Mary* any time he felt that he had recited it only with his lips. From this point of view, he considered suffering as a prayer without any distractions, as pain has the propensity of attracting all our at-

¹⁹ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ultimele marturii* [*Spiritual Writings. The Last Testimonials*], trans. Doina Cornea, 532.

²⁰ Cf. Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale*, 532-535.

²¹ Cf. Aquinas, *In Ioannem* 16, lect. 6.

²² Cf. Claudia Stan, coord., *Fericit! Dialoguri cu viata propuse de Claudia Stan* [*Blessed! Dialogues with Life proposed by Claudia Stan*] (Bucharest: Editura ARCB, 2015), 29, 194.

²³ Cf. de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 88.

tion.²⁴ He always sought to pray well, and insisted that a good prayer means that one's actions become prayers and one's prayers lead to actions.²⁵

Moreover, Ghika encouraged praying in common, especially together with those poor from a material point of view, for those who are poor from the spiritual point of view.²⁶ He often organised prayer groups for various noble causes, such as the conversion of unbelievers, of those who had not received the Good News, of those who had received the Good News and yet did not believe, of those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, etc.²⁷ He pleaded for continuous praying, explaining that this originates from the very feeling of God's presence and ends in a kind of fusion with Him,²⁸ and that through such prayer our life on earth becomes the beginning of our eternal life.²⁹ He prayed for others and asked others to pray for him, especially in difficult times.³⁰ He always encouraged an exchange of prayers, as a means of being closer to others and less alone.³¹

Which Prayer Is the Perfect Prayer?

The *Our Father* prayer or *The Lord's Prayer* is the perfect prayer because, as Thomas claims, through this prayer we not only ask for that which we would normally want, but we also ask in the proper order. We begin with the purpose of our desire which is God, we continue with those things that lead us towards Him, and we end with those things that keep us away from Him.³² Ghika considered this prayer as a mirror of our spiritual life. Depending on our inner disposition, we will adapt its words, no matter whether we are aware of it or not, and distort them in various ways. For instance, instead of "Our Father, who art in Heaven" we might think "Our Judge, who is at the Court of Justice," "Our Supplier, who is behind the counter," "Our Creditor, who knocks much too often on our door," "Our Primary Cause, whose faint effect we are," "Our Supreme Master, before whom we are nothing but dust," "Our Comrade, with whom we can freely discuss," etc. Unfortunately, as Ghika noticed, "we no longer use in their original meaning exactly the very words which God himself had taught us to say whenever we pray: *Our Father...and who art in Heaven.*"³³ The importance which Ghika attached to the *Lord's Prayer* can be also seen from the paraphrase and adaptation he made in order to underline the intercession

²⁴ Cf. Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 211.

²⁵ Cf. de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 28.

²⁶ Cf. de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 39; Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 155.

²⁷ de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 66-67.

²⁸ Cf. Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 132.

²⁹ Cf. Daujat, *L'Apôtre du XX^e Siècle*, 83.

³⁰ Cf. Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 244-245.

³¹ Cf. Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Fragmente postume*, 389.

³² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, a. 9.

³³ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ganduri pentru zilele ce vin* [*Spiritual Writings. Thoughts for The Next Days*], trans. Doina Cornea, 112-113.

accomplished by the Virgin Mary between God and us. He addressed the Blessed Virgin with the following words:

Our Mother who art in Heaven, hallowed be the name of thy Son. Build thyself here a place for the Kingdom of God. Not only His will be done but also everything pleasant to Him, and let the earth seem less afar from Heaven. Be blessed for the Bread of Life that thanks to thee, thy adoptive sons by repeating the sacrifice of Jesus are able to receive and give us here daily. Help us to improve and to love each other. Save us from ourselves and, as thou thyself had never known evil, may thy intercession be easier for the all too real misery of our trespasses. Amen!³⁴

Ghika composed many beautiful prayers, both long ones and short. One instance of a short prayer, which he referred as to a kind of spiritual S.O.S meant to be repeated throughout the whole day, is:

O, Lord, Thou art everywhere: make me find Thee everywhere!
Thou art for ever: make me find Thee for ever! Thou art infinite:
make me deepen myself in Thee! Thou beholdest me with fatherly
love: make me behold Thee with filial love! Through Christ, our
Lord. Amen!³⁵

How Many Types of Prayer Can There Be?

There are many types of prayers, such as public or common prayer, particular or individual prayer, mental prayer and vocal prayer. About public prayer, Thomas said that this “is offered to God by the ministers of the Church representing the body of the faithful: wherefore such like prayer should come to the knowledge of the whole people for whom it is offered: and this would not be possible unless it were vocal prayer. Therefore, it is reasonably ordained that the ministers of the Church should say these prayers even in a loud voice, so that they may come to the knowledge of all. On the other hand individual prayer is that which is offered by any single person, whether he pray for himself or for others; and it is not essential to such a prayer as this to be vocal.”³⁶

Thomas distinguished four reasons for which particular prayers should also be accompanied by voice: “so as man to exhort himself by means of words to pray with more devotion; so as to protect himself from any distractions, as adding words to his own feelings helps him remain more concentrated; the impulse of devotion appears naturally in words, as the movement of superior potencies overflow over the inferior ones and whenever it is powerful enough, and likewise when the mind of him who prays is filled

³⁴ *Apud Estienne, O flacără în vitraliu, 226-227.*

³⁵ *Estienne, O flacără în vitraliu, 228.*

³⁶ *Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, II-II, q. 83, a. 12.*

with devotion he manifests himself through groaning, sighing, exulting with joy, and shouting; so as to accomplish our duty of righteousness towards God, as long as we owe Him not only respect with our mind but also to work for Him with our body.”³⁷

Ghika paid special attention to public prayer. The climax of this type of prayer was the Sacred Liturgy. He never doubted the infinite effect of the Liturgy, and “he always trusted its superiority when compared to any other form of action dedicated to the salvation of souls.”³⁸ There are numerous stories that illustrate how Ghika was united with the sacrifice of Christ he was actualising in the Eucharist, but also in his own being, as one could somehow perceive him crucified and dying together with Christ: “those present at the Holy Mass were perplexed. Henri Gheon compared it to the one celebrated by the Curé d’Ars: *A good priest is said to celebrate well his Liturgy, about a fervent priest that he lives it: about the Curé d’Ars that he died in it.* From its beginning to the end Father Ghika was in sheer agony in which he re-lived Christ’s whole suffering on the cross, the ever-burning fire of an inner life radiating around him.”³⁹

Commenting on this spiritual perspective, Yvonne Estienne remembers that “It was enough to see him celebrating the Holy Mass to understand that he had entirely received the heritage of Calvary, following Christ’s Grieving Mother and his Beloved Disciple.... The daily Mass, which he had been celebrating since 1923, was indeed an act of complete union with Christ, whose suffering, agony and death he was living afresh, not as a conspicuous theatrical show, but on the contrary in an atmosphere of such deep prayer that overwhelmed all those present. He was approaching the altar, his body heavy with penance, his hands full of triumph, his soul prepared to answer the call of his Master, Priest for ever, as he himself had translated in *Pensées pour la suite des jours (Thoughts for the Next Days)* “Oh, my Priest, how could you sacrifice me truly and completely, as long as you did not sacrifice first yourself truly and completely?”⁴⁰

For Ghika even preaching was a kind of public prayer. As we well know, Father Ghika was little endowed with rhetorical talent, but he still managed to communicate very well, as he had a simple, direct and convincing style, using concrete images and examples. He, thus, transmitted sacred teaching, but even more he made his audience pray, and he led them towards the presence of God.⁴¹ “To preach, no matter how poorly, means to pray in public,” he used to say. “I speak to God in you and I listen to Him in you, after I have tried to listen to Him in myself.”⁴²

³⁷ Aquinas, *IV Sent.*, d. 15, q. 4, a. 2, sol. 1.

³⁸ Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 36-37.

³⁹ de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 77.

⁴⁰ Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 220-221.

⁴¹ Mgr. Ghika used to refer to the complete offering of oneself to God in one’s neighbour as the *Liturgy of One’s Neighbour*. Cf. de Galzain, *Une âme de feu*, 77.

⁴² Cf. Daujat, *L’Apôtre du XX^e Siècle*, 178.

Other public prayers – in a more general sense – were the devotions that Ghika practised while free or imprisoned, such as the cult of the relic of the Sacred Thorn, “prayers played” at the organ, the Rosary, the Way of the Cross, and the Divine Office. We could say that even his engravings or writings were a sort of public prayer.⁴³ Here is an instance of a moment of prayer with the relic of the Sacred Thorn at the bed of a sick person in hospital; as Suzanne Marie recalls:

Standing near her bed, with the relic of the Sacred Thorn in his hand – a relic he had received from the Archbishop of Paris and which he always carried with him – he prays and this prayer is so intense that the features of his face become petrified, if I could say so. He remains for a while in this hieratic attitude: a prayer become man. He then recovers from this state, opens his eyes and calmly raises his hand above the sick [person] to bless her. Eventually, he leaves.⁴⁴

In prison, he often prayed the Rosary or the Way of the Cross together with other prisoners, and on Sundays, after saying a Divine Office adapted to the circumstances, he would improvise a brief sermon.⁴⁵ About his prayers “played at the organ,” Hieronymus Menges said that, during the 1950s, Mgr. Ghika “was no longer preaching and after reading the Breviary he would sit at the organ and improvise a prayer of praise, of thanksgiving or of request, so deeply felt that no one left but stayed to listen. A student of mathematics assured me that this half of an hour which the Monsignor used to spend playing the organ meant for her, as for many others, a spiritual nourishment which lasted for a whole week, a lifting of one’s soul and an encouragement.”⁴⁶

The Holy Hour or the hour of adoration was done in silence, kneeling, publicly or in private. Father Ghika spent many such Holy Hours in this way. Thus, in the presence of two Lutheran pastors, in a chapel in Paris, after exposing the Holy Sacrament, Ghika said towards those present: “As for one hour we have here with us Christ Himself, the Word of God truly present before us, the best thing we could do is to remain silent and to spend this hour looking at Him and listening to Him in the depths of our souls by loving Him.” Then he knelt and began to pray in silence. At the end of the Holy Hour, the pastors came up to him and asked him to receive them into the Roman Church.⁴⁷

As his spiritual sons have remarked, Ghika’s private prayer was extremely intense. At times his prayer would turn into a powerful cry towards God – something referred to, in the Bible, as the expression of a *man of de-*

⁴³ Cf. Estienne, *O flacăară în vitraliu*, 263.

⁴⁴ *Apud* de Miribel, *Memoria Tăcerilor. Vladimir Ghika*, 56.

⁴⁵ Cf. de Miribel, *Memoria Tăcerilor. Vladimir Ghika*, 133-134.

⁴⁶ *Apud* Francisca Baltaceanu and Monica Brosteanu, *Vladimir Ghika. Professeur d’esperance (Vladimir Ghika. Professor of Hope)* (Paris: Cerf, 2013), 369.

⁴⁷ Cf. de Miribel, *Memoria Tăcerilor. Vladimir Ghika*, 91-92.

sire, full of devotion and boldness before his Lord.⁴⁸ Between 1920 and 1939, Ghika lived with the Benedictine Brothers in Paris. There, he could be often seen “kneeling before the Holy Sacrament or at the altar of the Blessed Virgin absorbed in his prayers.”⁴⁹ This great man of prayer composed numerous prayers to come to the aid of those who did not know how to pray. Here is an example of a prayer addressed to the Holy Spirit:

Oh, God of Love, God who is nothing but Love and who passed from the Father to the Son, and from the Son to the Father through us, I need to cry out my joy of discovering in myself the only unperishable thing, the only one which should never cease, the very substance of my own eternity in your own. Love born before time itself, alive in this very hour and made to last for ever and ever. I salute it and enshrine it in myself and am aware that I possess it, the one out of which the Heavens were created. And, to find it and to feel it without any digression, like St. John I rest my forehead and my heart on the human heart of our Lord. Holy Ghost, who descends from the Heavens with flames and tears, lift our tears to you, and the flames of our passion that have originated from you. Amen!⁵⁰

Between private and public prayer on the one hand, and between prayers said aloud and those made in silence on the other hand, Ghika recommended public prayers said aloud: “one of the most necessary practices is that of the public prayer made together with others, together with the poor, within their homes. Pray together with them, aloud for a need you yourself are unable to satisfy.”⁵¹ Afterwards, he explained why: “If you pray in this way, God will listen to your prayers even better than to the ones made by those alone, as they are more devoid of selfishness (even if well grounded) and because any time you pray like this, you will have amidst you, closer than ever, ready to touch you, Christ who has promised to be present among those who pray in his name.”⁵²

Praying in common and aloud is comforting, beneficial, and powerful, and yet mental prayers are superior to prayers said aloud. Eventually, the highest form of prayer is the complete prayer,⁵³ which means prayer as an act of the whole human being in Christ, with Christ, and through Christ. According to Thomistic theology, a complete prayer encompasses the following elements: the *uttering* of the words with the lifting of one’s heart towards God; *thanksgiving* for past benefits; the *intention* or desire regarding future benefits; the *request* done through Christ our Lord.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Cf. Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 146.

⁴⁹ Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 35.

⁵⁰ *Apud* Estienne, *O flacăără în vitraliu*, 226.

⁵¹ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Convorbiri spirituale*, 241.

⁵² Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Convorbiri spirituale*, 241.

⁵³ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Fragmente postume*, 388.

⁵⁴ Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 87, a. 17.

What Are the Effects of Praying?

For Thomas, the effects of prayers said aloud are three-fold: “The first is an effect which is common to all acts quickened by charity, and this is merit. In order to realise this effect, it is not necessary that prayer should be attentive throughout; because the force of the original intention with which one sets about praying renders the whole prayer meritorious, as is the case with other meritorious acts. The second effect of prayer is proper thereto, and consists in impetration: and again the original intention, to which God looks chiefly, suffices to obtain this effect. But if the original intention is lacking, prayer lacks both merit and impetration....The third effect of prayer is that which it produces at once; this is the spiritual refreshment of the mind, and for this effect attention is a necessary condition.”⁵⁵ Yet the attention needed for such prayers is in itself also three-fold: “One which attends to the words, lest we say them wrong, another which attends to the sense of the words, and a third, which attends to the end of a prayer, namely, God, and to the thing we are praying for. That last kind of attention is most necessary, and even idiots are capable of it. Moreover this attention, whereby the mind is fixed on God, is sometimes so strong that the mind forgets all other things.”⁵⁶

For Ghika the main characteristics of praying are continuity, omnipresence, intensity, and discretion. He was always exasperated whenever someone spoke about ‘morning prayers’ and ‘evening prayers.’⁵⁷ The first fruit of praying is familiarity with Jesus Christ, with the Blessed Virgin, with God, and with the saints, and yet this familiarity should be accompanied by the utmost respect towards the divine Transcendence. Ghika says at one point: “One’s true union with God is accomplished on the day one begins to address Him directly.”⁵⁸ The second effect originates from the first, namely “one is always accompanied by the presence of God,” one is never and nowhere alone. The third effect is that “everything becomes possible, miracles as well as humble obedience towards the laws ordered by the Creator.”⁵⁹ Another effect can be felt on the face of the world. He used to say that the “appearance” of our world is the “outcome of our mistakes and prayers.”⁶⁰ Moreover, all things in the universe are pervaded by a “sap of prayers”: “*Time* prays and *Eternity* sings praises.”⁶¹ In his spiritual life, man can know that he is making progress the moment that his silence opens and turns into prayer.⁶² Briefly said, the effects of prayer can be felt in our hu-

⁵⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, a. 13.

⁵⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 83, a. 13.

⁵⁷ Cf. Daujat, *L'Apôtre du XX^e Siècle*, 81.

⁵⁸ Estienne, *O flacăra în vitraliu*, 215.

⁵⁹ Estienne, *O flacăra în vitraliu*, 215-216.

⁶⁰ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ganduri pentru zilele ce vin*, 21.

⁶¹ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ganduri pentru zilele ce vin*, 31.

⁶² Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ganduri pentru zilele ce vin*, 43.

man being, both at the level of our mind and at that of our will: prayer teaches man to think boldly and to wish firmly.⁶³

Prayer as a Going Beyond Oneself

With reference to the theme of prayer, we can detect both convergent and divergent lines in Thomas and Ghika. On the one hand, they have in common an insistence that prayer should be the expression of the whole person. But, on the other hand, Thomas has realist and systematic accents, while Ghika emphasises the personalistic dimension, both aesthetic and metaphysical. For Thomas, one's inner life seems an arriving point, for Ghika it is a starting point. Thomas strives to support the importance of prayer by reasons of common sense, logical and authoritative; Ghika, by daily living and spiritual guidance. Moreover, they both plead for praying in common and aloud, yet Thomas underlines the hierarchical and official dimension of prayer, while Ghika insists on praying in common with the poor and for the poor of all kinds. They both are convinced of the power of prayer, which pervades the heavens and all the universe; for Ghika, he who prays has something of the heavenly power, while, for Thomas, a praying man anticipates somehow one's future condition of blessedness. Finally, both Thomas and Ghika considered *The Lord's Prayer* as the perfect prayer, as the Lord Himself teaches us how to pray. Thomas is more aware of the priority of the spiritual over the material, while Ghika tries to draw our attention to the possible distortions of our praying caused by an erroneous understanding of the relationship between the Father and his sons.

Thomas and Ghika spoke beautifully about God as they themselves had first spoken with God by praying. In their highest form prayers become actions, more precisely acts of contemplating God in His own being and in our neighbour. If prayer means going beyond oneself, leaving one's ego behind, as Thomas and Ghika teach us, then we can understand why – especially today – there are few who truly pray. Indeed, the indolence induced by our consumerist societies, our spiritual laziness, and our fear of the other diminish the attraction and the practice of praying. May the teachings and the models of prayer left us by St. Thomas Aquinas and the Blessed Vladimir Ghika heal our spiritual weakness and inspire us with the courage to always pray in words and deeds.

⁶³ Ghika, *Scrieri spirituale. Ganduri pentru zilele ce vin*, 93.

Critical and Relational Ontology: Parallels between Joseph Kaipayil and Christos Yannaras

Sotiris Mitralaxis

In the course of my research, I have come across a noteworthy similarity in the contemporary philosophical currents of Greece and India: two thinkers with radically different backgrounds and no other connection with each other:¹ Professor Emeritus of Philosophy Dr. Christos Yannaras in Athens, Greece, and Professor of Philosophy Joseph Kaipayil in Bangalore, India. Both articulate a “Critical Ontology” and a “Relational Ontology” with striking similarities as well as substantial differences, and not undeserved claims of philosophical fertility in a post-modern context. One of the most interesting aspects of this parallel philosophical production is the observation by both philosophers that a “relational ontology” cannot but be a “critical ontology,” and vice versa, for reasons that will be expounded in the following pages. In this paper, I will attempt to briefly present the theories of both philosophers, and highlight the common points and differing aspects that call for a direct dialogue between them.

Joseph Kaipayil

Joseph Kaipayil expounds a relationalist theory of reality, which he proposes as a corollary to a critical stance towards ontology – and names it ‘ontic relationalism.’ He expounded this critical ontology in his second book, *Critical Ontology: An Introductory Essay*. For Kaipayil, “critical ontology considers philosophical questions as ultimately ontological questions and tries to address them from its critical ontological perspective.”² Following a Kantian path, he states the following: “if we start our philosophical reflection from assumptions and presuppositions, we will surely end up with antinomies”;³ “an ontology solidly established on critical reflection on the empirical and yet transcending the empirical in search of the being-principles of things is what we call Critical Ontology”;⁴ “a theory is ‘critical’ if it is based on empirical experience. This notion of ‘critical’ may be found in Kant's first critique, the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Critical ontology

¹ As I have been informed by them.

² Joseph Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology: An Introductory Essay* (Bangalore: Jeevalaya Institute of Philosophy, 2002), ix.

³ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 24.

⁴ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 33.

is basically in agreement with the Kantian critique that philosophical knowledge should be grounded on empirical experience.”⁵

But, given Kant’s rejection of ontology and metaphysics, how could one speak of a critical ontology in a Kantian sense? Kaipayil strongly criticizes the tendency of Western philosophy, from the time of Hume and Kant until our days, to either omit ontology and metaphysics or to disconnect philosophical questions pertaining to epistemology, ethics, etc., from their ontological roots.⁶ He rejects Kant’s claim that all metaphysics is philosophically unproductive, while retaining Kant’s assertion that “philosophical conclusions should be based on empirical facts” and on “concrete human experience,” thereby making metaphysics critical in nature. He rejects Kant’s nullification of metaphysics: “Not all metaphysics is of pure speculative reason, as the Kantian critique wanted us to believe.”⁷ So, not only does Kaipayil retain Kant’s critical method while rejecting his anti-metaphysical stance, but he also argues that this exact critical method is the prerequisite for every sound ontology: “only an ontology that is critical in character does give adequate rational justification for metaphysical thinking, especially the philosophy of being.”⁸

In this first treatise on critical ontology, Kaipayil observes that critical ontologies see human beings only as relational beings that can manifest consciousness, freedom, and self-transcendence through relation:

[C]onsciousness and freedom are instances of human self-transcendence. By self-transcendence we mean our ability to transcend some of the objective limitations of our existence....In knowing the object I know that I am a knower, a subject, and not merely an object in the world....And in the exercise of freedom, I choose between alternatives and I come to know I am not confined to mere circumstances.⁹

The delicate balance between relation and individuality or otherness – what Kaipayil later calls ‘difference’ – is that which gives birth to the possibility of freedom. Relations *manifest* the otherness of each person. These ideas are further expounded in *Human as Relational: A Study in Critical Ontology*.¹⁰ In it, the author argues that a critical ontology is simultaneously a relational ontology, as it cannot but recognize relations as constitutive of being and, especially, of the human being – not only of his ‘character,’ but also of his biological existence.

⁵ Joseph Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology* (Kochi: Karunikan Books, 2008), 30-31.

⁶ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 22-24.

⁷ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 24-26.

⁸ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 32.

⁹ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 54.

¹⁰ Joseph Kaipayil, *Human as Relational: A Study in Critical Ontology* (Bangalore: Jeevalaya Institute of Philosophy, 2003).

In *An Essay on Ontology*, Kaipayil traces examples of ontological propositions that have had a critical or relational character in the history of philosophy.¹¹

Alongside speculative or transcendent ontology and metaphysics, there existed in the history of philosophy what might be called *critical* ontology and metaphysics....By critical ontology and metaphysics I mean the ontology and metaphysics that is grounded on empirical experience. While based on empirical experience, critical ontology and metaphysics is not limited to empirical experience.¹²

However, Kaipayil voices a different opinion in the course of his essay: “Critical ontology makes it absolutely necessary that we postulate ontological concepts and categories only on the basis of the analysis of empirical experience.”¹³

While expounding his relational ontology, his ontology of relationality¹⁴ or relationalism, Kaipayil stresses that “relationality signifies the relational nature of reality. Ontic relationalism, therefore, denotes the theory that reality is relational and for any thing to exist and to be known is to exist and to be known in its relatedness. The real (the existent) is relational, and the relational, real (existent).”¹⁵ However, this does not mean that there is no otherness or individuality or “difference”.¹⁶ just like Yannaras, as we will see, Kaipayil stresses the balance between relation and otherness, and states what Yannaras and the Greek philosophical tradition would articulate by saying that there is no essence without hypostasis, without particular realization; there is no ‘*ousia anypostatos*.’ Kaipayil writes:

The essential properties, which together make the essence, are those qualities an object should necessarily possess to belong to a designated category. All objects having the human essence belong to the class of humans. Essence, thus, gives the categorial identity to a particular; essence is the class identifier of an object. Essence as such, however, does not exist....It is a concept signifying the unity of the essential properties that determine a thing’s what-it-is.¹⁷

Only the existence of the particular realizations, of the hypostases, gives being to the essence.

¹¹ See *An Essay on Ontology*, chap. 2, “Some Ontologies of Critical Nature,” 36-58. The first “critical ontology” that he cites is Aristotle’s ontology, see ch. 2.1, 36-39.

¹² Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 12.

¹³ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 31.

¹⁴ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 31 and esp. ch. 3 “Towards an Ontology of Relationality,” 59-84.

¹⁵ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 59.

¹⁶ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 59, esp. ch 3.4 “Essence and Difference,” 67-68.

¹⁷ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 67.

In *Relationalism: A Theory of Being*,¹⁸ Kaipayil puts relationalism in perspective by trying to find its roots in other traditions, like Sankhya Dualism, Buddhist Processism, Vaisheshika Pluralism, and Vedantic Monism – not so much by drawing on these traditions, but rather in critiquing them and taking a point beyond them – in illustrating relationalism as a more inclusive and more realistic position than monism, dualism, pluralism and even processism.¹⁹ He also illuminates some misunderstandings:

Relationism is not anti-substantivism. On an anti-substantivist view, things are not objects in their own right, but only events dependent on other events for their existence. Even if we grant the argument that relations are ontologically more fundamental than entities themselves, the question is, if there are no entities with some enduring substantivity, how do relations themselves exist? Relation is ‘holding’ between two or more things. If entities disappear, relations will also disappear.²⁰

And Kaipayil recapitulates his relational ontology as such:

Being (all that exists) is relational. Relationality (relatedness) is the very characteristic of reality, both existentially and structurally. The real (that which exists) is relational. Reality is irreducibly pluralistic and inescapably unitary. Then relationalism is our search for the ontological principles that account for the unity and diversity of the world. As the main task of relationalism is to show rationally and systematically how the world is a unity and a plurality at the same time, relationalism turns out in the end to be a theory of the one and the many....The identity of an entity is defined by its relations.²¹

Christos Yannaras

Christos Yannaras is a Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Cultural Diplomacy at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens, Greece. Holding doctorates from the Université Paris IV (Sorbonne) and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, he has been a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Paris, Geneva, Lausanne, and Crete and has been awarded honorary doctorates from the University of Belgrade, St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York, and the Hellenic College in Brookline, Massachusetts. His books and monographs have been translated into twelve languages,²² and the former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams

¹⁸ Kaipayil, *Relationalism: A Theory of Being* (Bangalore: JIP Publications 2009).

¹⁹ Kaipayil, *Relationalism: A Theory of Being*, 12-38.

²⁰ Kaipayil, *Relationalism: A Theory of Being*, 8.

²¹ Kaipayil, *Relationalism: A Theory of Being*, 9-10.

²² English translations of his works, as opposed to earlier French translations, have been published quite recently, mostly in the last ten years. These include, among others: Christos Yannaras, *Postmodern Metaphysics* (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2004); *Varia-*

considers him “one of the most significant Christian philosophers in Europe,” whereas the late Olivier Clément has characterised him as “contemporary Greece’s greatest thinker.” Yannaras has focused on highlighting the differences between Greek/Hellenic/‘Byzantine’ and Western European philosophy and tradition.

Two of Yannaras’ monographs are of exceptional importance for our endeavour: in 1985, he published his *Propositions for a Critical Ontology* (*Protaseis Kritikis Ontologias*,²³ not yet translated into English) and, in 2004, his *Relational Ontology*,²⁴ a direct corollary of his work and research from the time of the first publication of *Person and Eros* in Greek as a doctoral dissertation in 1970. To arrive at Yannaras’ critical and relational ontology, one must first consider (a) his *communal epistemology* of apophaticism and (b) his *ontology of the Person* (*prosopon*), which collectively constitute the answer to the question of why his ontology is to be termed (a) ‘critical’ and (b) ‘relational.’

Yannaras understands apophaticism not as the theological via *negativa*, but as a stance towards the verification of knowledge. He writes:

In the context of post-Newtonian epistemology, the apophaticism of the Greek tradition of the theory of knowledge acquires a new importance. We call *apophaticism* (1) the denial that we exhaust knowledge in its formulation; (2) the refusal to identify the understanding of the signifiers with the knowledge of what is signified; and (3) the symbolic character of every epistemic expression: its role in bringing together atomic (i.e., individual) experiences and embracing them within a common semantic boundary marker, a process which allows epistemic experience to be shared and once shared to be verified.²⁵

Yannaras argues further that,

The social criterion for the verification of knowledge links the mode by which we know with the mode by which we exist, and the topos of this linking is the struggle to attain *relation*, or *communion*. Truth is that knowledge that is assured by the knowledge of each person (his or her relation with reality) and that is confirmed by a testimony, or a verbal expression, in which all persons coincide – through which all are brought into a relation among themselves and with reality.²⁶

tions on the Song of Songs (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2005); *Person and Eros* (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2007); *Relational Ontology* (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2011); *The Enigma of Evil* (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2012); *Against Religion: The Alienation of the Ecclesial Event* (Brookline, MA: HC Press, 2013).

²³ Christos Yannaras, *Protaseis Kritikis Ontologias* (Athens: Domos, 1985).

²⁴ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, trans. of *I Ontologia tis Schesis* (Athens: Ikaros, 2004).

²⁵ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 2.6, 9.

²⁶ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 2.5.1, 8.

Reality itself arises as a relational event, or an event of relationality: “we signify the reality of the world as the consequence and the totality of activated relations....We situate both universal-natural becoming and human-social becoming within a set of relations. Consequently, we speak of relation as the mode by which something that exists does so.”²⁷ However, a precise definition of relation is needed in this context, and Yannaras offers it by writing that,

Relation is knowledge as immediate experiential assurance, the mode by which we recognize reality. It is the mode by which we participate in the communion of experiential assurance, the mode by which each person can verify knowledge of reality. It is the mode by which what we recognize as existent exists, the mode by which existence is both realized and manifested.²⁸

The observations (a) that knowledge arises from experience, (b) that experience arises from relation, (c) that every relation constitutes an experience,²⁹ and (d) that, in turn, knowledge arises from relation, taken together, link communal epistemology and relational ontology in a whole that cannot be divided, and in which the possibility of *a priori* truths, prescribed doctrines, and axiomatic theories are excluded.

The otherness of the individual, or of anything that constitutes an otherness, is fundamental for the possibility of an ontology based on relation and a prerequisite of freedom:

The otherness of the rational subject is an existential fact: it is activated or manifested as a uniqueness that is not subject to general, common predeterminations, which belong to the essence or nature. That is to say, the otherness of the rational subject is activated or manifested as an existential fact or a product of indeterminacy, or *freedom*.³⁰

However, it is relation that manifests the otherness of the related, their otherness arises from the relation:

The meaning of *otherness* can only be comparative (i.e., morphic) when the *other* is defined in relation to a given homotropy. In its hypostatic (i.e., particular) expression, every natural operation (of any natural homotropy) has a specific, or morphic, otherness. The difference between the homotropy of the natural operation and the otherness of its hypostatic expression is a difference signifying *logos*: nat-

²⁷ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 1.2.2, 2.

²⁸ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 2.5.3, 9.

²⁹ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies [Six Philosophical Paintings]* (Athens: Ikaros, 2011), 58.

³⁰ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 2.1.4, 5.

ural homotropy signifies the *logos* of the species, and hypostatic otherness signifies the *logos* of the subject. Both *logoi* are situated (as is their difference) within humanity's rational (*logiki*) capacity, or the rationality that is accidental to human nature – the mode by which a human being recognizes and signs reality.³¹

However, is relation only a *capability* of humanity, or is it the mode in which man *is*? Yannaras would answer that “in the ‘logical space’ that determines the signifier *anthropos* (human being) we also include the possibilities of self-transcending referentiality – relative existential freedom – which are always made operative (by the natural operations of self-conscious rationality and creative difference) as *relation* or *invitation-to-relation*.”³² The human being cannot but be relational, but the question remains as to what the extent is of his attainable freedom from natural individuality, and existential freedom from necessities and predeterminations. In this context, the *other* of the relation is the way to freedom, albeit only relative freedom:

The meaning of otherness can be one signifying freedom when the *other* is defined, and confirmed, as an existential detaching of the subject from the limitations, or necessities, of nature. The only mode accessible to empirical confirmation by which the natural operation, hypostatically expressed, constitutes a fact of (relative) freedom from the limitations, or necessities, of nature is that which we call *relation*, for example, the mode of *language* and the mode of *art*.³³

For this to be attained, the way that we see the human being is of critical importance. If we define the subject merely as an individual, as *atomon*, as an undifferentiated unit of a whole that cannot be further divided,³⁴ then it is bound to the inclination to exist individually. Only the person, *proso-pon*, can manifest that freedom, and *proso-pon* is a word with exceptionally interesting semantic content. It is constituted of the words *pros* (towards, with direction to) and *ops/opos* (eye, face), so that it defines someone whose face looks at, or rather is directed towards, someone or something,³⁵ someone that exists in-relation-to, only in relation and in reference to other beings, someone who refers his existence to the other, coming out of his existential individuality; someone who exists only by participating in relations and relationships.³⁶ The transcendence of individuality by the *proso-pon* is the only path to existential freedom, because self-transcendence is only real-

³¹ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 3.7, 16.

³² Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 3.5, 14.

³³ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 3.7.1, 16.

³⁴ See Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 61.

³⁵ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 63.

³⁶ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 103.

ly self-transcendence when the subject can be freed from even the necessities and prerequisites of his own essence (*ousia*). This can happen if the hypostasis of the subject, the actual and specific manifestation of its essence, the *particular*, has ontological priority over its essence and is not restricted to the limitations and prerequisites of its essence.³⁷

Person, relation, and otherness constitute, according to Yannaras, a *relational ontology*. He writes that “otherness is realised and known in relation-to-the-other, always relationally. It is an outcome and an experience of relation and relationship. Through this perspective, we can speak (with logical consistency) of a relational ontology.”³⁸ We base “propositions for an ontological interpretation of existence and reality that are subject to critical verification or refutation”³⁹ through an apophatic stance towards epistemology, and, thus, Yannaras ascertains that a relational ontology can only be a *critical ontology*, an ontology whose propositions are always subject to the communal criterion of truth, to communal verification or refutation. He defines *critical ontology* as follows:

We term onto-logy the theoretical investigation of existence (ton logo peri tou ontos), the logical propositions for the interpretation of reality. We try, with our rational faculties, to interpret reality and existence as to the fact that it is real and that it exists. We try to interpret the meaning of existence, the cause and purpose of existence.

With the word ‘critical’ we term the process of evaluating ontological propositions, evaluating the logical accuracy of these propositions on the grounds of ‘koinos logos’ (common sense, word, rationality, language and understanding), evaluating the capability of the ontological propositions to be empirically verified through shared, communed experience accessible to all.⁴⁰

A Brief Comparison

The above introduction should have highlighted the common points in both philosophers’ thought: (1) the relational nature of existence, (2) the relational prerequisites of man’s freedom, i.e., self-transcendence, *eros*, (3) the realization of absolute otherness *through* relation, which, in turn, (4) underlines the abyss between substance and hypostasis, the genus and the particular, and (5) the ontological priority of the particular, of the hypostasis, (6) the fact that a relational ontology constitutes a critical ontology,

³⁷ For a more detailed presentation of the basic tenets of Yannaras’ philosophy, see S. Mitralaxis’ article, “Person, Eros, Critical Ontology: An attempt to Recapitulate Christos Yannaras’ Philosophy,” *Sobornost* 34, 1 (2012): 33-40.

³⁸ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 58.

³⁹ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 54.

⁴⁰ Yannaras, *Hexi Philosophikes Zografies*, 51. For another definition of critical ontology, see point 2 of Yannaras, *Protaseis Kritikis Ontologias*, 21. See also Mitralaxis, “Person, Eros, Critical Ontology.”

without which any attempt at constructing an ontological theory cannot but remain an ideological proposition, and that (7) elements of a relational and critical ontology can be found in traditions of the past: Kaipayil finds them in Indian streams of thought (while criticizing them and unveiling what he sees as inconsistencies) and Yannaras discovers them in the ancient Greek and Christianized Hellenic and Eastern Roman ('Byzantine') traditions and philosophy.

However, there are also major differences between the two philosophers, which we will attempt to expose:

(1) Kaipayil seems to build his ontology strictly within the boundaries of existence, or of reality as we know it. For Kaipayil, ontology is an internal matter of existence, without any reference to anywhere *beyond* the boundaries of existence. Even the search for a first and supreme principle, for the 'ultimate being,' as he puts it, is limited to inside the world, although even that search is not necessary: "critical ontology is open to the possibility of discovering the being-principle of the world in and through its search for being-principles of entities. However, critical ontology need not necessarily be a search for the ultimate being. One can do critical ontology without reference to the ultimate being."⁴¹ For Yannaras, however, the ontological question itself, the search for the *meaning* and *sense*, the *cause* and *purpose* of existence, point the philosopher to *beyond* existence – even if we cannot *speak* about it. In answer to Kaipayil, Yannaras would most probably cite Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, as he often does: "The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In the world everything is as it is and happens as it does happen. In it there is no value – and if there were, it would be of no value."⁴² For Yannaras, a relational ontology would entail a *personal* and *relational* cause of existence *outside the world and in relationship with* each human personal hypostasis, *personal* because it is made *in the image* of this personal *Other* of the relationship, an answer to a call 'from non-being into being.'

(2) Kaipayil observes that man is relational. For Yannaras, the fact that man is constituted as a *person* (*prosopon*) calls for a more radical approach: freedom in this sense is not simply the right to choose, but the ability to choose between existing (hypostasizing the human substance) in the mode of individuality, autonomous existence, and death, or in the mode of relation, self-transcendence, *eros*, and life, i.e., in the likeness of the relational (in that case, triune) *Other* of the relationship.

(3) Kaipayil maintains that the relational nature of man grants him freedom. Yannaras, as a corollary of his position as presented in the previous points, wonders about the *limits* of that freedom. He asks if the affirmation of the human person to exist relationally could preserve his absolute

⁴¹ Kaipayil, *Critical Ontology*, 36.

⁴² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (New York: Humanities Press, 1961), 6.41.

otherness, and his will to relate as will to exist even beyond natural individual onticity:

How should we conceive of the subject of existential referential ecstasy as a hypostatic reality not exhausted in natural individual onticity? By which categories (capable of empirical confirmation) can we signify the hypostatic fact of subjectivity as activated by means of brain functions but realized existentially as an unlimited fact of relation? The question permits the quandary whether death – the supreme manifestation of evil for natural individual onticity – also dissolves the hypostatic rationality, which is not subject to definite localization.⁴³

The possibility that the rational individual should not be subject to the law of biological death can be traced only through uncertain indications, indirect epistemic probing – as ‘in a mirror, dimly.’ These uncertain indications or indirect probing constitute a proposition of the meaning of existence and of that which exists. They amount to a thematic analysis of the signifier relational ontology.⁴⁴

(4) For Kaipayil, it is with the intellect that we move from the empirical to the transcendent: “the ability of the human intellect to draw logical conclusions from the analysis of experience”⁴⁵ is that which unveils ontological truths, even in an empirical context. “Critical ontology...believes in the dynamism of the human intellect to move from the empirical to the transcendent. The very same human intellect that knows the empirical world makes this cognitive passage or transcendence. This cognitive transcendence is inherent in the intellect and the intellect is not satisfied until it arrives at the knowledge of the ultimate principles of the world.”⁴⁶ For Kaipayil, the intellect as a separate function, as a *facultas ratiōis*, is the subject, not only of ontological research, but of human life itself. However, for Yannaras, it is the human *existence* as a whole – the human *person* and *hypostasis* in its totality and unity, without divisions or dualities – that experiences existence and *knows*, for relation is a cognitive event in itself, and cognition a relational event in itself. In the greater context of Yannaras’ and Kaipayil’s philosophy, a context which cannot be expounded in detail here, this difference plays a major role.

(5) It could be said that there is room for a misunderstanding of Kaipayil’s rejection of ‘objective truths’ as a road to solipsism, which could turn relationalism to mere relativism. The leap towards a communal verification of knowledge, an explicitly apophatic epistemology, could perhaps remedy this. Kaipayil states that “critical metaphysics does not maintain that there exist objective truths out there and we discover them. Rather, critical

⁴³ Yannaras: *Relational Ontology*, pt. 18.3.3, 105-106.

⁴⁴ Yannaras: *Relational Ontology*, pt. 20.5, 120.

⁴⁵ Kaipayil: *Critical Ontology*, 31.

⁴⁶ Kaipayil: *Critical Ontology*, 32.

metaphysics sees its task as one of interpretation. Reality permits us to have metaphysically different interpretations of it, but each interpretation must be an interpretation of the ‘texts’ of our empirical experience.”⁴⁷ The philosophical path from these formulations to relativism or solipsism might be recognized as a short one. Yannaras clearly accepts the objective realities that constitute the horizon of relations:

If relation is a real presupposition of existence and knowledge for humanity (the mode by which we exist and know), then the factors – essential for perception to function – of cause and purpose, space and time, beginning and end, although constituted as experiential givens by relation, are only the horizon of every event of relation, boundary markers or measures of the event of relation. And, as measures or boundary markers, they inevitably have some character of objectivity – that is, they cannot be taken as subjective products of rational referentiality; they have at least the ‘objectivity’ of language.⁴⁸

Apart from that, the communal and apophatic epistemological stance locates the validation of knowledge, not in the individual intellectual faculty, but in the Heraclitian “*for if we are in communion with each other, we are in truth, but if we exist privately, we are in error.*”⁴⁹

The brevity of this article limits us from exposing the common points and the differences between these parallel *relational and critical ontologies* more thoroughly. However, such an undertaking would surely be most interesting, and we strongly hope that it will be researched in the near future.

⁴⁷ Kaipayil, *An Essay on Ontology*, 17.

⁴⁸ Yannaras, *Relational Ontology*, pt. 20.3.4, 118.

⁴⁹ *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. Hermann Diels, 5th ed. Walther Kranz (Berlin, Berlin: Weidmann, 1934), Band I, 148, 28-30.

Mystical Language as a Method of Expression in Islamic Spirituality

Ruzana Pskhu

When one discusses mysticism and its logic and language, the first question that might arise is “What do these words express”? In other words, does the content of a mystical text reflect one true Reality, which can be named differently as God, Absolute, Brahman, Viṣṇu, and so on, or are these words only the specific expression of a mystic’s feelings and vision of the world – just as a poem is a verbal expression of a poet’s inner life? Everybody would concede that our question is not particularly original. The famous accusation of Rudolf Carnap against traditional philosophy and metaphysics, expounded in his article “The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language,” will serve as a vivid example of how one might make sense of a language which is not rooted in any common experience, sense perception included:

Our claim that the statements of metaphysics are entirely meaningless, that they do not assert anything, will leave even those who agree intellectually with our results with a painful feeling of strangeness: how could be it be explained that so many men in all ages and nations, among them eminent minds, spent so much energy, nay veritable fervor, on metaphysics if the latter consisted of nothing but mere words, nonsensically juxtaposed?...They serve for *the expression of the general attitude of a person towards life....* Metaphysicians are musicians without musical ability.¹

This magnificent article, which is concerned more with philosophical language than with philosophy itself, reveals many problems concerning the logical structure and the representation or reconstruction of the world in language. Nevertheless, it also demonstrates a real misunderstanding of the very core of philosophical (and also mystical) language and its illogical character – or to express it more precisely, its counter-logical character.

In his Preface to the second edition of his work, *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism*, Carl Ernst notes:

There are two extremes in the comparative study of mysticism today. One point of view, which might be termed the univocal approach to mysticism, sees it as the constant unifying element that underlies the

¹ Rudolf Carnap, “The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language,” trans. Arthur Pap, in *Logical Positivism*, ed. A. J. Ayer (New York: The Free Press, 1959).

apparent discrepancies between religious traditions. This perspective is associated with the writings of Walter Stace as well as advocates of the Perennial Philosophy such as Sayyid Nasr. An opposing perspective, which could be called the equivocal approach, asserts that there is no generic mysticism, and that a “constructive” epistemology reveals that the forms of all mystical experience are determined by cultural and linguistic factors; therefore all mystical traditions are radically different from one another.²

This differentiation of univocal and equivocal approaches presupposes that it is possible to study mystical philosophy as a scientific object which can verify this Reality or the God which is described in it – or, at least, correlate with it or Him. Here, I quite agree with Carnap’s description of “metaphysicians as musicians without musical ability,”³ and I even dare to paraphrase his sentence and correlate it with the mystical texts. In them, there is no logic, no objectivity – only a specific ‘way of speaking.’

However, we have no instrument to verify or check mystical truths. That is why we should cast aside this differentiation and the question itself, because it has no scientific use or sense. But another question arises: how can we investigate mystical language if we reject the possibility of going beyond the bounds of reason? I think that there are only two possibilities if one wishes to study mysticism: one of them – non-scientific – is to adhere to a mystical tradition, to become a practical mystic; the other is to study mystical philosophy *via* its “parlance,” its “way of speaking,” i.e., *via* a mystical language. We should remember that there is a third approach to mysticism, which we can find in the works of Michael Sells. He took, as the object of his study, the relation between language and mystical experience.

According to Sells, mystical language, founded as it is on the aporia of the ineffability of its subject, accepts the “double proposition” as its basic semantic unit. The meaning in mystical texts takes shape in the gap between two mutually contradictory propositions. Any positive statement about the transcendent cannot be true, for, as the transcendent is “beyond form, limit and thought,” it is also “beyond language.” The first statement must, therefore, be contradicted or modified by another statement. But the second statement, because it also occurs in language, is also untrue and has to be “unsaid” in its turn. Sells describes this as “a linguistic regress”:

² Carl W. Ernst, “Preface to the Second Edition,” *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism* (London: Archetype, 2nd ed. forthcoming). Ernst tried “to develop a non-essential approach to comparison that allows us to take account of difference, by examining historical encounters between mystical traditions (such as Sufism and Yoga) that include acts of appropriation, resistance, and interpretation,” 5, accessed June 1, 2020 <http://www.ignaciodar-naude.com/espiritualismo/Words of Ecstasy in Sufism,C.W.Ernst.pdf>.

³ Carnap, “The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language,” 80.

Each statement I make – positive or ‘negative’ – reveals itself as in need of correction. The correcting statement must then itself be corrected, *ad infinitum*. The authentic subject of discourse slips continually back beyond each effort to name it or even to deny its nameability.⁴

Mysticism is frequently defined as an experience of direct communion with God or union with the Absolute. But definitions of mysticism (a relatively modern term) are often imprecise and usually rely on the presuppositions of the modern study of mysticism, namely, that mystical experiences involve a set of intense and usually individual and private psychological states. Mysticism involves the practice of contemplation both in the philosophical sense of the contemplation of truth and in the ‘supernatural’ sense of having knowledge of God *via* a life of prayer. Nevertheless, the ‘mystical way’ is primarily practical, not theoretical, and is something in which the whole self is engaged; the great mystics speak of how they acted rather than how they speculated.

It is important to see how mystics themselves understand the meaning and place of language as instrument of description of their mystical experience. By way of example, I wish to look at the Iraqi mystic of tenth century, Muhammad Ben Abd al-Jabbar an-Niffary. In the main Sufi biographical sources, Niffary is not mentioned. Our knowledge of his life is limited, and we can say little substantial to explain his doctrine. Nevertheless, an example from his work is illustrative.

Niffary’s written legacy consists of several very small treatises and only two vast works. One of them is *Kitab al-mawaqif* or *The Book of Spiritual Stayings*, and the other is *Kitab al-mukhatabat* or *The Book of Spiritual Addresses*. Both texts are very similar in their structure, style, and strong expressiveness. The dialogues between the God and the mystic, presented in these two works, aim to explain the main “stayings” on the path toward God, and God himself reveals to the mystic the divine meaning of these “stayings,” which are denoted by different terms. Niffary’s parlance is paradoxical and symbolical. In the scholarly investigations of Niffary’s works, the complexity and symbolism of Niffary’s language is widely recognized. Everyone who reads Niffary’s texts in the original knows how it is difficult to translate them from the Arabic. The semantic fullness of the text, its sophisticated parlance form and polyphony, are transportable to other languages only with great difficulty. The paradoxicality of Niffary’s language exhibits a non-normal (perhaps supernormal) state of Sufi consciousness. Its symbolical character reveals the impossibility of expressing, in language, the communication of a human soul with God. The diversity of the poetic expressions of Niffary points at the logical impossibility of the verbal expression of communication with the Supreme Entity. The semantic polyse-

⁴ Michael A. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2.

my of this text provides the reader and the researcher with a wide field for interpretation: one of Niffary's phrases can generate two or three clarifying interpretations. I think that the very rich allegorical character of his texts extremely complicates academic research if the researcher is in unfavorable conditions and does not have – what is indispensable for any historian of philosophy – information about the ideas of his predecessors or followers, the historical and cultural influences on his intellectual evolution, his own explanations of his worldview, etc. All this, as I have mentioned above, lies beyond the possibilities of even those researchers who take the trouble to translate and study Niffary's mystical heritage. The researcher remains only with the text itself and has to deal with it or, to be more precise, with the "parlance" by which Niffary expressed his spiritual experience of communion with God.

The doctrine of Niffary is based on the concept of "staying" (*waqfah*), which is regarded as the spirit of *gnosis* (*ma'rifah*): while *gnosis* sees both God and itself, *waqfah* sees only God. *Ma'rifah* is the limit of the expressible, but *waqfah* is beyond the expressible. The human path to God, according to Niffary, has three dangerous stages: (1) the letter (*harf*), i.e., the Koran, (2) the knowledge (*ilm*), and (3) the *gnosis* (*ma'rifah*), i.e., the mystical knowledge. All three are regarded by Niffary as important, and hidden, obstacles on the path to true communion with God, because according to Niffary, they all hide God from the mystic.

In Niffary's dialogues there are two voices. Sometimes it is difficult to know who is speaking to whom, and identities seem to shift at the center of the standing. The paradoxicality of the phrases used by Niffary to express his thoughts completely disorients the reader in his attempts to understand and grasp the logical structure of Niffary's doctrine. Contrast of meanings, contradictions of thought when some meanings emerge that are opposite to what has been just expressed – all this deprives the reader of hope of reconstructing Niffary's doctrine. The only thing, which Niffary grants to his reader, is the possibility of following the process of his thinking or, to be more precise, of watching how he plays the language game which is developing in front of him in the pages of the work. The only thing that we can say with certainty is that Niffary's *Kitab al-mawaqif* is constructed mainly on unexpectedness: the reader is in a stressful situation of never-ending paradoxicality and absurdity. When God gives to the mystic a certain prescription, always, as a rule, it is necessary to expect an opposite prescription. The "fruit" of such paradoxicality should be an understanding of the true nature of God as love, which is saving and gracious.

The framework of the reader's habitual representations, concepts, and language possibilities, while pondering over Niffary's phrases, needs to be broken. This means that any attempts to please God by adhering to any 'system' or to a certain way in search of His realization are useless, insofar as they are based on a person's belief that he is able to save himself. The value of such efforts is equal to zero; what can give them any importance consists only in their force of attracting someone to God. It is possible to say that the

only thing that remains to the person on the path to God is a seeking, which will be his path. In other words, the knowledge which is found by the mystic in dialogue with God, is the realization that all depends on God's will. And in this situation of awareness of an extreme dependence on God, the only thing that remains for the mystic is to hope for the favor of God, that is entirely dependent on His will.

So all that we have is Niffary's language, and this language can be investigated only by philological methods of interpretation and an understanding of Niffary's mode of thinking. Niffary's terminology, as said above, is very specific and original. The terms "*waqfa*" (staying), "*nazar*" (look), "*ru'ayah*" (vision), etc., have a specific significance, and if one wants to understand these terms, he should plunge into the text, investigating it from various sides. The most interesting term, which is very significant for Niffary and which occurs very often in his texts, is the term "*ru'ayah*" or "vision." Yet it is noteworthy that Niffary's very small treatise,⁵ *Wa min khasā'is kalāmihi al-gharīb fi-l-mahabba*, is based on the term "*nazar*" or "look," – which, in fact, is radically different from the term "*ru'ayah*." This very small treatise is devoted to the theme of Divine Love, and it has been extensively analyzed by the Jesuit Paul Nwyia in his article "Niffari et l'amour-nazar."⁶

In the introductory words of his article, Nwyia says that, first of all, the title of this text of Niffary reflects the specific feature of Niffary's manner of writing, which can be denoted by the word "*gharīb*," i.e., "strange," and we should be ready, says Nwyia, to find in this text a strange understanding of Love, which is totally different from any other Sufi concept of Love. It does not mean that Niffary is a bad Sufi or that he is not a Sufi. Rather, he is a different or unordinary Sufi, but also a Sufi *par excellence*. This strangeness is a result of his manner of developing his thought: Niffary only touches the things, the ideas, but never dwells on them.⁷ He never goes into details on the problems touched on by him, and this method allows the reader himself to conjecture about the core of the dialogue with God. The structure of this treatise is very simple and consists of three parts: 'Introduction,' 'Questions,' and 'Answers.'

In the 'Introduction,' God addresses the human being (which is personified in Niffary and who is addressed as "*ayyatuha al-bunya*") and then, after a series of question, He displays His answers on the questions. These answers present the principal part of the text and contain the development of Niffary's dialectics of Love – 'nazar.' The introduction of the treatise does not contain an idea of "nazar," however. Love is considered here only as a proposition between the lover and the beloved (*hukm baina al-muhibb wa-l-*

⁵ The full title of this treatise is denoted in different manuscripts as "Wa min khasā'is kalāmihi al-gharīb fi-l-mahabba." See Paul Nwyia, "Niffari et l'amour-nazar," in *Islam-wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen* (Festschrift für Fritz Meier-Wiesbaden, 1974), 191-197, at 191.

⁶ Nwyia, "Niffari et l'amour-nazar."

⁷ Nwyia, "Niffari et l'amour-nazar," 191.

mahbub), which can be transformed into a conflict between them: “The beloved submits to the judgments of the lover until the beloved falls in love with the lover. But when the beloved has fallen in love with his lover, he accepts the judgments of his lover in respect of him.” Until the beloved is an object of love, he receives passively the judgments of the lover. But, if transformed from the object of love into the subject of love, then the judgments, which he had in regard of the relationship “lover-beloved,” will conflict with his own judgments as “beloved-lover.” The conflict is possible only if the beloved falls in love with the lover, affirms Niffary, because, at the beginning, when the lover is only seeking the beloved, the latter accepts this search from the side of the lover, and this search is a seeking of the beloved by himself. But when the beloved falls in love with the lover, the latter enjoys the search, not the beloved, and it is a cause of a loss of the sincerity of the love. That is why there is a conflict between the beloved and the lover.⁸ The lover’s seeking and looking during his search for the beloved is a difference between them, until both become, at the same time, an object and a subject of the love. And this mutuality of love makes possible a dialectics of “*nazar*” or the look of ‘vis-à-vis.’

Then Niffary presents God’s sayings about the development of love. In the centre of God’s speech there are two terms: “look” (*nazar*) and “looking aside” (*ghadd an-nazar*). It is very important that the author of the text, according to Niffary, is God, not Niffary himself, and, in the final analysis, it is God who is the Beloved and the Lover at the same time. Niffary gives a very deep analysis of dialectics of ‘love looking,’ its results in the lover’s being and in the being of the beloved – but more interesting is his analysis of the reasons of ‘looking aside’ in this love looking.

This analysis sheds light on the relationship between God and the human being. In fact, why can the lover ‘look aside’ his beloved? And what is the result of this looking aside in regard to the beloved and the lover? There are two answers to these two questions: first, the lover looks aside, because he is filled by the beloved and confused by his look; the lover is too weak to bear it, and he continues to seek the beloved and finds pleasure in this seeking. The beloved, in his turn, is afraid that the lover can negate his judgments of love – that is why he looks aside – though, in reality, he concentrates himself on the lover.⁹ The lover sees this looking aside of his beloved and guesses that the feeling of the beloved has changed, and he, in his turn, begins to feel dread, and turns his look to another object. Thus, there is a rupture between the lover and beloved – which will last as long as the beloved does not take the initiative in the renewal of their relationship. This analysis shows that the beloved is an object of love, but he is a subject of the dynamics of this love, because it is he who prepares all the conditions for nearness with the lover.

⁸ Nwyia, “Niffari et l’amour-nazar,” 192-193.

⁹ Nwyia, “Niffari et l’amour-nazar,” 195.

At the end of the dialogue, God addresses Niffary with very important words: “One, who characterizes me, is situated on the side of solitude, but who characterizes you, is situated on the side of chosenness.” Actually, God is alone and He should be loved, and the human being is a lover, but instead of striving for God, he is striving to cover his experience of love by his looking. The human being looks for and to God, but then looks away from Him, looking for His reward for this love – and it becomes a cause of judgment of his knowledge about God, not of judgment of his feeling of love. That is why, says God, you are confused, but you do not loathe My reward. In short, it is a way which leads to a deadlock; this way can lead a human being only to himself, because the real Path to God needs the sincerity (*ikhhlās*) of the lover, which strives for the Beloved, not for His reward. But even if the looks of both (Beloved and lover) meet, the judgment of this meeting of eyes cannot be revealed by human nature – it is a gift of judgment of the inexpressible mystery.¹⁰

In light of this conception of vision, we can say that mystical language as poetry is a reflection of one’s vision, and that one need be attentive and love listening. The mystic has a unique inner state and, therefore, no instrument (reason or language) is adequate to share his experience with anybody else. That is why one should study mystical language only by means of philosophy.

¹⁰ Nwyia, “Niffari et l’amour-nazar,” 191-197.

Playing with *Tao*: The Art of the Qin and Its World View

Wang Shang-Wen

Introduction

When the word music is mentioned, many people would immediately associate it with the play among notes, the performer, and sound. Aside from the internal play that music has, it also has an “external play,” i.e., the “relatedness to the world,” which the German philosopher Albrecht Wellmer calls “Weltbezug.”¹ The “relatedness” or “reference” to the world is, however, not as direct and obvious as in the “concept language,” as Ogden and Richards indicate in the “semiotic triangle”: “signifier,” “signified,” and “subject.”² Music is a language in its own right. Adorno, then, called this character of music the “similarity to language” (Sprachähnlichkeit).³

The example of the Qin (or Ch’in, 琴) or Guqin (古琴, the ancient Qin) music can explain this characteristic “relatedness to the world” well. The Qin is one of the oldest musical instruments in China. It contains the rich cultural meaning of China. The ear accustomed to western music has difficulty enjoying the music of the Qin. If one understands the many meanings (which come mainly from Taoist aesthetics) behind the music, one will have a deeper experience of both the music and the world.

In this paper, the art and aesthetics of the Qin will be shown in three sections. The first section is a general introduction to the art of the Qin; the second section is about the characteristics of Taoism and its aesthetic ideal; the third section includes three case analyses which show how Taoist aesthetics is incarnated in the art of the Qin: its construction, the program, and an iconographical analysis. In the conclusion, I will indicate what the Taoist aesthetic attitude can contribute in this time of global change.

The General Introduction to the Art of the *Qin*

The *Qin* or *Guqin* is a kind of string instrument of the zither family, which is one of the oldest Chinese classic music instruments. In 2003, the art of the Qin was included in the list of “oral and intangible heritage of

¹ Albrecht Wellmer, *Versuch über Musik und Sprache* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2009), 10.

² Cf. C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Trubner, 1923).

³ Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, “Fragment über Musik und Sprache,” in *Quasi una Fantasia* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963).

humanity” by UNESCO, because of its representativeness of the Chinese worldview and view of music. The Qin is a plucked string instrument with seven strings, which are tuned up in C-D-F-G-A-c-d.

Illustration 1. *Qin*, Front and Back



Huang He, ed. *The Appreciation of Chinese Guqin*, 115.

The earliest descriptions of the Qin appeared in the *Classic of Poetry* (詩經, *Shijing*), which is the oldest extant collection of Chinese poetry. It belongs to the “Five Classics,”⁴ which were believed to be compiled by Confucius. The *Classic of Poetry* emerged between the tenth and seventh century B.C. The instrument exists, therefore, since at least the seventh century B.C.

In the descriptions in the *Classic of Poetry*, the Qin is always accompanied with the *Se* (瑟), which is another kind of plucked string instrument, but has only five strings. “By means of the Qin and *Se*, man befriends the beautiful lady” (“窈窕淑女，琴瑟友之”).⁵ “The love between husband and wife resembles the interplay of the Qin and the *Se*” (“妻子好合，如鼓琴瑟”).⁶ “When honored guests come, I play the Qin and the *Se* for them” (“我有嘉賓，鼓瑟鼓琴”).⁷ The first description shows that the Qin is an instrument which can express love for a lady. In the second, the love between husband and wife is allegorically compared with the harmony between the Qin and the *Se*. The third indicates that the music of the Qin exhibits special respect to important persons.

In *Mister Lü's Spring and Autumn* (呂氏春秋, *Lüshi Chunqiu*), the famous annals edited by the chancellor Lü Buwei (呂不韋, 291-235 B.C.) of the Qin state (秦國) at the end of the “Warring States Period” (戰國時代, 475-221 B.C.), the Qin was depicted as having five strings. In the “Tomb of

⁴ The other four are: *Book of Documents* (尚書), *Book of Rites* (禮記), *Classic of Changes* (易經) and *Spring and Autumn Annals* (春秋).

⁵ Chap. *Guan Sui* (關雎).

⁶ Chap. *Chang Di* (常棣).

⁷ Chap. *Lu Ming* (鹿鳴).

Marquis Yi of Zeng” (曾侯乙墓, ca. 400 B.C.),⁸ however, a Qin with ten strings was dug out. In the “Tomb of King Ma's Mound in Han Dynasty” (馬王堆漢墓),⁹ which was built in the early Western Han Dynasty (漢朝, 206 B.C.-9 A.D.), a Qin with seven strings was found. The structure of the Qin could be fixed after the Western Han Dynasty.

The art of the Qin has received much respect in Chinese culture. Confucius, the leading philosopher in China, for example, emphasized the cultivating function of music in society, and he was also a good Qin player. Moreover, the art of the Qin was the first art of the Chinese “Quadrivium” (文人四藝), which must be practiced well, if someone wanted to be a qualified educated person.¹⁰

Illustration 2. Confucius Learns the Qin Playing
by Gai Chi (改琦, 1774-1829)



Huang He, ed. *The Appreciation of Chinese Guqin*, 62.¹¹

Taoism and Its Aesthetic Ideal

The contents and aesthetics of Qin art became richer and richer over time. Many different schools of philosophy, e.g., the above-mentioned Confucianism, noted the enrichment achieved through the art of the Qin. The philosophy of Taoism (or Daoism, “道家”), whose worldview and view of

⁸ The tomb, which lies in the province of Hubei (湖北) and was discovered in 1978, is an important archaeological site of the early Warring States period. For music(ology), there was a significant finding of a big set of bronze bells with 64 bells.

⁹ The tomb lies in the province of Hunan (湖南) and was uncovered in 1972. There are altogether three tombs for Marquis Li Cang (利章), his wife, and a male believed to have been their son. The rich findings provide many materials for the study of the early Western Han Dynasty.

¹⁰ The four arts – Qin, Chess, Calligraphy, and Drawing – was already coupled together in the Tang Dynasty (唐, 618-907 A.D.), but they were not called the “Quadrivium” until the Ming Dynasty (明, 1368-1644 A.D.).

¹¹ See Huang He 黃河, ed., *The Appreciation of Chinese Guqin* 天籟心經:中國古琴鑒賞 (Changsha 長沙: Hunan Art 湖南藝術, 2011).

art greatly influenced Chinese aesthetics and philosophy of life in general, is also a main source of the aesthetics of Qin art.

The key concept of Taoism lies in the idea of “Tao” (道). This idea is ambiguous in daily language and has at least three meanings: 1) the way (道路), 2) to speak (道說), and 3) the truth (大道). Beside these three common meanings, the idea of Tao has a specific metaphysical meaning in *Tao Te Ching* (道德經), whose author is believed to be Laotse (or Laozi, 老子, “Old Master”):¹² In *The Origin of Being* it is written:

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal Name. The unnamable is the eternally real. Naming is the origin of all particular things. Free from desire, you realize the mystery. Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations. Yet mystery and manifestations arise from the same source. This source is called darkness. Darkness within darkness. The gateway to all understanding.¹³

Two essential determinations of the Tao are indicated as follows:

“Nature” and “Not-Doing”

Although Tao is the highest principle of the world, it does not force the world to develop with it. Because of this characteristic, the Tao is counted as “nature” (自然). The literal translation of the term “自然” is “(let it) to be what it is.” ‘Nature,’ here, means, therefore, not only the material world, but a “positive passivity”: nature generates all things but lets them grow by themselves. “Man follows the earth. Earth follows the universe. The universe follows the Tao. The Tao follows nature.”¹⁴

With this determination, the Tao can be understood as “Not-Doing” (無為). That is why Stephen Mitchell translates the last of the above-mentioned sentences as “the Tao follows only itself,” but not “the Tao follows nature” because the Tao doesn’t disturb what it originates after creation. To say that Tao does nothing, does not mean that nothing happens. In fact, the effect of “Not-Doing” is much greater than that caused by artificial dealing with the world. “The Tao never does anything, yet through it all things are done. If

¹² The biographical details of the person called Laotse are varied. According to the most popular version, Laotse was a contemporary of Confucius (551-479 B.C.), but older than him.

¹³ Laotse, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Harper Collins, 1988), chap. 1.

¹⁴ *Tao Te Ching*, chap. 25. Mitchell translates the last sentence as “The Tao follows only itself.” The translation is reasonable and meaningful, but grammatically problematic. In the first three sentences, what are followed are definite things (earth, universe, Tao), grammatically they are nouns. The fourth sentence should have the same structure, because the four sentences here are parallel.

powerful men and women could enter into it, the whole world would be transformed by itself, in its natural rhythms.”¹⁵

The “Void” (虛) and the “Peace” (靜)

The “not” of Tao does not really mean that it does nothing, but, in fact, it provides a field of potentiality, which is called the “Void” (虛). The Tao provides this specific “passive activity,” which lets all beings exist in it. “The Tao is like a well: used but never used up. It is like the eternal void: filled with infinite possibilities.”¹⁶ Moreover, Laotse liked to use the metaphor “vale” to indicate the “void” of Tao: “The greatest virtue is like the vale.”¹⁷ The deeper the void of the vale, the more it can contain.

The great Tao, which is effective as the invisible prime cause of Being, moves all the visible phenomena in the world. The movement of the Tao cannot be obviously perceived by human beings, because, compared to the Tao, they are relatively tiny – just like people cannot perceive the movement of the earth. Laotse called this great but not perceivable movement of Tao, “peace” or “serenity” (靜): “Empty your mind of all thoughts. Let your heart be at peace. Watch the turmoil of beings, but contemplate their return. Each separate being in the universe returns to the common source. Returning to the source is serenity.”¹⁸

The Tao behaves not only as the ontological basis of the world, but also the aesthetical ideal of art: Excellent art is what can exhibit the unperceivable Tao through the perceivable forms. The particular aesthetics of Taoism was formed between the perceivable and the unperceivable.

The Art View of the Qin: Three Case Analyses

Qin art has its special characteristics close to the aesthetics of Taoism. The following are three aspects from which it may become clearer how Taoist aesthetics is incarnated in the Qin art. The first is the construction of the Qin instrument, the second is the topos of the Qin music, and the third is an iconographical analysis of the appreciation of Qin music.

The Construction of the Qin Instrument

In the famous collection of folk stories *Stories to Caution the World*, which was edited by Menglong Feng (馮夢龍, 1574-1646) in the Ming

¹⁵ *Tao Te Ching*, chap. 37, Mitchell’s translation. The idea “Not-Doing” implies the political critique that the government should not mistreat the people by giving them too much work, but let them develop naturally.

¹⁶ *Tao Te Ching*, chap. 4, Mitchell’s translation.

¹⁷ *Tao Te Ching*, chap. 41, my translation.

¹⁸ *Tao Te Ching*, chap. 16, Mitchell’s translation.

Dynasty (明朝, 1368-1644 A.D.), there is a well-known quasi-mythological description of the origin of the Qin:

The first zither was made by Fuxi (伏羲).¹⁹ He saw the essence of the five planets fly through the air and fall on a wutong tree (梧桐).²⁰ Then a phoenix descended onto the same tree. The phoenix, the king of all birds, eats only bamboo seeds, perches only on wutong trees, and drinks only from sweet springs. Knowing that the wutong provides good timber, Fuxi thought that a musical instrument made of wood containing cosmic essences would produce the most elegant music. And so he ordered that the tree be cut down.

The thirty-three-foot-tall tree, in harmony with the thirty-three layers of heaven, was cut into three segments, representing heaven, earth, and people respectively. Fuxi tapped the upper segment, but finding the sound too delicate and soft, he put it aside. He then took up the bottom segment, tapped it, and, finding the sound too coarse and thick, put it aside as well. When he tapped the middle segment, he discovered that the sound was neither too delicate and soft nor too coarse and thick. The timber was put into an ever-running stream to soak for seventy-two days, in harmony with the seventy-two divisions of the year.²¹ When the time was up, it was taken out of the water, dried in the shade, and, on a chosen auspicious hour of an auspicious day, was made by Liu Ziqi (劉子奇), the master craftsman, into a musical instrument.

Because it produced the kind of music heard only in the Jasper Pool (瑤池),²² it was named the jasper zither. It was three feet, six and one-tenth inches long, in harmony with the three hundred and sixty-one degrees of the cosmic circumference; eight inches wide in front, in harmony with the eight solar terms of the year; four inches wide at the back, in harmony with the four seasons; and two inches thick, in harmony with the two elements of heaven and earth. It has a Golden Boy (金童) head, a Jade Maiden (玉女) waist,²³ a fairy's back, a dragon's pond (龍池), a phoenix's pool (鳳沼),²⁴ jade tuning pegs, and gold frets. The frets are twelve in number, in harmony with the twelve months. There is also another fret in the middle, which

¹⁹ One of the first legendary emperors of Chinas.

²⁰ The wutong tree is native to Asia. It can grow to twelve meters high. Because of its excellent quality for sound, the wood is used to produce the soundboard of many Chinese instruments, including the Qin and Zheng (箏), another kind of plucked string instrument.

²¹ Besides the four seasons and twelve months, the Chinese separated one year into twenty-four solar terms (節氣) and seventy-two periods (候), as good indications for daily life and agriculture.

²² The Jasper Pool is the location of the palace of the Western Queen (西王母), who is one of the greatest gods in Chinese mythologies.

²³ Golden Boy and Jade Maiden are the attendants of the Jade Emperor (玉皇大帝), who is the highest god in heaven.

²⁴ There are two sound holes under the Qin. The big one is called the dragon's pond, and the small one the phoenix's pool.

stands for the leap month. There were originally five strings, which, on a cosmic scale, stood for the five phases of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, but on the zither itself they also represent the five musical notes.²⁵

The description firstly shows a number-cosmology, which dominates also Pythagoras' philosophy. The Tao, which behaves as the prime cause of the world, is to some extent close to the number-structure of the cosmos. The description can be observed from two aspects, which show that the Qin agrees with the Tao on the number-structure.

The first was the selection of the material. Not every wood could be used to produce the instrument, but only the wood of the wutong tree: it received the essence of the five planets and, because of its particular holiness, the sacred phoenix was willing to land on it. Moreover, the height of the tree agreed with the number of the layers of heaven. That the tree was separated into three parts is a metaphor, that it contained the "three great principles" – (三才) heaven (天), human beings (人), and earth (地). That Fuxi selected the middle segment to produce the Qin instrument implied that the art of the Qin was the essence of human beings, mediate between the heaven and the earth. The timber was soaked in water for seventy two days, and the number of days agreed with the seventy two periods of a year.

The second aspect is the end product of the Qin. The numbers of the length, width, and height of the Qin correspond to the numbers of the cosmos. The form of the Qin appeared as sacred figures (Golden Boy and Jade Maiden) and auspicious animals (dragon and phoenix). The five strings symbolized externally the five elements of the world (五行) – metal, wood, water, fire and earth – and, internally, the five tones of the Chinese scale.

Although a quasi-mythological description with a number-cosmological image cannot be treated as a convincing document, it still indicates an excellent view of the art that the Qin instrument is in harmony with the great Tao and is a sacred miniature of the cosmos.

The Topos of Qin Music: Mediated Nature

The most famous Qin music always has its topos within the framework of nature or natural things, e.g., *The Flowing Water* (流水), *The Water and Cloud in Xiaoxiang* (潇湘水雲), and *The Landfall of the Wild Goose on the Sandbank* (平沙落雁). The topos of nature is, in fact, not only in Qin music, but a favorite theme of Chinese art. This topos of music, which might be classified as "program music" after the European genre,²⁶ is, in reality, not a

²⁵ The Chinese scale is pentatonic. Menglong Feng, *Stories to Caution the World*, trans. Suhui Yang and Yunqin Yang (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2005), 11.

²⁶ Hans Oesch wrote that "The Melodies for the Qin are Understood as Program Music." See *Aussereuropäische Musik*, Teil 1, *Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, Band 8 (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1984), 85. See also Liu Jingshu, *Die vom Daoismus inspirierte Musikanschauung und ihre Einwirkung auf die Qin-Musik* (PhD. Diss., Universität zu Köln, Köln, 1997); Liang Ming-Yueh and Joseph S. C. Lam, "Qin

pure description of nature, but an expression of the *fusion of nature and human beings*. Nature, which is expressed through art, is not treated as an object against human beings as subjects, but as mediated and (Hegelian) “aufhebene” nature.

This point can be shown more clearly through an analysis of an example of Qin music, *Three Times Plucking the Plum Blossom* (梅花三弄). This work was thought to be composed by Huan Yin (桓伊) in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (東晉, 317-420). Huan Yin was a Chinese flute virtuoso. He originally composed this work for the Chinese flute; later it was arranged for the Qin. “Three Times Plucking” means that the “Plum Blossom” theme is played three times on three different keys. The theme is played characteristically with overtones, which are used very often in Qin music because of the specific sound effect – just like the echo from the far vale.

The plum blossom possesses a special meaning in China. By means of its resistance to frost and pure color, the plum blossom symbolizes the virtuous person.²⁷ Although the title of the musical work is “plum blossom,” the music does not really describe the beautiful flower, but wants to show respect to the integrity of the person and to praise it. The piece of music has ten paragraphs and each has its particular title:

1. Introduction: Brook, Mountain, and Moon in the Night (溪山夜月);
2. Theme: The Tone Pierces through the High Cloud (聲入太霞);
3. The Blue Bird Warbles to the Soul (青鳥啼魂);
4. Theme: The Tones of Jade Flute (玉笛聲), played an octave lower;
5. The Tones of Jade Long Flute (玉簫聲);
6. Theme: The Sounds of Reading Aloud the Book (讀書聲), played slightly varied;
7. The Fast Wind Sweeps through the Jade (凌風嘜玉);
8. The Tones of Metal Flute (鐵笛聲);
9. The Wind Shakes the Plum Blossoms (風蕩梅花);
10. Can't Help Carrying On (欲罷不能).

The titles of the paragraphs are like the elements of a vivid landscape painting, where many natural things intertwine with each other. In the painting, there are different musical instruments. These instruments can, but do not have to, be sounded by human beings.²⁸ In most of the scenes, human

(Ch'in),” *Oxford Music Online*, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.47071>

²⁷ The plum blossom was thus selected as the national flower of the Republic of China, in 1964.

²⁸ The instruments can sound by themselves. Chuang Tzu (or Zhuang Zi, 莊子), the second representative of Taoism, differentiated three kinds of music (or sound): The human, the earthy and the heavenly music. The human music is produced by human beings with instruments. The earthy music is produced by the wind, which blows

beings are indirectly hidden. In the fifth and tenth paragraph, human beings appear openly. In the fifth paragraph, someone reads aloud, but the sound of human beings does not underlie the reader but atmospherically belongs to the whole of nature. The title of the tenth, the last, paragraph, “Can’t Help Carrying On,” is a Chinese idiom, which means that an activity or an event is so exciting that the participants can’t help carrying on with it. This idiom here indicates, however, the reality of human existence, and that its subjectivity could be illusory: *Only the Tao, the nature is the main role and owns the real subjectivity.*

Music Example 1.

Three Times Plucking the Plum Blossom, Introduction and Theme

Three Times Plucking the Plum Blossom, Introduction and Theme
 Jingshu Liu, *Die vom Daoismus inspirierte Musikanschauung und ihre Einwirkung auf die Qin-Musik*, 158.

An Iconographical Analysis: Qin-Playing under the Trees

The experience of the playing of the Tao, where human beings and nature play together and the opposition between subject and object is cancelled, may be shown further in an analysis of a painting: *Qin-Playing under the Trees* (林下鳴琴) by Te-jun Chu (or Derun Zhu 朱德潤, 1294-1356).

Under the pine trees, which are the symbols of right-hearted personality and longevity in China, there is a Qin meeting with, principally, three persons. The middle one plays the Qin, and the other two listen to it atten-

through different holes in nature. The heavenly music is the great power of Tao. “It blows on each of the thousands of things differently, but makes each of them follow their own patterns. By themselves they all attain what’s right for them, so is there anyone who’d really be able to enslave them?” See *Zhuang Zi*, chap. 2, “Theories on all things being equal” (齊物論), trans. Nina Correa, accessed July 10, 2019, <http://www.daoisopen.com/ZZ2.html>. See also Chen Guying 陳鼓應, *The New Translation and Comments of Lao-Tzu* 老子今註今譯及評介 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu 臺灣商務), 1963; Jiang Yimin, *Große Musik ist tonlos. Eine historische Darstellung der frühen philosophisch-daoistischen Musikästhetik* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1995).

tively. Together, they have some cakes to enjoy. This is a typical form of meeting for ancient Chinese men of letters.

The music seems so beautiful, that, on the right side, the fisherman rows his boat closer to the shore, in order to hear it clearly. The boy servant, who draws water from the river, cannot help turning around, and seeing the playing of the Qin.

Illustration 3. *Qin-Playing under the Trees* (林下鳴琴) by Te-jun Chu (朱德潤, 1294-1356)



The Qin-Playing under the Trees, ink on silk, 120.8 x 58 cm.
Taipei: National Palace Museum

Illustration 4. *Qin-Playing under the Trees*, partial enlargement.



The Qin-Playing under the Trees, ink on silk, 120.8 x 58 cm.
Taipei: National Palace Museum

Beyond the river, the uninterrupted mountains extend to the horizon. In the middle of the mountains, there is a temple, which is a symbol of the transcendent world. Clouds and fog, whose calm movements mirror the invisible movement of the Tao, hover over the landscape. The technique of perspective is well used here. The scene in the foreground is emphasized with strong brush strokes and dense ink, while the far landscape is relatively abstract and painted with thin ink.

Although the title of the painting is “Qin-Playing under the Trees,” the scene of the Qin playing appears, strangely, comparatively small in the whole picture. If the author had not written down the title on the upper left corner, the audience would have seen it as a normal painting about a landscape. In fact, such an arrangement possesses a deep sense of Taoist aesthetics. What is painted, according to the guide of the title, is the Qin playing. *What is, however, played by means of the Qin?* In other words, what is intended to be presented by the Qin playing? The notes, the melodies, or the virtuosity in technique? None of the above. Rather, the *Tao hidden behind the nature*, the origin of Being. The whole painting, the whole combined with sky, earth, human beings, and nature, is what is intended to be played out in the music.

One could be so tiny, like the five small figures in the painting, if one limits himself only to his own individuality and sees his subjectivity opposed to all other things outside of him. One could also be as wide and broad as the Tao, if one is willing to play with the Tao and no more be opposed to other things; he becomes a part of the Tao. *One receives the great subjectivity of Tao, if he gives up his limited subjectivity and joins the play of the Tao.*

Conclusion: The Echo in the Time of Globalization

Globalization, a distinct mark of our time, represents a great result of human technology. With this huge development, people all over the world can exchange their ideas and products more quickly than ever before. Globalization could be an efficient instrument to create more happiness for people on earth, but, in fact, it also produces many new problems, e.g., the growth of inequality in wealth, the disappearance of non-mainstream culture, and the violent identification of the view of value. Horkheimer and Adorno indicated that the cause of a “new kind of barbarism” is the unequal development of “instrumental reason” and “purpose reason”: human beings just know how to make their instruments and methods more efficient, but they forget what the purpose of development is.²⁹ Most people behave in such a way that they focus only on their own interests and their limited subjectivity, and other people or things are just indifferent objects which have only the value to be manipulated.

²⁹ Cf. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectik der Aufklärung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1947).

This bad subject-object relation in the time of globalization should be corrected. But how is one to get people to change their deep-seated consciousness, which concentrates only on their own interest? Aesthetic education, as Friedrich Schiller suggested, could be a good prescription. Aesthetic cultivation demands that people should be disinterested, and then they can genuinely appreciate beautiful things. Taoist aesthetics can provide a solution: It reminds us that nature is not a material object to exhaust, but the origin of life, the origin of Being. If we give up our limited and tiny subjectivity, we are welcome to join the great subjectivity and the play of Tao. In the play of Tao, a situation of selflessness and ecstasy, people can experience a unique beauty and freedom.

Plato's Theory of Love

Vasiliki P. Solomou-Papanikolaou

The theme of love, which is a diachronic subject of interest in literature and in all forms of art, occupies a central place in Plato's philosophy. To best understand and evaluate the Platonic theory of love, it should be seen within the frame of ancient Greek society, which, among many things, cultivated a special form of love, with elements of pederasty.¹ Moreover, because Plato's thought is characterized by its synthetic nature (which means that his various theories are connected in a relation of mutual dependence and support), it is necessary, from a methodological point of view, to acquaint oneself with the main aspects of Platonic philosophy in general, in order to attain a deeper understanding of the Platonic theory of love.

I

Plato extensively deals with the subject of love in the dialogues *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*,² both of which belong to the middle, or mature peri-

¹ From the extensive bibliography regarding pederasty or homosexuality in ancient Greece, see H. Licht, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1932), 411-498; G. Devereux, "Greek Pseudo-Homosexuality and the 'Greek Miracle'," *Symbolae Osloenses* 42 (1968): 69-92; K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978); F. Buffière, *Eros adolescent: La pédéraste dans la Grèce antique* (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1980); G. Koch-Harnack, *Knabenliebe und Tiergeschenke: Ihre Bedeutung im päderastischen Erziehungssystem Athens*, mit einem Vorwort von W. H. Gross (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1983); B. Sergent, *L' Homosexualité dans la mythologie grecque*, Préface de G. Dumézil (Paris: Payot, 1984); M. Golden, "Slavery and Homosexuality at Athens," *Phoenix* 38 (1984): 308-324; D. Cohen, "Law, Society and Homosexuality in Classical Athens," *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 3-21; J. J. Winkler, "Laying Down the Law: The Oversight of Men's Sexual Behavior in Classical Athens," in *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World*, eds. D. M. Halperin, J. J. Winkler and F. I. Zeitlin (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 171-209; W. A. Percy III, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1996); P. W. Ludwig, *Eros and Polis: Desire and Community in Greek Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

² References to the theme of love exist in other dialogues as well, but they are circumstantial and brief and do not offer in themselves an integrated idea of Plato's conception of love. For the relevant passages, see W. S. Cobb, *The Symposium and Phaedrus: Plato's Erotic Dialogues. Translated with Introduction and Commentaries* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), 171-175 (= Appendix: References to Love [Erōs] in Other Dialogues). On the role of love in Plato's early dialogues, see K. Βουδούρης, ed., *Ερωτας, παιδεία και φιλοσοφία* (Αθήνα: Διεθνής Εταιρεία Ελληνικής Φιλοσοφίας, 1989), 13-37, esp. 17-19. On the importance of love in the *Republic*, see S. Rosen, "The Role of Eros in Plato's *Republic*," *The Review of Metaphysics* 18 (1965):

od of his writings.³ It is well known that in Plato's works of this period the theory of Ideas is developed, which – in addition to his theory of the immortality of the soul – is the highest expression of his philosophical thought. Both these theories are closely interrelated and form the basis for his theory of love. In the *Symposium*, Plato's views on love are joined mainly to his theory of Ideas, while, in the *Phaedrus*, his views on love are joined both to his theory of Ideas and to his theory of the immortality of the soul. A brief reference to the afore-mentioned theories will help us to understand better why the concept of love is so important in Plato's philosophy.

According to Plato, "what is really real,"⁴ or "what is purely real"⁵ is not the world of common experience, which is perceived through the senses and is characterized by unstoppable motion and change, but the world of Ideas, which is immovable, imperishable, eternal, and supersensible. Only philosophers are able to approach and come to know this world, by their intellect alone and through an arduous and long-lasting learning process.⁶ The stability, the objective existence, and the unchangeability of the world of Ideas assure, in Plato's view, the potential for real knowledge⁷ and, thus, the potential of acting rightly.⁸ As a matter of fact, Plato was led to the con-

452-475. (= S. Rosen, *The Quarrel Between Philosophy and Poetry. Studies in Ancient Thought* [New York and London: Routledge, 1988], 102-118.)

³ On the problem of the chronology of the Platonic dialogues and their classification in three main groups, which represent equal number periods of Plato's writings, i.e., the early, the middle and the later, and which also represent the stages of the development of Plato's thought, see H. Thesleff, *Studies in Platonic Chronology* [Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum, 70], (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1982), where the writer, among other things, cites an extensive catalogue of the conclusions of the research made by the most important scholars on the theme of the chronology of the Platonic dialogues since 1792 up to 1981 (pages 7-17); G. R. Ledger, *Re-counting Plato: A Computer Analysis of Plato's Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); L. Brandwood, *The Chronology of Plato's Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁴ See Plato, *Republic* 490b; *Phaedrus* 247e, 249c; *Philebus* 59d. Cf. *Timaeus* 52c. For Plato's work, see *Platonis Opera*, Tomi I-V, recognovit brevis adnotatione critica instruxit I. Burnet (Oxonii: E. Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1900-1907 [I=1900, II=1901, III= 1903, IV=1902, V=1907] with many reprints); new edition (1995) of vol. I by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson and J. C. G. Strachan, and, of the *Republic* (2003), by S. R. Slings. Translations from Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* are from Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff, *Plato Complete Works*, eds. J. M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis, IN and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997).

⁵ Plato, *Republic* 477a. Cf. *Republic* 478d; *Philebus* 59c.

⁶ See Plato, *Republic* 521d-540b, esp. 537d-539d.

⁷ In the *Theaetetus*, it becomes clear that "science" is not identified with "sense" (186e), which means that knowledge does not refer to the sensible world of motion and change, but to the immovable and stable world of Ideas (186d). Cf. Plato, *Republic* 477a, 479e-480a; *Phaedrus* 247d-e.

⁸ On the practical importance of the knowledge of the world of Ideas and especially of the idea of the good, see Plato, *Republic* 484c-d, 500c-501c, 517c, 519c-521a, 540a-b.

ception of the theory of Ideas, which is a theory with ontological and metaphysical content, in order to solve the problems of knowledge and action.⁹

Each Idea is a self-existent, immovable, and indivisible entity, incorporeal, eternal, divine, which is always in the same state and admits neither generation or destruction.¹⁰ In describing the Platonic ontology concisely, G. Vlastos says: “For every generic character which spatio-temporal objects may have in common, Plato posits an ideal entity in which particular things “participate” so long as they have that character.”¹¹ Basically, this means that, behind every general (genus) or particular (species) concept, there lies an Idea which has its own individual nature and existence and which is not a logical construction of the mind. Because the things of the visible world participate in the Ideas, or because the Ideas are present in them, these things acquire their “name” and identity – in other words, they are and they are called, for instance, beautiful, same, big, good.¹² Plato calls the relation among the sensible things and the intelligible Ideas “participation” (μέθεξις). This relation is also called “imitation” (μίμησις), which means that the Ideas stand for examples or models, while things are the resem-

⁹ Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 987 a32-b8, 1078 b9-17 and 1086 a31-1086 b2) believes that it was mainly an epistemological problem that led Plato to conceive of the theory of Ideas and, in particular, to attempt to reach certain and sure knowledge beyond the unstable and continuously changing sensible world. For the claim that the moral problems of Plato’s time were very likely the basis for the conception of Plato’s theory of Ideas, see H. Cherniss, “The Philosophical Economy of the Theory of Ideas,” *American Journal of Philology* 57 (1936): 445-456, esp. 446-447 (= H. Cherniss, *Selected Papers*, ed. L. Tarán [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977], 121-132, esp. 122-123.). For Aristotle’s work, see *Aristotelis Opera ex recensione I. Bekkeri*, edidit Academia Regia Borussica, accedunt Fragmenta, Scholia, Index Aristotelicus, vols. I-V (vol. quintum: *Index Aristotelicus*, edidit H. Bonitz). Editio altera quam curavit O. Gigon (Berolini: Apud W. de Gruyter et Socios, 1960-1961 [= vols. I-IV (1831-1836¹), vol. V (1870¹]).

¹⁰ On the characteristic features of Ideas, see *Phaedo* 78c-79a, 79d, 80b; *Symposium* 211a-b, 211e; *Republic* 476a, 479e, 500c, 507b; *Phaedrus* 247c; *Timaeus* 27d-28a, 52a; *Parmenides* 132d, 135e; *Philebus* 15b.

¹¹ G. Vlastos, “Degrees of Reality in Plato,” in G. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981²), 58-75. For an extensive presentation of the Platonic theory of Ideas and its correspondent problems, see L. Robin, *La théorie platonicienne des Idées et des Nombres d’après Aristote: Étude historique et critique* (Paris: Alcan, 1908); P. Natorp, *Platos Ideenlehre. Eine Einführung in den Idealismus* (Zweite: durchgesehene und um einem metakritischen Anhang vermehrte Ausgabe. Unveränderter Abdruck, 1921; Hamburg: Verlag von Felix Meiner, 1961); D. Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963; 1951); J. M. Rist, “The Immanence and Transcendence of the Platonic Form,” *Philologus* 108 (1964): 217-232; E. W. Schipper, *Forms in Plato’s Later Dialogues* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965); K. Dorter, *Form and Good in Plato’s Eleatic Dialogues: The Parmenides, Theaetetus, Sophist and Statesman* (Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press, 1994); D. T. Devreux, “Separation and Immanence in Plato’s Theory of Forms,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 12 (1994): 63-90.

¹² See Plato, *Phaedo* 100d-e, 102b; *Symposium* 211b; *Parmenides* 130e-131a, 132d-e.

blances or the copies of the Ideas.¹³ The intelligible world is the object of knowledge *par excellence*; from an ontological and axiological point of view, this is superior to the sensible one.¹⁴ The philosopher, as Plato conceives him, steadily heads towards the intelligible world, supported and directed in his course by love, as we shall see next.

The connection of love with the world of Ideas is particularly evident in Plato's teaching of the immortality of the soul¹⁵ as well as in his teaching of knowledge as recollection. These teachings are admittedly considered to be the pillars of the theory of Ideas.

According to Plato, the human being is body and soul together.¹⁶ The soul, which is invisible and immortal, is the beginning, the cause, and the vehicle of life,¹⁷ and exists before the body, into which it is incorporated, at the time of birth. According to the myth of the soul in the *Phaedrus* (246a-249d),¹⁸ the souls, before entering the human body, hang around with the gods in heaven and they are able to see "the place beyond heaven," which is the place of the intelligible beings. With the aid of the intellect (νοῦς), which is "the soul's steersman," some souls more and others less are able to gaze upon beings that are "without color," "without shape," and "without solidity," namely, upon the eternal and imperishable Ideas, which constitute "the subject of all true knowledge" (*Phaedrus*, 247c).

At some phase, when the soul has not yet entered the sphere of becoming and has not yet been embodied, it has reached true knowledge.¹⁹ However, with its embodiment, the soul forgets what it previously knew. The recovery of this real, but forgotten, knowledge is, according to Plato, possi-

¹³ See Plato, *Phaedrus* 250a-b; *Parmenides* 132d; *Timaeus* 48e. For an interesting interpretation of the problem of the relation between Ideas and sensible things or models and resemblances, see R. Patterson, *Image and Reality in Plato's Metaphysics* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1985).

¹⁴ On the reasons for which Plato considers that the intelligible world is superior to the sensible world, see Vlastos, "Degrees of Reality in Plato."

¹⁵ Plato's theory of the immortality of the soul is first explicated in the *Phaedo* (70c-107b) and is repeated in the *Republic* (608c-611b) and in the *Phaedrus* (245c-246a). For its preludes, see Plato, *Gorgias* 523a ff.; *Meno* 81 b-c.

¹⁶ See *Republic* 462c-d, 588 d-e; *Phaedrus* 246c; *Statesman* 271e, 309c; *Timaeus* 41e-42a, 42e, 69c-89d; *Laws* 766 a, 902b; *Epinomis* 976d. In some of these passages, man is characterized as "animal," which means that he is perceived as a unity of body and soul, because, according to Plato, the animal is an "ensouled body" (*Sophist* 246e; cf. *Epinomis* 981a). Only in *Alcibiades* does Socrates claim that man is identified with the soul (130c).

¹⁷ See Plato, *Phaedrus* 105d, 106d; *Cratylus* 399d-e; *Republic* 353d.

¹⁸ For an analytical and critical description of the myth of the soul in *Phaedrus*, see I. N. Θεοδωρακόπουλος, *Πλάτωνος «Φαίδρος». Εισαγωγή, αρχαίο και νέο κείμενο με σχόλια* (Αθήνα, 1971³ [1948¹]), 184-235. For the purpose of this myth, see G. R. F. Ferrari, *Listening to the Cicadas: A Study in Plato's Phaedrus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 125-139.

¹⁹ See Plato, *Phaedrus* 249b (cf. 249e), where it is emphatically stressed that the soul which has not faced the truth shall never be embodied in a human body.

ble, and it is accomplished by means of recollection.²⁰ What causes the re-awakening of the memories of the spectacles in the intelligible reality are the images and the impressions of the objects of the visible world, which one can perceive through the senses. Due to his ability to reason, man can integrate the multiple images and impressions of similar things in a single form and, thus, a concept is conceived. But the logical conception of the concept, whether it is a genus or species, is nothing else than the recollection of the Idea, which the soul in its disembodied life had seen (*Phaedrus* 249b-c). Therefore, knowledge is recollection,²¹ and the first thing to cause the process of recollection is, as we shall see later, the presence of beauty in the natural world and the love that springs in the soul due to this beauty.

Concerning the question of why sensible beauty and love motivate the philosopher to seek and concentrate on real being, Plato's response in the *Phaedrus* could be reconstructed as follows: Beauty in general bears the privilege of being "the most clearly visible and the most loved," or the clearest and the most radiant thing and, at the ultimate level, the most worthy of love (250d-e). The soul²² first saw ideal beauty in "heaven," and was strongly attracted to it. The soul is also attracted to beauty on earth. As a matter of fact, the resemblances of ideal beauty in the sensible world sparkle, and are so lucid that they are discerned easily by vision, the clearest and "the sharpest of our bodily senses" (250d). Thus, they cause the awakening of love in the human soul. If the sensible resemblances of justice, prudence, and wisdom, and of all those virtues that are precious for the soul, could sparkle like beauty so that the eye could see them, an incredibly powerful love would be provoked in one's soul (250b, d).²³ The lucidity and distinc-

²⁰ All people have the potential for recollection, since their souls, as mentioned before, once had access to truth. However, because the souls that managed to see the intelligible beings fully enter the bodies of men who will become philosophers (*Phaedrus* 248d), it follows that the souls of the philosophers are, from a gnosiological point of view, superior and more able in achieving recollection, i.e., the acquisition of knowledge.

²¹ The theory of knowledge as recollection is also explicated in the *Meno* (81c-84a, 84d-86a, 98a) and *Phaedo* (esp. 72e-77a). For an overall presentation and interpretation of this theory, see O. Hansing, "The Doctrine of Recollection in Plato's Dialogues," *Monist* 38 (1928): 231-262; N. Gulley, "Plato's Theory of Recollection," *Classical Quarterly* 4, nos 3-4 (1954): 194-213; D. Scott, "Platonic Recollection," in *Plato I: Metaphysics and Epistemology*, ed. G. Fine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 93-124; J. McCoy, "Re-examining Recollection: The Platonic Account of Learning," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 51 (2011): 451-466. On the possibility of using, in modern teaching practice, the didactic method, which is presented in the *Meno* and is based on the theory of knowledge as recollection, see X. A. Τέζας, «Ο παιδαγωγός Χρήστος Φράγκος και η αρχαία ελληνική φιλοσοφία», *Δωδώνη* (Μέρος Τρίτο) 27 (1998): 23-53, esp. 34ff.

²² For the brightness of the Idea of beauty, see *Phaedrus* 250b, 250c-d.

²³ For the non existence of visible resemblances of moral Ideas in the sensible world, see also *Statesman* 285e-286a. For the view that the resemblances of these kinds of Ideas have only a "verbal" nature and that the impressions caused by them are thus auditive, see Gulley, "Plato's Theory of Recollection," 204-205; C. L. Griswold Jr., *Self-knowledge in Plato's Phaedrus* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press,

tiveness of sensible beauty, therefore, which is mainly realized in young boys – “the beauty of the boy,”²⁴ Plato has primarily in mind – and the love for beautiful young boys, which occupies the soul of the philosopher, cause the beginning of the mental and abstract process of recollection.²⁵ Due to this process, knowledge of ideal beauty is achieved and, at the same time, love for the eternal beings revives, a love that the philosopher neither lessens nor loses (as described in the *Republic*, 490b) until he grasps by mental intercourse the nature of each ideal being, and generates by means of this intercourse “intelligence and truth” – if, in other words, he is not driven to reach true knowledge and true life in their entirety.

Therefore, as the mechanism of recollection takes place, love of the beautiful young boy is transformed into the love of wisdom, into a powerful impulsive willingness for “learning,” into a factor that can bridge the gap between the sensible and the intelligible world. But the philosopher’s erotic love for the young boy is not a selfish passion by means of which only the lover gains. The erotic relation, as Plato conceives it, is a relation between teacher and pupil, where the real teacher desires to form and educate in the best possible way the soul of the pupil; it is thus a deeply educative relationship, which benefits both the educator and the pupil.²⁶ According to Plato, the erotic relationship is also a dialectical relationship, because the philosopher’s love for the young boy soon enough shall cause the beloved’s “back-love” for the lover (*Phaedrus* 255e).²⁷ This means that the educated boy shall have his own turn at following the path to the soul’s exaltation towards ideal beauty, a path that the educator-lover had previously taken, due to his

1986), 114. However, the sense that is connected with the birth of love is vision and not hearing and, thus, the “verbal resemblances” of Ideas, to which moral concepts correspond, do not arouse erotic desire.

²⁴ Plato, *Phaedrus* 251c; cf. 251a, 254b.

²⁵ Because recollection in general is not possible without impressions, which come from the sensible resemblances of Ideas (*Phaedrus* 249b-c), and given that these resemblances are not of the same kind, but are visual or tactile or auditive in nature, it is obvious that the activation of the mechanism of recollection is caused, not only by vision, but also, though in a lesser degree, by hearing and touch, as is clear in *Phaedo* (73c-76a). On this theme, see J. T. Bedu-Addo, “Sense-Experience and the Argument for Recollection in Plato’s *Phaedo*,” *Phronesis* 36 (1991): 27-60.

²⁶ For the educative dimension of love in Plato, see Θεοδωρακόπουλος, *Πλάτωνος «Φαίδρος»*. *Εἰσαγωγή, ἀρχαῖο καὶ νέο κείμενο μὲ σχόλια*, 130-174, esp. 253-256, 280-283; E. Π. Παπανοῦτσος, «Τὸ παιδαγωγικὸ ἦθος», in E. Π. Παπανοῦτσος, *Φιλοσοφία καὶ παιδεία* (Αθήνα: Ἴκαρος, 1958), 81-182, esp. 96-130; K. Βουδούρης, «Ἔρως καὶ παιδεία κατὰ Πλάτωνα», in *Ἐρωτας, παιδεία καὶ φιλοσοφία*, ed. K. Βουδούρης (Αθήνα: Διεθνῆς Εταιρεία Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας, 1989), 13-37; D. Connolly, «Τα φτερά του ἔρωτα: Ἡ ο ἔρως ὡς παρόρμηση γιὰ μάθηση», in *Ἐρωτας, παιδεία καὶ φιλοσοφία*, ed. K. Βουδούρης (Αθήνα: Διεθνῆς Εταιρεία Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας, 1989), 67-82; M. Βενετή, «Ψυχὴ, ἔρως καὶ παιδεία», in *Ἐρωτας, παιδεία καὶ φιλοσοφία*, ed. K. Βουδούρης (Αθήνα: Διεθνῆς Εταιρεία Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας, 1989), 94-104.

²⁷ On the erotic mutuality between the lover and the beloved in Plato and its importance for social morality, see D. M. Halperin, “Plato and Erotic Reciprocity,” *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986): 60-80.

erotic desire for the boy. If they both succeed in resisting the powerful desire for bodily contact and pleasure (cf. *Republic* 403a-b; *Laws* 838e) and are led “to follow the assigned regimen of philosophy,” then, according to Plato, they shall secure happiness on earth (*Phaedrus* 256a-b), which is the final end of action, and the highest human good.²⁸ Therefore, love, for Plato, can appear ideocentric: it can seem as an impetus for the soul to escape the earthly world, but, at the same time, serves as the moral target of this life, since, as “the right kind of love” (*Republic* 403a) – which means a “love of order and beauty that has been moderated by education in music and poetry” (*Republic* 403a) – it offers the good of happiness²⁹ to those who are in love.

II

Love’s ascent from sensible to intelligible beauty is described in a dramaturgic way in Plato’s *Symposium*, a dialogue which mainly contains speeches that praise love, and which are made by prominent representatives of ancient Greek spirit. In the speeches of Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, Aristophanes, and Agathon, the content of which represents, according to G. Santas, “at least Plato’s perception of the various traditions about Eros in the Greek culture,”³⁰ different aspects of the erotic phenomenon are presented and analyzed.³¹

Socrates, through whom Plato expresses his ideas in the *Symposium*, radically differentiates himself, in his own speech of love, from the other speakers, because he does not aim to sing praises of love, but to explore in depth the nature of love and to determine its works and essence (199a-c). At first, he claims that love (ἔρως) is love of something (199d-e) instead of love in itself or love of nothing. This means that love is relational, that is, that love is characterized by intentionality.³² So love desires something

²⁸ For happiness (εὐδαιμονία) as the highest and final good, see Plato, *Euthydemus*, 279c; *Gorgias* 499e; *Symposium* 205a; cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1095a 16-20.

²⁹ On the eudaemonistic value of the “right” love in the *Phaedrus*, see M. C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), esp. 219-221.

³⁰ G. Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 15.

³¹ For a critical and extended reference to the content of these appraising speeches, see I. Δ. Συκουτρῆς, *Πλάτωνος Συμπόσιον. Κείμενον, μετάφρασις καὶ ἐρμηνεία* (Αθήναι: I. Δ. Κολλάρος καὶ ΣΙΑ. Α.Ε. – Βιβλιοπωλεῖον τῆς «Εστίας», 1949² [1934¹]), 80-138; S. Rosen, *Plato’s Symposium* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 39-196; R. L. Mitchell, *The Hymn to Eros: A Reading of Plato’s Symposium* (Lanham, MD and London: University Press of America, 1993), 19-102.

³² On the term “intentionality” (intentio), which denotes the intentional tendency of the mental phenomena to refer to an object, a term which was introduced by scholastic philosophers and was especially used by F. Brentano and E. Husserl, see R. M. Chisholm, “Intentionality,” in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (New York and London: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, 1967), vol. 4, 201-204; T. Crane,

which it lacks – indeed, needs (200a-b, 200e). It is thus obvious that love is desire, since the features of desire, according to Plato, are the state of need and the constant tendency to refer to an object.³³

In the *Charmides*, one of the early Platonic dialogues, three kinds of desire are mentioned: a) the “desire” (ἐπιθυμία) that is directed towards pleasure, b) the “will”³⁴ (βούλησις) that is directed towards things that are considered goods, and c) “love” (ἔρωζ), which is directed towards the beautiful (167e). Plato holds the same opinion about love in the *Symposium*, since here, too, the object of erotic desire is beauty (201a, 203c, 204b, d), but he also adds to the concept of love characteristics that belong to the concept of will, as we shall see next. According to Socrates, because these goods are beautiful, love, apart from the beautiful, lacks and desires these goods as well (201c). But in no case does Plato connect love and pleasure in the *Symposium*.³⁵ This is a paradox, if we consider the fact that all confess, as the tragic poet Agathon asserts, that love is the strongest form of pleasure: “No pleasure is more powerful than Love” (196c). This certainly happens because Plato has a different concept of love than the “many.” As it becomes clear from what Platonic Socrates himself says, and from what, as he claims, he has heard from Diotima, Plato considers love, in this dialogue, as the desire that turns towards “good and beautiful things” (202d) and tries to possess them (204d-e). Love is also presented as the universal desire for *eudaimonia* (205d), because those who “possess good and beautiful things” are those who are happy (202c, 205a). Furthermore, love is considered as the desire of an object which is wisdom (203d, 204b), which in turn is included among the most beautiful goods (204b). Love, in addition, is the desire that drives one towards the transcendental good and seeks to possess it forever (205e-206a). It is also the desire for “reproduction and birth in beauty” (206e) and to secure immortality, because only immortality can enable the eternal and continuous possession of the good (207a). In other words, love, in the *Symposium*, is the highest expression of rational desire,³⁶ which,

“Intentionality,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. Craig (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), vol. 4, 816-821.

³³ See *Symposium* 200e; cf. Plato, *Lysis* 221d. On love as a form of desire, see also *Phaedrus* 237d.

³⁴ In the spurious Platonic work, *Definitions*, which echoes the spirit of the Academy, the “will” is defined as “wanting, based on correct reason; reasonable desire; natural desire, based on reason” (413c). This indicates that this term is used mainly by Plato in order to denote rational desires. Following the same tradition, Aristotle associates “will” with practical intellect (*On the Soul*, 432b 5-7; cf. *Topics* 126a 13) and arrives at the following definition: “will is the appetite for the good” (*Rhetoric* 1369a 2-3).

³⁵ See also G. Santas, “Plato’s Theory of Eros in the *Symposium*,” *Noûs* 13 (1979): 67-75, where it is noted that pleasure is absent from the theory of love in the *Symposium*, but no interpretation of this is made; cf., Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, 61.

³⁶ On love as a rational desire in the *Symposium*, see C. H. Kahn, “Plato’s Theory of Desire,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 41 (1987): 77-103, esp. 95, 98-101; Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, esp. 60-61. On the close relation between love and

for Plato, never has, as an end, the achievement of pleasure, but the attainment of the true and the good,³⁷ and, thus, human happiness. This interpretation of love is enhanced by the description of the steps of the ladder of erotic initiation, as described by Diotima (209e-212a). At each step of the ladder, one can easily observe that love does not act and operate without judgment, but behaves rationally, since the one initiated in “love” does not move from one step to another on an impulse and without consciousness, but perceives, understands, and concludes that every new object of his desire is, from an evaluative point of view, superior to the previous one and, thus, worthier of love.³⁸

The steps of the ladder of love³⁹ that one “who rightly loves” is obliged to follow – in order to ascend from finite to eternal beauty, and so as to attain, in seeing the real being, the final purpose of life – are, according to Diotima,⁴⁰ the following: “First...he should love one body and beget beauti-

reason in this dialogue, see also D. A. Hyland, “Ἔρως, Ἐπιθυμία and Φιλία in Plato,” *Phronesis* 13 (1968): 32-46, esp. 39ff; J. M. E. Moravcsik, “Reason and Eros in the ‘Ascent’-Passage of the *Symposium*,” in *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, eds. J. P. Anton and G. L. Kustas (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1971), 285-302; T. Irwin, *Plato’s Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 167-171; R. Patterson, “The Ascent in Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 7 (1991): 193-214; E. Μαραγγιανού-Δερμούση, *Πλατωνικά θέματα. Συστηματική προσέγγιση τῶν κυριότερων θεμάτων τῆς πλατωνικῆς φιλοσοφίας* (Αθήνα: Ἐκδόσεις Καρδαμίτσα, 1994), 30.

³⁷ The rational desire, in the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, is never directed towards pleasure, but desires “being,” “truth” and “wisdom” (see respectively *Phaedo* 65c, 66b and 66e) or tends towards the pursuit of truth (*Republic* 581b). The same holds for philosophical *erōs* in the *Republic* (501d).

³⁸ Cf. Irwin, *Plato’s Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues*, 170-171. Reason in Plato is, among others, able to judge “for the best and worst” (*Republic* 441c), which means that the rational desire is able to evaluate the quality of its object, contrary to the irrational desire that does not possess such an ability (see *Republic* 437d-439b).

³⁹ These steps are, according to Santas, “the normative part of Plato’s theory of love,” see Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, cf. 43. On the normative character of these steps, see also K. Sier, *Die Rede der Diotima: Untersuchungen zum platonischen Symposium*, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, Bd. 86 (Stuttgart and Leipzig: Teubner, 1997), 145-291, where there is an interesting analysis and interpretation of the passage 209e-212a.

⁴⁰ On the problem of the historicity of the priestess Diotima, from whom Socrates was taught (he claims) the “matters of love” (201d), see W. Kranz, “Diotima von Mantinea,” *Hermes* 61 (1926): 347-447; S. Levin, “Diotima’s Visit and Service to Athens,” *Grazer Beiträge* 3 (1975): 223-240; M. E. Waithe, “Diotima of Mantinea,” in *A History of Women Philosophers, Vol. 1: Ancient Women Philosophers 600 B.C.-500 A.D.*, ed. M.E. Waithe (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 83-116, where there are strong arguments for the case that Diotima was a historical figure. On the importance of a woman having a leading part in the *Symposium*, see D. M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990); D. M. Halperin, “Why is Diotima a Woman? Platonic *Erōs* and the Figuration of Gender,” in *Before Sexuality*, 257-308. (= D. M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* [New York and London: Routledge, 1990], 113-151.)

ful ideas there" (210a). Next, he must realize that the beauty of a beautiful body relates to the beauty of other beautiful bodies (210a-b) and, in this way, he shall conceive of the unity of beauty, regarding beauty of the body. If this is to be achieved, he must fall in love with every beautiful boy and stop concentrating on one person (210b). Afterwards, he must understand that the beauty of the soul is superior to and more valuable than the beauty of the body (210b), so as to be able to instill, inside the beautiful soul, even of a barely attractive young man, reasons that advance and enhance young people from a moral point of view (210b-c). The initiated in "love" must shift from the beauty of the soul to the beauty of activities and laws and, by coming to be aware of the unity of beauty in the area of action, must realize even more that the beauty of the body is a thing of no importance (210c). Next, he must be driven to know the sciences – in order also to become aware of their own beauty and, thus, get in touch with a huge and amazing ocean of beauty.⁴¹ At this point, he shall break free from the attraction of individual beauty, which until now was present in the beauty of a particular boy or behavior. Then, he shall give birth to many beautiful speeches, ideas, and thoughts, inspired by the sight of the beautiful, with an inexhaustible impetus towards philosophy (210c-d).⁴² At this stage, after achieving maturity and spiritual power, he shall continue his rise until "all of a sudden he will catch sight of something wonderfully beautiful in its nature," that is the idea of beauty (210e), and, thus, become a possessor of the knowledge of the absolute and transcendental beauty (211e). The contemplation of this beauty, magnificent in nature, is the reason for the lover to give birth to real virtue,⁴³ by the cultivation and practice of which the lover shall attain the gods' love and shall gain the highest degree of immortality⁴⁴ that a human

⁴¹ On the importance and meaning of this step of the ladder of love for Plato, see N. Δ. Γεωργοπούλου-Νικολακάκου, *Ο πλατωνικός μύθος της Διοτίμας* (Αθήνα, 1989), 140-146.

⁴² On the translational and interpretational problems of 210d, and especially of the phrase "he gives birth to many gloriously beautiful ideas and theories, in unstinting love of wisdom," see E. E. Pender, "Spiritual Pregnancy in Plato's *Symposium*," *Classical Quarterly* 42 (1992): 72-86, esp. 81-82.

⁴³ Cf. Plato, *Republic* 490b, where the "true" lover of wisdom, by having intercourse with "what really is," gives birth to "intelligence and truth."

⁴⁴ In the *Symposium*, the theory of the immortality of the soul, as we know it in other dialogues by Plato of the same period (*Phaedo*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*), is not present. A different kind of immortality is put forward here, where one notices the following levels: a) Immortality through reproduction and perpetuation of human species (207a-208b), b) Immortality through creations that offer their creator eternal and imperishable fame and honor (208c-209e), and c) Immortality through the development and practice of real virtue, which arises when the philosopher is mentally in touch with ideal beauty (212a). On the distinctive character of immortality in the *Symposium*, see indicatively R. G. Bury, *The Symposium of Plato*, Edited with Introduction, Critical Notes and Commentary, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., 1932), xliii-xlvi; R. Hackforth, "Immortality in Plato's *Symposium*," *The Classical Review* 64 (1950): 43-45; J. V. Luce, "Immortality in Plato's *Symposium*," *The Classical Review* 2 (1952): 137-141; M. J. O'Brien, "'Becoming Immortal' in Plato's *Symposium*," in *Greek Poetry and Philoso-*

being can gain (212a). Thus, “through loving boys correctly” (211b) and going “aright into the mystery of love” (211b-c), one can contemplate the intelligible beauty, a contemplation that brings to the lover happiness,⁴⁵ but also immortality, due to which the eternal possession of the ultimate human good is secured.

From the above, it becomes obvious that love in the *Symposium* appears as a creative and beneficial power, as the cause of the moral and mental fulfillment of man, and as the best workmate of human nature (212b), as it attempts to fulfill its highest pursuits. All these features bring out the logical character of love.

The Platonic theory of love in the *Symposium* that we have sketched above has been particularly criticized on the following three points: a) Love, according to some scholars, passes by and essentially disregards the particular person, in favor of the impersonal idea,⁴⁶ b) love appears too rational and is a view that comes in conflict with the common belief that connects love with irrational passion and madness,⁴⁷ and c) love is, as they say, possessive and selfish, and has nothing in common with the self-sacrificing and altruistic Christian love.⁴⁸

The over-rationality of erotic desire, which seems extremely provocative in the *Symposium*, is, at first, abandoned in the *Phaedrus*, in Socrates’ first speech on love (237a-241d), but it reappears, in a moderate form, however, in what Socrates says in at least some points of his palinode (244a-

phy, ed. D. E. Gerber (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 185-206; Ch. Evangelidou, “Eros and Immortality in the *Symposium* of Plato,” *Diotima* 13 (1985): 200-211; M. Dyson, “Immortality and Procreation in Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Antichthon* 20 (1986): 59-72.

⁴⁵ In the final step of the ladder of love, life acquires fulfillment and meaning and has all those elements that make it enviable and happy, as inferred by Diotima’s words in 211c-d.

⁴⁶ See G. Vlastos, “The Individual as an Object of Love in Plato,” in G. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981²), 3-37, esp. 26-34. For a contrary view, see A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 49, 51-54; T. Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 310-311.

⁴⁷ See Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, 58, 60-61. On love in the consciousness of Ancient Greeks as a state of sickness, as the opposite of rationality, and as the factor that may damage the order of civilization, see B. S. Thornton, *Eros: The Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 11-47. For different aspects of *erōs* in ancient Greek culture, see E. Sanders, C. Thumiger, C. Carey and N. J. Lowe, eds., *Erōs in Ancient Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁴⁸ See A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros: The Christian Idea of Love*, trans. P. S. Watson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 209-210. On the fundamental differences between love and Christian love, see Συκουτρής, *Πλάτωνος Συμπόσιον. Κείμενον, μετάφρασις καὶ ἐρμηνεία*, 230-246. On the egoistic character of love in the *Symposium*, see also G. Santas, “Plato on Love, Beauty and the Good,” in *The Greeks and the Good Life*, ed. D. J. Depew (Fullerton, CA: California State University, 1980), 33-68, esp. 44, 51, 54, 60; Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, esp. 26, 31-32. On the view that love is egoistic at its lower levels, but non egoistic at its highest one, see T. A. Mahoney, “Is Socratic *erōs* in the *Symposium* Egoistic?” *Apeiron* 29 (1996): 1-18.

257b). In Socrates' first speech, love is presented as pathological and as a kind of "hybris,"⁴⁹ and is defined as the "unreasoning desire" that "is driven to take pleasure in beauty" and aims at sexual pleasure (238b-c). Love opposes the "acquired judgment" which desires the "best" (237d), and this means that it is not a power that produces morality. The lover is a man, who behaves and operates without reason and prudence, because he is subject to desire for sensual pleasure. Therefore, a handsome boy, to whom this lover may turn, shall be harmed if they get into a sexual relationship. The lover, who basically uses the beloved as a sex object,⁵⁰ will not pursue the young man's spiritual development (239a-c) and "the cultivation of his soul, which truly is and will always be, the most valuable thing to gods and men" (241c).

Having exposed the bad side of love, Socrates later acknowledges that he did something disrespectful,⁵¹ and thus undertakes in his palinode to redress the injustice he committed, and show that love is the foundation of education, the passion that elevates life to higher levels. Love is now defined by Socrates as madness (244a, 245b-c, 249d, 265a), but madness, as he claims, should not always be seen as akin to evil. As a matter of fact, when the gods cause madness in men, it undoubtedly has a beneficial character, because it is the cause for all the good things that happen to human beings on earth (244a, 245b-c). Therefore, love, for Plato, is one of the god-sent madnesses (the others are the prophetic, the performative, and the poetic [244b-245a, 265b]), and it is described as "the best and noblest of all the forms that possession by god can take for anyone who has it or is connected to it" (249e). Furthermore, erotic madness does not oppose reason, which, for Plato, steadily drives man towards whatever really benefits him,⁵² because this madness, as it has been pointed out, is a madness that belongs to

⁴⁹ See *Phaedrus* 238a-c. In general, it is argued that, in his first speech, Socrates' views on love are similar to those of Lysias, whose speech had previously been read by Phaedrus. On the existence, however, of a difference between these two speeches, see T. Calvo, "Socrates' First Speech in the *Phaedrus* and Plato's Criticism of Rhetoric," in *Understanding the Phaedrus: Proceedings of the II Symposium Platonicum*, ed. L. Rossetti (Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1992), 47-60.

⁵⁰ On what it meant to treat a young man as a sex object in ancient Greece, see M. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, vol. 2 of *The History of Sexuality*, trans. R. Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 215-225.

⁵¹ In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates considers love as "a god or something divine" (242e; cf. 242d) and as a god it is not possible, according to Plato, to be involved with evil (242e). Hence, to say something bad about god, Love, is a blasphemy. For God as an entity that instantiates the goodness and is not responsible for the existence of evil, see *Republic* 379c, 380c, 381b-c; *Theaetetus* 176c; *Timaeus* 29e, 42d; *Laws* 900d-e.

⁵² For Plato, because reason can distinguish between good and bad (*Republic* 441c), it can make decisions in favor of the whole soul and body (*Republic* 442b-c). In the *Timaeus*, also, Plato, by personifying reason, considers it as a daemon (90a). However, according to Plato, the daemons are entities "between god and mortal" (*Symposium* 202d-e), that act, as inferred from the *Phaedo* (107d), as guides and guardians for every man.

the rational part of the soul.⁵³ This means that erotic madness, which is intrinsically interwoven with the mental process of recollection (249d, 254b), and in spite of the tension it causes to the soul of the philosopher-lover (251a-252c), does not lead to irrational and improper behavior, but to a full unfolding of reason, and to a truly rational life.⁵⁴ The philosopher who is possessed by erotic madness acquires wings for his soul and tries to fly from the beauty of the body to the beauty of the soul and to continue his trip towards the “place beyond heaven” of the Ideas, while at the same time, tries to pull with him his favorite pupil in this exaltation.

III

From all that we have said so far, it could be inferred that love has no relation to politics, since the lover’s target is to contemplate ideal being and to present the contemplative life as the happiest way of life. However, as is explicitly mentioned in the *Republic* (500c), the philosopher’s dedication to the intelligible beings, “which are all in a rational order,” and to form a world where there is no injustice, generates in his soul the desire to imitate these beings, because it is impossible, according to Plato, for someone not to imitate the things with which he comes in contact and which he admires. This imitation entails that the philosopher will act in a certain way in order to create order, both in the soul and in the state, according to the standard of the ideal world of Ideas. Thus, action is the natural and necessary outcome of theory, since the philosopher’s work is accomplished when his desire for imitation is fulfilled. The knowledge of “what is real,” towards which love drives the soul (apart from contemplative knowledge as such), is also knowledge of action. In other words, this knowledge, which equates to what Plato calls dialectic, has a clear anthropological and sociopolitical perspective, since it motivates the philosopher to envision and to attempt to realize a plan of life that actually fits human nature and political society.⁵⁵

In short, in Plato’s thought, love appears to be an important factor, not only for the attainment of true knowledge, but also for the advancement of practical living.

⁵³ See Santas, *Plato and Freud: Two Theories of Love*, 62-69; Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics*, 304-306. For similar views, see C. J. Rowe, *Plato: Phaedrus, with Translation and Commentary*, 2nd (corrected) ed. (Warminster, PA: Aris and Phillips, 1988), 170-182 (249d2); Griswold Jr., *Self-knowledge in Plato’s Phaedrus*, 112.

⁵⁴ On the characteristics of rationality that Plato introduces and its differentiation from Aristotelian but also from modern European rationality, see Γ. Αποστολοπούλου, «Από τον αρχαίο ελληνικό λόγο στον ευρωπαϊκό ορθολογισμό», in *Η ιδέα της Ευρώπης (Die Idee von Europa)*, ed. Γ. Αποστολοπούλου (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 1994), 45-63, esp. 49ff. [= offprint from the Yearbook *Δωδώνη* (Part 3), 23 (1994); Sonderdruck aus: *Dodone*, Bd. 23 (1994) 3. Teil].

⁵⁵ On the relation between love and politics from a rather different perspective than ours, see E. Νικολαΐδου-Κυριανίδου, «Πολιτική και έρωσ στο Φαίδρο», in *Έρωτας, παιδεία και φιλοσοφία*, ed. Κ. Βουδούρης (Αθήνα: Διεθνής Εταιρεία Ελληνικής Φιλοσοφίας, 1989), 202-223.

Part II
Embodiment and Spirit

Seeing Self (*Jiva*), Seeing as Self (*Atman*), and Seeing Self as Ultimate Consciousness (*Brahman*)

Indra Nath Choudhuri

When discussing metaphysics, philosophers often understand the notion of the Self as an important aspect of reality. Metaphysics, in general, offers an account of the nature of reality with reference to such phenomena as consciousness, mind, knowledge, belief, etc. These phenomena, as argued by R. C. Pradhan in his paper, “Rediscovering the Metaphysical Self,”¹ cannot be explained unless we presuppose a subject, or Self, to which they are attributable. Consciousness, mind, and knowledge are concepts which immediately raise the questions, ‘Whose consciousness?’ ‘Whose mind?’ and ‘Whose knowledge?’ These questions cannot be answered unless we introduce the Self as the locus of the phenomenon. It is an elementary principle whose locus cannot be a part of the phenomena of which it is the locus. Therefore, the Self must always be treated as a metaphysical category.

So at the outset, we must first note a semantic inadequacy: for we say that the Self is Consciousness² even though we simultaneously acknowledge that there is no duality between the Self and consciousness, nor is consciousness distinct from the Self any more than light is from the sun. The embodied self also has knowledge, but it is lower knowledge or knowledge of the material world. The higher knowledge or the knowledge of Brahman, on the other hand, is known as pure consciousness which is reality transcending the subject-object distinction, and also as that which is beyond all duality.

My reference point here is the concept of Advaita, non-duality, taken from the Indian philosopher Shankaracharya or Shankara (~8th Century A.D.) who argued that the empirical self realizes itself as Consciousness. Since Consciousness has categories, it will be better to say that self realizes itself as Ultimate Consciousness, which is to be understood both as Cartesian duality as well as the Vedantic oneness of both the empirical self and the Supreme Self. It can also be understood as the progressive movement of the empirical self from its position of embodied self or *jiva* or empirical ego

¹ R. C. Pradhan, “Rediscovering the Metaphysical Self,” in *Self, Society and Science: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives* (henceforth SSSTHP), eds. D. P. Chattopadhyay and A. K. Sengupta (vol. XI, pt. 2, *History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*) (New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2005).

² See “prajnanam brahma,” *Aitareya Upanisad*, 3.3 “prajnanagahana eva,” *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*, 2.4.12.

to the metaphysical Self (*atman*) or Pure Consciousness. At the same time, inversely, *atman* or Pure Consciousness goes on inspiring, without making it obvious, this progressive movement of empirical self or empirical ego towards the ultimate realization of the Self as Pure Consciousness.

This notion of Pure Consciousness (*chit/chaitanya*), a pivotal concept in Vedanta, comes quite close to the concept of ‘transcendental consciousness’ in Husserlian phenomenology. However, Husserl’s intentionality theory of consciousness goes against the non-intentional framework of Advaita. Shankaracharya explicitly refers to *pratyagatman* (self-realization) as the state of pure consciousness, and explains it as *sakshi* witness (without any involvement) (*asesa svaprachara saksi*). In this non-involvement (*asanga*), pure consciousness illumines *atman*, i.e., self-illumination, as well as the empirical ego, or *jiva*. Swami Vidaranya compares the witness-consciousness to a lamp on a stage, which equally illuminates the patron, the audience, and the dancer, and, at the same time, also illuminates itself even in their absence – *tadabhavapepi dipyate*.³ This self-luminosity (*svaprakasatva*) of the conscious self without any intentionality is highlighted at several places in the Upanishads. Shankaracharya also uses the term *prajna* (knowledge) for consciousness.

One becomes conscious of a thing when one has the knowledge of it, and, hence, consciousness is the very basis of the world of objects (*prajna pratistha sarvasya jagatah*, Aitareyaopanisad Bhasya, 3.13) and is therefore identified as Brahman (“*tasmāt prajnanm Brahma*”). It is *prajna* or, rather, *samyak prajna* or comprehensive knowledge which reveals this meaning of self as Self/*Atman* or Brahman or pure consciousness. Like pure radiance, pure consciousness remains unrelated and unaffected by the objects which it lights up or reveals. This centrality of the pure consciousness of *Atman* is a unique feature of Advaita Vedanta. The entire world is revealed through the light of Brahman/*Atman* which is the same as pure consciousness or *chaitanya* which in its turn is not dependent on any object whatsoever for its self-revelation.⁴

The *Atman* which is *advaita* (one without a second) is regarded as the ultimate reality in the Vedantic framework of Shankara. *Atman* is not only of the nature of pure consciousness; it is also of the nature of pure bliss, *sacchidananda svarupa*.

I plan to give a synchronic (studying at a point of time and not historically) interpretation of the empirical self, the metaphysical Self, and Ultimate Consciousness, based on Shankara’s Advaita Vedanta, which, for its part, rests on Upanishadic philosophy. The Upanishads seem to contain two streams of thought: one which recognizes the diversity of the objective universe, the subjective individual, and ultimate reality (*Brahman*), and another

³ Cf. Vidyaranya, *Panchadasi*, x.11.

⁴ G. C. Nayak, “Self and Consciousness in Vedanta and Buddhism,” in SSSTHP.

which emphasizes their unity.⁵ Shankara thinks that anything which affirms the reality of diversity is only a concession to empirical modes of thought. Since all diversity is only conditionally true, the only teaching of the Upanishads according to him is that of unity. But, there can be no unity apart from diversity; he does not describe his teaching as monism but only as “non-dualism” (*advaita*).⁶ By calling it “non-dualism” Shankara accepts the existence of diversity on an empirical level.

Jiva: The Empirical Self

The most striking feature of Vedic thought and Indian philosophy is its emphasis on the divinity of the human being and the immortality of the human self. The Vedic philosophy speaks of an individual as a combination of the perishable material body and the imperishable inner spirit which is the essential immortal self.⁷ Although death is certain for all human beings, a mortal can nevertheless transcend it and attain immortality by knowing the Self or *Atman*. Because of ignorance and a lack of true knowledge (*prajna* or *prakista jnana*), the empirical self – the *jiva* – cannot realize that he is the immortal soul or *Atman*.

The *jiva* lives in *jagat*, or the objective universe, and it is a *vyabaharic satya*, or empirical reality. The empirical reality of the *jiva* is created by its involvement in the process of *samsara* (worldly affairs), bound by its *karma* or actions. The objective universe and individual self are both identical with Brahman.

In Advaita Vedanta, this world (*jagat*) is false or an illusion (*maya*) or *prakriti* (or matter), like the illusion of a person who sees a serpent at a distance when in actuality it is just a piece of rope. When the illusion of ‘serpent’ is overcome, there will be nothing left of it. Similarly, like the serpent, this world (called *jagat*, or *prakriti* or matter) is false (or *maya*), but this *maya* is the creative power of *Isvara* or God. The concept of *Isvara* is complex, because it involves both the concept of the absolute (*Brahman*) and that of *prakriti* (matter). The world, which is full of variety and change, cannot be explained in terms of the absolute alone, which is invariable, immutable, and identical.

The grand statement about all of this is that “All this is verily Brahman.”⁸ The *maya*, which is the source of change and difference, cannot by itself produce the world, for it is unconscious or unintelligent. An Advaitin

⁵ Arvind Sharma, *Advaita Vedanta: An Introduction* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2004), 18.

⁶ M. Hiriyanna, *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1949), 154.

⁷ “Amartyo martyena sayonih,” see *Rgveda*, 1/164/30, 38.

⁸ Ainslie T. Embree says that in their quest for some ultimate ground for the world of natural phenomena, of ‘time and space’ and of human existence, the Upanishadic sages came to the conception of Brahman, an undeniable, impersonal, unknowable power. *The Hindu Tradition*, ed. Ainslie T. Embree (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 52.

(a devotee/student of Advaita) believes that, to produce anything, a cause must itself be intelligent or it must be guided by intelligence. So the cause of the world must consist of the Brahman (the pure unchanging intelligence) and *prakriti* (matter or the unconscious changing element). Both change and permanence characterize the world. Hence its cause must itself have both these characteristics.

The *Brahman* in God is the principle of consciousness and permanence, and the *prakriti* in God is the changing unconscious and dynamic element. *Isvara*/God combines the two principles of *Brahman* and *prakriti*.⁹ It is through God that the connection between the Absolute and the world is established. (For Jews, Christians, and Muslims, God is the 'Ultimate Absolute' or ultimate cause, and cannot be equated with *Isvara* or the God of Vedanta.) The Absolute in Vedanta is invariable, immutable, identical, and non-dual, whereas God in Shankara's Vedanta involves the concept of matter or *maya*. Furthermore, *Brahman* is non-different from *Isvara* or God. Non-different does not mean identical. *Isvara* or God is dependent on *Brahman*. Hence, in Shankara's Vedanta, instead of just God and the universe, we have the Absolute, and then God, and then the universe.

Shankara, who was highly religious and who has since been regarded as the chief preceptor of the Advaita school of thought, had to provide a place for God in his conceptual scheme; recall his grand statement that 'All this is verily Brahman.' *Brahman* will have to be accepted as the sole reality, but It cannot be the creator, as It is beyond all these. It is invariable, immutable, identical, and non-dual, but if It becomes creator it will prove duality. So, the Absolute will become the cause of the changing world. Thus, Shankara can introduce a concept of God as the creator of the universe into his overall scheme.

The *jiva* or the empirical self, as said in another grand statement, is also Brahman: "I am *Brahman*." *Jiva* and *atman* (*jivatman*) are different, according to Shankara, but, at the same time, both are together. *Jiva* is an individual or a person, a knower, a doer, and a reaper of the consequences of its actions. It is in bondage, that is, it is involved in the cycle of births and deaths until it becomes free from bondage with the realization of the self. *Jiva* is not false or illusory, as the world is; rather, it is its limitations, which are false.¹⁰

These limitations, which are really *Jiva's* empirical adjuncts, appear as if transferred to it, as a person looking at a white conch through a sheet of yellow glass, of whose existence he is not aware, takes it to be yellow. In other words, the yellowness of the glass appeared to be transferred to the conch. In the case of the rope and the serpent, the serpent is illusory, but, in

⁹ S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 2nd ed., Intro. J.N. Mohanty (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), vol. II, 556.

¹⁰ For a good discussion of this point see John Grimes, *Problems and Perspectives in Religious Discourse: Advaita Vedanta Implications* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994).

the case of the white conch, it is not illusory; only the attribution of yellowness is illusory. With true knowledge, the self realizes that it is *Brahman* itself. When this fact is realized in one's own experience, what is denied is not the *jiva* as a spiritual entity, but only certain aspects of it, such as its finitude and its separateness from other selves. As the *Mundakopanishad* says about the liberated *jiva* or the embodied self:

*Yatha nadyah syandamanah samudrestam
gachanti namrupe vihaya|
tatha vidvan mamarupad vimultah
paratparam purushamupaiti divyam||*

(As rivers, flowing, disappear in the ocean losing name and form, so the wise man free from name and form goes unto the highest of the high – the Supreme Divinity.)

Those who believe in duality, such as the *Madhvas* (the disciples of Madhvacharya, 13th Century A.D.), think that the liberated souls retain their individuality. Even if we follow the *Advaitins* when they say that one can realize oneself as the metaphysical Self or pure consciousness in his life time, we must remember that, as long as the *jiva* or the empirical self is alive, he lives in this world with his internal adjuncts. When realization comes and the internal adjuncts become immaterial, he is *jivanamukta* (in a state of realization) and becomes a *jivasakshi* (witness).

There is a difference in the way in which the internal adjuncts are related to the *jiva* and to the *jivasakshi*. The internal adjuncts are a part of an invariable distinguishing feature of the *jiva* or the empirical self, but they are an external condition or separable feature of the *jivasakshi*. So long as the ego is in bondage, its *sakshittva* (the witnessing quality) is associated with the internal adjuncts. However, in the state of realization, the *jivasakshi*, the pure consciousness, remains without the internal adjuncts. Similarly, *maya* is an invariable feature of *Isvara*, but a separable condition of *Isvarasakshi*.¹¹

Jiva is eternal in two senses: (i) it is eternal in the sense that it is part of the *samsara* (empirical reality/mundane existence) which, as a process, is eternal; and (ii) it is eternal in the sense that it is identical with Brahman, which is eternal. It is perhaps because *jiva* is eternal in both senses that it can be referred to as *jivatman* or the eternal Self or, as said, it is Brahman

¹¹ Radhakrishnan, while explaining the *sakshittva* or the witnessing role of the *jiva*, says that “the internal organ enters in to the very constitution of the *jiva* while it remains outside screening the *jivasakshi*. In the former case it is *visesana*, an attribute in the latter case, *upadhi*, a limitation.” In the footnote, it is further explained that an “attribute is an invariable distinguishing feature, as blueness in a lotus. A limitation is a separable distinguishable feature, as the red flower standing in the vicinity of a crystal which seems to be red owing to its presence” while the ultimate consciousness particularized by *maya* is *Iswara*, the same consciousness conditioned by *maya* is *Isvarasakshi*. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. II, 490.

appearing in an empirical self.¹² As the permanently constant witness to its eternally fluctuating fortunes, the *jivatman* is known as the *sakshi* or witness – the permanent as the witness of the constant.¹³ But this leads to the view that there can be two kinds of eternities: (1) *Kutastha nityata*, unchanged forever like a rock (permanent) and (2), *pravaharupa nitya*, constantly changing yet without altering its pattern (*niyati*), as a flowing river perpetually changes but still retains its form. The first eternity is ‘enduringly real’ and the second ‘mutably real.’

The whole concept of *jiva* as a *sakshi* has emerged from a widely-accepted, oft-quoted couplet from the *Mundakopanisad*:

*Dwa suparna sayuja sakhaya
Samanam vriksham parishasvajate|
Tayornyah pipallam swadvatti
Anasnannayah abhichakashiti|| 5.1*

(Two birds, bound one to another in close friendship, perch on the self-same tree. One of them eats the fruits of the tree with relish, while the other looks on without eating)

The bird who eats the fruit is the *jiva*, limited by ignorance and, therefore, bound by body, mind, attachment, and action; the bird that does not eat is untainted by the passing phase of life or by forms of enjoyment, and is only a witness (*sakshi*). Though distinct, both are bound to one another in close friendship. *Jiva*, thus, is nothing but the image of the *Paramatman/Brahman*. They are inseparable from each other as is the sun’s image from the sun, and when *jiva* sees the other perching on the same branch and also his glory (*justam yada pashyatanyamishamasya/mahimanamiti vitashokah, Mundako, 5.2*), he becomes free from dejection and attains to the unbroken eternal bliss of his own self.

But this does not happen on its own. One attains this through veracity (*satyena, Munduko, 5.5*), concentration and austerity (*tapasaa, ibid., 5.5* and *8*), comprehensive knowledge (*samyak jnana, ibid., 5.5*), thought (*chetasaa*), refinement and purification of understanding (*jnana prasedana, ibid., 5.8*) and with purified nature (*vishudhah svatah, ibid., 5.10*).

However, the sages are cautious not to give too much importance to knowledge, thought, and intellect (*buddhi*), as all are empirical, worldly knowledge – *apara vidya* or *avidya* – which can make the mind go haywire. And so it is said that, ultimately, this realization of the Self is not attained through discourses, nor through intellection, nor through learning. It is gained only by the person who longs for it. To such a person, the Self reveals Its own nature.

The Upanishadic sage is not describing a schizophrenic personality, but the normal division of the self into an acting self and a witnessing self.

¹² Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. II, 159-160.

¹³ Sharma, *Advaita Vedanta: An Introduction*, 24.

The acting self is the bird who is eating the fruit, who is the self with the material adjuncts and, hence, not-self. The *Atman* alone cannot cause individuality, for it is differenceless, whereas individuality implies differences. The *Atman*, being universal and indivisible, is equally present in all persons. According to S. Radhakrishnan, Shankara agrees that a not-self remains an integral element of personality. The *jiva* is subject-object, self and not-self, reality and appearance. It consists of the *Atman* united or individuated by the object. It is the *Atman* in association with ignorance (*ajnana*).¹⁴ It is therefore *jivatman*.

The two birds are in fact one and the same. In the next *sloka* (couplet), it is said that, seated in the self-same tree (i.e., the body), one of them, the personal/worldly self – sunken in ignorance and deluded – grieves for his impotence. But when he sees the Other – the Lord, the Worshipful – and his glory, he becomes free from dejection.¹⁵ When the individual comes to realize the transcendental reality of his own self – which is the Lord of all beings untouched by the passing phenomenon of life, even as the sun is not really tarnished by the dust and dirt of the materials on which it reflects – then his dream of suffering and enjoyment disappears, and he attains to the unbroken eternal bliss of his own self. Both the birds are important, if one is to understand this deep philosophy of the *Atman*. We will have to convert the Cartesian “I think therefore I am” to “I am, therefore I think.” Man therefore seeks to discover what he is.

The *jiva* suffers the illusion that its apparent individuality is a genuine individuality. Shankara’s argument is that the difference between *jiva* and *Atman* is an unreal difference – different only for the unliberated, who understand only from the point of view of *apara vidya*, or worldly knowledge. The liberated, with the help of *para vidya*,¹⁶ or higher knowledge, realize that the *jiva* is *Atman* but that it could not be realized because of false qualities of the *jiva*.

Let me argue here that both Ramanujacharya’s ‘Vishitadvaitavada’ or qualified non-duality and Madhvacharya’s ‘Dvaitavada’ concept of duality-non-duality explain the whole issue under the framework of a theistic, personalistic interpretation of Vedanta, and preserve the identity of and difference between *Atman* and *Brahman*. For Ramanuja and Madhva, salvation

¹⁴ Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. II, 556, 596.

¹⁵ Mundakopanishad, 5, 2.

¹⁶ The higher knowledge, unlike the lower, is non-perceptual, non-conceptual, and intuitive. It is immediate and direct and is attained only by those who have stilled their senses and intellect. Further the higher knowledge is neither objective nor subjective, for it transcends all three categories of empirical experience, namely the knower, the known and the knowing. Neither the performance of rituals and sacrifices nor the singing of the hymns nor the chanting of the mantras can bring one the higher knowledge. “The Self is not known through the study of scriptures, nor through subtlety of the intellect, nor through much learning. But by him who longs for him is he known, Verily unto him the Self reveal his true being.” Katha, I.ii.23, S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upanishads* (Delhi: Indus/Harper Collins India, 1992).

does not result in the loss of the self or its individuality. On the contrary, the liberated self retains its individuality and consciousness and enjoys eternal bliss in the infinite glory of the *Paramatman*.¹⁷ This might be understood as the arrival of modernity in Indian thought, though this point remains contentious.

For instance, the distinguished psychologist Sudhir Kakkar's challenge to the claim that Hindus are unique in self-knowledge and self-development is erroneous, and his contention that Hinduism encourages men and women to be members of groups rather than self-determining individuals is incorrect. Indian philosophical thought presents the self-transcending individuality as oriented towards a higher level of existence and, so, inspires one to be a good individual. It is the realization of the limitless infinite in the finite and, hence, emancipation; in this way, the individuality of the self as well as its sublimation fulfills one of the biggest demands of the modern times, that is, the sublimation of one's ego. As Gaudapada says in his magnum opus, *Mandukya Karika*, "*Advaita tattva*," if properly understood, does not oppose any duality whatsoever.¹⁸

Atman: The Metaphysical Self

The very notion of the Self as an individual implies an embodied existence; hence, body is stated to be the abode of *Atman*. As stated earlier, two kinds of eternity are distinguished in Indian philosophy: i) *Kutastha nityata*, and ii) *pravaharupa nityata*. A thing is *kutastha nityata* if it is unchanged forever, like a rock. On the other hand, a thing is *pravaharupa nityata* if it incessantly goes on changing but without the alteration of its pattern (*nityati*), like a river. The river is mutably real, like the *pravaharupa nityata*, and represents the *jiva* part of the *jivatman*, and the *Atman* element in it is the *kutastha nityata*, like a rock which is enduringly real.¹⁹ Thus, when it is said that 'I am Brahman,' it is not the *jiva* but the *Atman* element of the complex which is referred to.

Wittgenstein has a similar thing to say, which is that the metaphysical Self is neither the human being,²⁰ nor is it the psychological self, because, by *Self/Atman*, we do not mean the human organism or the mind (which is attributable to the human organism). The human organism cannot be the Self because we can still ask whose organism it is. Similarly, the mind is not the Self because we can ask whose mind it is. Thus, Self, man, and mind do

¹⁷ Ramakrishna Puligandla, *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1975), 273.

¹⁸ Cf. Mandukya Karika, 17, "Svasiddhanta vyavasthasu dvaitino niscita drdham parasparam virudhyante tairayam na virudhyate."

¹⁹ K. Satchidananda Murty, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), 40.

²⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Humanities Press, 1961), 5.631-5.641.

not belong to the same category. Man and mind are empirical concepts, whereas Self/*Atman* is a non-empirical, metaphysical category.²¹

According to Advaita philosophy, the Self is the primal source of the universe, and it designates it as *Brahman*. And at other times, it describes it as the innermost essence of man²² and refers to it as *Atman*. The Self stands for both *Brahman* and *Atman*. One needs to remind oneself that, as a result of going outward into the universe, the Upanishadic seers identified its real basis as *Brahman*; while looking inward, the Upanishadic seers realized the inner self to be *Atman*.²³ In the macrocosm of the universe, the sages saw Brahman; in the microcosm of their own being they saw the *Atman*. The realization that there is no distinction between the two, that the ground of one's own being is identical with the ground of the universe, says Embree, is the great discovery of the Upanishadic thinkers. "Whoever thus knows, I am Brahman," declares the sage, "becomes this all. Even the gods have not the power to prevent him from becoming thus, for he thus becomes the Self."²⁴

According to Charles Taylor, death can be a way to breathe the air beyond. It gives a renewed affirmation of transcendence – of something beyond flourishing – and this idea recurs again and again in Western culture. In Indian culture, Patanjali's *Yoga sutras* (2nd Century A.D.) was brought to the common people by a siddha (enlightened) yogi. Gorakhnath, in one of his mystical esoteric poems, compares the Ultimate Self to an ocean and the self to a rain drop which becomes a part of the ocean, saying that the small constricted life of a drop broke, and the drop became the ocean. Certainly, when the drop falls into the ocean, in one sense it dies – it dies as a drop – while, in another sense, the drop attains for the first time to the great life – it lives as the ocean. It dissolves and dies, and then becomes the divine manifestation of the union or realization of the oneness. However, the self is not merely a drop that can merge with the ocean, the Brahman, but it is also a drop that contains the ocean, a microcosm that contains the macrocosm.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad*²⁵ speaks about the one who realizes the Self and also sets forth the nature of the Self: "*satyam, jnanam anantam Brahma*." Each of the four words have the same case-ending, referring to one and the same thing: the Self (*Brahman* or, by implication, *Atman*). The other three words – *satyam* (reality), *jnanam* (knowledge), and *anantam* (infinite) – convey its essential nature.

²¹ Pradhan, "Rediscovering the Metaphysical Self," 255.

²² The metaphysical reason is that human being cannot be the Self because it is an organism which must presuppose a reference point by which it can be counted as an individual in the universe. The Self is the reference point which has no locus of its own in the universe but yet has to be presupposed by what we call the human individual.

²³ Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upanishads*, 36.

²⁴ Embree, ed., *The Hindu Tradition*, 55. The reference at the end of the quotation of Embree is taken from the Bṛhadaranyakopaniṣad: "*ya avam vedaaham brahasmiti sa idam sarvam bhavati tasya ha na devashcha nabhutya ishate*," I.4.10.

²⁵ *Taittiriya Upanishad* (hereafter TU), 2.1.1,

These latter three words, according to N. Veezhinathan, do not express a relation. For, in that case, the Self/*Atman* will be qualified by the attributes of reality, knowledge, and infinitude. But an entity which is qualified or circumscribed by attributes cannot be viewed as infinite. The Self, however, is said to be infinite in the sense that it is unbounded (*anantam*). Further, a qualified entity invariably comes within the range of speech and mind. A subsequent text of the TU, “*yato vaco nivartante, aprapya manasa saha,*” declares that the Self transcends both speech and mind.

On these two grounds, it must be held that “*satyam...Brahma*” conveys the Self as *not qualified* by the attributes such as reality, but as *having* reality, consciousness, and infinitude in its nature or essence.²⁶ Hence, these three words are not qualifying attributes (*visesanas*) but defining characteristics (*lakshanas*). The words ‘*satyam,*’ ‘*jnanam,*’ and ‘*anantam*’ (reality, knowledge, and infinitude), as defining characteristics, distinguish the Self from objects which are non-real, insentient, and finite, which are thus dissimilar from the Self. They also distinguish it from objects such as space, time, and *avidya* (ignorance), which are falsely imagined to be similar to the Self in virtue of their being immeasurably great like it.

The Self is real (*satyam*). A thing said to be real if it does not leave out its own essential nature. *Satyam*, or reality, is the essential nature of the Self. Concerning the Self as *satyam*, scholars generally, by way of an illustration, refer to a text of the *Chandogya Upanishad*:

Yathā Saumya, ekena mrit-pindena sarvam mrimmayam vijnātam, syāt, vācārambhanam vikāro nāma-dheyam, mirttikā iti eva satyam.
(6.1.4)

(Son, as by knowing one clod of clay, all things made of clay are known, different names in speech are but distortions in naming, clay is alone the truth.)

In other words, that clod of clay alone is real, and modifications such as a pot are non-real. But if the clay is to be taken as Self, and both are to be understood as real, the Self is to be viewed then as cause and also as insentient, but the clay is insentient and not the Self.

By defining Self as of the nature of Knowledge (*jnanam*), the false notion that the Self is insentient is no doubt removed, but the mistaken belief that it would be instrumental in bringing about action – denoted by the verbal base ‘*jna*’ – will not be dispelled. A detailed study of the issue explains that *jnanam*, or knowledge in the empirical sense, can be derived provided there is i) a knower, *jnata*, ii) an object known, *jneya*, iii) an instrument of knowledge, i.e., mind and senses, *jnanendriya*, and iv) knowledge itself, i.e., *jnaptiriti jnanam*.

The text “*tat srstva tadeva anupravisat*” (TU, 6.1) speaks of the Self/*Atman* as present in the body-mind complex as the *jīva*, the empirical

²⁶ N. Veezhinathan, “*Advaita Concept of the Self,*” SSSTHP, 178.

self, which is no different from that which is well-known as the knower, looking for the object of knowledge and who is dependent upon instrumental factors (mind and senses) to bring about knowledge. What follows is that knowledge, which is stated to be the nature of the Self which bears no difference from the *jiva*, must also be non-eternal.²⁷

To solve this knotty issue, Shankaracharya's commentary on the Taittiriya and the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* brings out the difference between consciousness (which is the essential nature of the Self) and empirical knowledge (which *jiva* comes to acquire through the interaction of the mind and the organs of cognition with their respective objects).²⁸ The Self is eternal, self-luminous, and the ultimate revealing principle. Empirical knowledge, which is derived by instruments of cognition like the mind and the senses, is ultimately revealed by the Self or *Atman*. According to Advaita philosophy, there are only two categories: *drk*, the Self (which is the revealing principal) and *drsya*, the not-self (which is the revealed object).

The epistemological and metaphysical itinerary of *jiva* and *Atman* proceed in Advaita on the axis of difference and unity. Empirical knowledge creates the difference between *jiva* and *Atman* but, when true knowledge (*samyak jnana*) leads to *para vidya*, or revelation of the supreme knowledge, then the *jiva* realizes the unity and turns into *jivatman*.

Self as Ultimate Consciousness

Shankaracharya argues that if the word '*jnanam*' is taken in any sense other than that of consciousness itself (*jnanpitha*), the Self would cease to be *ananta* (infinite). The Self is infinite in the sense that it is not conditioned by time, space, and object, nor by the absence or limitation of time, space, and objects; that accounts for the infinite nature of the Self.²⁹ Shankara observes that the word "*anantam*," by conveying the absence of any form of limitation in the Self, distinguishes it from finite entities which are always conditioned by time, space and objects. The author of the *Vedanta-sutras*, in the aphorism "*ato anantena thatha hi lingam*," states that the *jiva* realizes its true nature as infinite or, in other words, as the Self. Herein he identifies the Self as infinite.³⁰

The words "*satyam*" and "*jnanam*" (reality, knowledge, and infinitude) convey the Self as real and consciousness and, thus, distinguish it from that which is non-real and insentient. Unlike the word "*anantam*," these do not convey the absence of anything.³¹ The Self is thus real, conscious, and infinite in nature. The role of Yajnavalkya's description of the

²⁷ Shankara, *Bhasya on Taittiriya Upanishad*, 2.1.1.

²⁸ Shankara, *Bhasya on Taittiriya Upanishad*, 2.1.1.

²⁹ Madhusudana Sarasvati, *Advaita Siddhi*, ed. Ananta Krishna Shastri, 2nd ed. rev (Bombay: Nirnayasaragar Press, 1937), 315.

³⁰ Vedanta-Sutra, 3.2.26.

³¹ Samkara, *Bhasya on Taittiriya Upanisad*, 2.1.1.

Self/*Atman* as “*asthulam*” in negative terms is to negate the duality of the Self, which thereby confirms its infinite nature known through the affirmative text, “*satyam, Jnanam, anatham* Brahma.”³²

The *Purva-Mimamsa* sutras hold the view that knowledge is never known, but that it is self-revealing (*svaprakasa*). A piece of knowledge can be analyzed into three factors: the object, the self that knows, and the knowledge itself that relates to the other two entities. Of these three factors, the last occupies a special position. It reveals the object, it reveals the self, and it reveals itself, all at the same time. The example given is that of an earthen lamp with oil and wick: when the wick is lighted, the lamp lights, and therefore reveals, not only the objects that surround it, but also itself – thus, we do not require another light to reveal the light of the original lamp. The same is true about knowledge. It is like light, simultaneously revealing itself, the object, and the subject. Malkani argues that there is no knowledge of knowledge.³³ He adds that self-revealing knowledge is not a mental act or *vritti*, which known in itself. Rather, it is pure consciousness alone. Further, this consciousness does not reveal the knowing self; it is the real knower of the previous analysis. Indeed, there is no other knower. This knower reveals the subject, understood as an act or function of mind, and, through the subject, reveals the object – but no one reveals it. For who can know the knower? It is truly self-revealing; being unknown, it is capable of entering into our use and in our speech as what is quite immediate (*ajnate sati aparoksa vyavaharayogyatam*).³⁴

In other words, and in line with the central insight of the Upanishads, the *Atman* and *Brahman* are not two distinct realities but two different aspects of the same reality. Knowledge of *Brahman* coincides with knowledge of *Atman*, but this knowledge is not *vyavaharika satya* (practical knowledge) or *apara vidya* (lower knowledge), or the knowledge of appearances, but is instead *paramarthika satya* (absolute knowledge) and truth or *para vidya* (higher knowledge). This higher knowledge is non-perceptual, non-conceptual, and, hence, non-propositional. It is *svayamprakashya* (self-revealed). It is the knowledge of the real, of *Brahman (Atman)*. It is to be obtained through intuitive mystical insight of the *nirbijasamadhi* of Yogic discipline.³⁵

The higher knowledge is neither subjective nor objective, and, therefore, transcends all three categories of lower knowledge: the knower, the

³² “Brahman the Truth, the Consciousness, and the Infinite,” in *Taittiriya Upanishad*, 2.1.1.

³³ G. R. Malkani, “Comparative Study of Consciousness,” in *Radhakrishnan: Comparative Studies in Philosophy Presented in Honour of his Sixtieth Birthday*, eds. W. R. Inge, L. P. Jacks, M. Hiriyanna and P. T. Raju (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1951), 247.

³⁴ Malkani, “Comparative Study of Consciousness,” 248.

³⁵ *The Vedanta-sutras of Badarayana*, commentary by Shankara, trans. George Thibaut (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1970), II.3.21.

known, and the act of knowing.³⁶ “And,” says Shankara, “when parts that are due to nescience (ignorance) are dissolved through knowledge, it is not possible that a remainder should be left. The parts, therefore, enter into absolute non-division from Brahman.”³⁷ In other words, when all distinctions between the external and the internal vanish, the distinction between the Self and the non-Self vanishes, and one experiences Pure Being as Pure Consciousness (Pure Intelligence). Knowing this true nature of the Self as pure intelligence, says Shankara, is knowing itself, to be of the nature of unchangeable, eternal Cognition; it, thus, lifts itself above the vain conceit of being one with this body, and becomes the Self whose nature is unchanging eternal Cognition.³⁸ Such an experience is one of pure bliss. Shankara says, “The Self consisting of bliss is the highest Brahman.”³⁹

Commenting upon the *Taittiriya* text, “*raso vai sah, rasam hi eva ayam labdhvaanandi bhavati*,” i.e., “the Supreme Consciousness is bliss (*rasa*),” Shankara says that, having achieved that *rasa*, a person becomes fully blissful. *Rasa* as a concept is mostly used in the critical analysis of theatre, and denotes the aesthetic experience of the bliss of the play. *Rasa* is not to be admitted in this context only as the source of worldly pleasure, because, in the *rasa* experience, the worldly cause and effect relationship does not work and, also, the spectator loses his/her particular identity and becomes universal (*samanya*); hence, Viswanatha describes this *rasa* experience as *bramhasvada sahodara*, or “like the realization of Brahman as supreme bliss.” It is joy of the higher mind rather than the worldly mind, but still different from the bliss of the Self which is transcendental. And so Shankara speaks of *paramananda*, the highest bliss of the Self or Brahman, which is also *nityananda*, the eternal bliss, as distinguished from the common pleasure of the senses or the experience of the theatric joy of the higher mind.

In another text, “*etasyaiva anandasya anayani bhutani matram upajivanti*,” it is clearly delineated that the *jivas* experience only a small fraction of this supreme bliss, and, thereby, it clearly brings out the contrast between the Self, which is unconditioned bliss, and the theatric pleasure of the higher mind, which is only a partial manifestation of it.⁴⁰ It is said that the enlightened souls (*jivan-muktas*) experience bliss in the state of *nirbi-*

³⁶ Paul Deussen in this regard makes an observation that it is appropriate to dispel some misunderstandings concerning Samkara’s teaching that the lower knowledge is only knowledge of appearances. Some of Samkara’s opponents, both ancient and modern, interpret him as having claimed that world of appearance is an illusion and consequently that the knowledge of such a world is false and useless. Such an interpretation is wholly groundless. For Samkara clearly maintains that the lower knowledge is valid and pragmatically efficacious in the realm of phenomena, the world of appearance, *The System of Vedanta according to Badarayana’s Brahmasutras and Samkara’s commentary*, trans. Charles Johnston (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1973), 271.

³⁷ *The Vedanta-sutras of Badarayana*, IV.2.16.

³⁸ *The Vedanta-sutras of Badarayana*, I.3.19.

³⁹ *The Vedanta-sutras of Badarayana*, I.1.2 and also see I.1. 13-19.

⁴⁰ *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*, 4.3.32.

jasamadhi. This state is characterized by the absence of external objects and of the functioning of the instruments of cognition, which are the stimuli that ensure sensual happiness. If, in spite of the absence of these external stimuli, the *jivan-muktas* experience bliss, then it could not be the sensory one, but the source of it, that is, the Self which is pure bliss.⁴¹ This is the reason that Advaita Vedanta refers to the experience of reality (Brahman, Atman) as *satchitanada* (*sat* = Pure Being, *cit* = Pure Consciousness, *ananda* = Pure Bliss).

Conclusion

Pure Consciousness is the bliss of the Self. This is the joy of being, and this joy of the Self has no limit. This joy cannot be exceeded and also cannot be lost, being the nature of the Self Itself. This is a joy above the mind, where the mind rests in peace; for it has nothing to achieve and nothing to do. Such is the joy that is immanent in the nature of pure consciousness, and is that consciousness.

One of the objectives of this paper has been to understand the *jiva* and *Atman* and pure intelligence which enable the *jiva* (or the individual self) to realize its real nature or transcendental state of existence. But, in these post-modern times, the self is often lost. Whatever I am, say the moderns, I am because I have been created by outside forces. Because of the post-modernist attack on metaphysics, we have lost the world and the self. It is what Foucault and Derrida call the age of deconstruction of those grand narratives of Reason and Metaphysics. The grand narrative of the Self has been replaced by the marginal elements of the psychology of consciousness; the search for a Self beyond the world is seen as a futile exercise, and talk of a unified world from God's point of view is a misnomer.⁴²

The world, on the contrary, is pictured through the prism of multi-coloured relativistic ideologies.⁴³ R. C. Pradhan, in his paper "Rediscovering the Metaphysical Self," says that the crucial reason why the deconstruction of the metaphysical Self is not possible is that the Self is the underlying link between what we call the different ways of understanding the world. It is the Self that links one culture with another, and one paradigm with another. This is the reason why we must rediscover the Self that makes us realize the underlying unity of all our experiences and thoughts. This transcendental subjectivity is the ground on which we could build the bridge between cultures, societies, and life-worlds.⁴⁴ The aim, however, is not to eliminate

⁴¹ Samkara, *Bhasya on Taittiriya Upanishad*, 2.7.1.; see *The Taittiriyaopanisad bhasya-vartika of Suresvara*, ed, with introd., English translation, annotation, and indices by R. Balasubramanian (Madras: Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1974), 2.58.

⁴² Frank B. Farrell, *Subjectivity, Realism, and Postmodernism: The Recovery of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁴³ Farrell, *Subjectivity, Realism, and Postmodernism*.

⁴⁴ Pradhan, "Rediscovering the Metaphysical Self," 261.

the differences amongst the paradigms to create one systematic whole, but, rather, to integrate them into one system of thought. Only a metaphysics of Self can make room for such a unity of cultures and societies. As the *Isavasyopanishad* makes clear, he who knows that all sentient and non-sentient beings are in the Self and that the Self is in all of them, knows truth.

To conclude, may I say that, when all distinctions between the internal and the external vanish, the distinction between the Self and the non-self also vanishes, and one experiences Pure Being as Pure Consciousness. Then, everything becomes sacred. This is the religiousness of the Upanishads, which could be understood by realizing the intertwining of the sacred with the secular. This could lead to the creation of a new humanity in which both consciousness and the sensuous live together. Any split between the two brings a split in the self. We are both together; we are neither just spirituality nor just consciousness – nor are we just matter. We are a tremendous harmony between matter and consciousness.

Three Dimensions of the Research on the Concept of Body in Chinese Philosophy

Yan Lianfu

In recent years, there have been three major articles, in domestic and overseas academic circles, summarizing the research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy: the first one is “The New Vision of the Research on ‘The Concept of Body’,” published in *Chinese Ideological History* and written by a Taiwanese academic, Huang Junjie;¹ next, “Research Summary of Chinese Concept of Body,” was written by an academic from the Chinese mainland, Zhou Yuchen;² third, Li Qingliang, from mainland China, wrote “The Chinese Concept of Body and Chinese Problems – and Comment on Zhou YuChen’s paper ‘Body: Thought and Cultivation.’” Huang’s thesis exhibits the academic orientation on the “body” in traditional Chinese philosophy, which includes the “body” as thinking method, the “body” for showing the cultivation of the spirit, and the “body” as a place to display political power. Zhou’s article summarizes the research on the concept of body in China from four angles of comparative culture, medical science, morality and politics. Li’s article mentions four stages in the process of raising questions on the Chinese concept of body: the earliest concerns about the human body issued from Western academic circles; the Chinese concept of the body was first brought into the research field by Japanese academics; then, there was an in-depth exploration by Taiwanese academics and Western sinologists; finally, there were studies by scholars from the Chinese mainland, Japan, and Taiwan on the construction of the contemporary Chinese concept of the body.³ All of these papers present a clear map of the current research concerning the issue of concept of the body in Chinese philosophy.

Nevertheless, there are still very few studies concerning the inner logic and the latest research on the concept of the body in Chinese philosophy, for example, Zhang Zailin, from Xi’an Jiaotong University, and Chen Lisheng, from Sun Yat-sen University, have done a great deal of thorough and original research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy. In view of this, the present paper will discuss the academic principles, different dimensions, and the prospect of the development of research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy.

¹ Huang Junjie, “The New Vision of Research on the ‘Concept of Body’,” *Chinese Ideological History (Modern Philosophy)* 3 (2002): 55-66.

² Zhou Yuchen, *Body: Thought and Cultivation: A Cross-cultural Review of Chinese Classics* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House, 2005), 22-51.

³ Li Qingliang, “The Chinese Concept of Body and Comments on Zhou Yuchen’s paper ‘Body: Thought and Cultivation’,” *Philosophical Trends* 5 (2006): 21-27.

Influences of the Eastward Transmission of Western Culture

First of all, the current interest in research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy is sometimes attributed to reflections on modernity. It goes without saying that modernity stems from the Western world, and modernization is the process of institutionalizing some aspects of modernity. According to the studies in *The Democracy of the Dead*, written by American academics David Hall and Angela Zito, among the major characteristics of modernity are technological reason, rights and democracy, and free enterprise capitalism, but also self-awareness, self-confirmation, and self-content.⁴ There is no denying that modernity has played an important role in the development of Western society, and pursuing modernization has become a significant goal of Asian nations, including China. Nonetheless, modernity may be a Trojan horse – it may have inner hidden parts that will destroy our aspiration to develop. The crisis of modernity, which lies in the excessive reliance of the modern world on individual consciousness and rationality, leads to a value orientation that sacrifices the body, a monological thinking of “controlling all by one,” and living conditions that lead to homelessness, and has become an important problem facing us for which a solution is urgently needed. In contrast to the abstractness, the monological character, and the synchronicity of “consciousness,” the “body” possesses features of concreteness, dialogue, and permanence, which undoubtedly provide a breakthrough for insight into the crisis of modernity. By virtue of its rich thinking about the body, Chinese philosophy has proved to be a significant resource for Western and Chinese philosophers to reflect on, and to overcome the crisis of modernity.

In addition, Western culture is also influential or responsible for the cutting-edge research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy. In a sense, a history of philosophy is, at the same time, a dialogue of the history between body and consciousness. Yet there has been hardly any great importance attached to the position of the body in philosophy. In the history of Western philosophy, from Plato of ancient Greece and Augustine in the early Christian period, to Descartes and, later, to German classical philosophers such as Hegel, the body – which was considered as an obstacle to the pursuit of knowledge, the city of God, the movement of consciousness and the absolute idea – was always excluded from philosophy. Yet, the crisis of modernity, which resulted from the emphasis on consciousness in philosophy, incites people to examine this focus on ‘the mind,’ and turn to the body. Based on the reflection on and the rectification of the traditional philosophy of consciousness, phenomenology – holding the banner of “return to living world” – helps us to find a path to recover a more thorough, fundamental origin of philosophy, by placing the body in the center of Western

⁴ David Hall and Angela Zito, *The Democracy of The Dead: Dewey, Confucius, and the Hope of Chinese Democracy* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People’s Publishing House, 2004), 17-27.

philosophy. It also provides us with a new vision of reviewing the intention of the body, as well interpreting the differences and similarities between Chinese and Western philosophy.

To be specific, contemporary Western philosophy's focus on the body benefits from the transition initiated by Nietzsche, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel Foucault, and so on, who transformed Western philosophy from metaphysics into physics, and from mentality to body. Nietzsche cried out strongly that "Everything starts from the body," "The Body is the criterion" – thereby affirming the effect of the body on the pursuit of knowledge. Merleau-Ponty stated without precedent that "the issue of the universal originated from the body," thus putting body in the ontology of philosophy. By thoroughly illustrating the political power surrounding body and life, Foucault fully revealed the mechanisms of the operation of power in regard to medical science, psychiatry, and the punishment of the guilty that are related to body. The ideas of Merleau-Ponty and others force philosophy to descend from the sky to the ground, from consciousness to the body, and to enlighten the fields of sociology, medicine, aesthetics, history, etc.

By the end of the twentieth century, the research on the issue of the body, led by Western academics, gradually raised the concerns of domestic academics, so that "body writing," "body-subject," and so on, have once again become the subject of heated discussion. Wang Minan, Xie Youshun, Ge Hongbing and others have studied the body from a literary and an artistic perspective. Pang Xuequan and Yang Dachun from Zhejiang University, Zhang Qingxiong from Fudan University, and other academics who study Western philosophy respectively from the angles of the phenomenology of the body and the human body in Christian philosophy, have elaborated the track of the development of research on the body in the history of philosophy. Undoubtedly, these efforts have boosted the research on the concept of the body in Chinese philosophy.

Heated discussion about the concept of the body in Chinese philosophy has also resulted from the reflection in our academic circles on traditional Chinese culture. Traditional Chinese culture, especially ancient Chinese philosophy, is rich in its thinking about the body. As Zhang Zailin says, contrary to traditional Western philosophy whose way of exploring the world is "thinking," Chinese philosophy – as a knowledge of experiencing the world by the "body" – has shown its special preference to the body when it was born (see *Ancient Chinese Philosophy as "Philosophy of the Body,"* by Zhang Zailin). In the history of Chinese philosophy, the pre-Qin period is the golden age of body philosophy in ancient China – see remarks such as: "be cautious about physical action," that shows a high value for the body in *The Book of History*; the body cosmology, in remarks such as "The Dao of Qian produces the male, the Dao of Kun produces the female," in *The Book of Changes*; "respecting one's body is crucial," in *The Book of Rites*; and "cultivate oneself so as to manage the family's affairs well," in *The Great Learning*, and so on. In the Song and Ming Dynasties, following the earlier prevalence of Buddhism, mental awakening and body seclusion

occurred, leading to the flourishing of the ‘mentality philosophy’ of Neo-Confucianism and the popularity of the Yangming doctrine. In spite of this, during the Ming and Qing periods, along with the Taizhou school’s “be worldly wise and make oneself safe” and the appearance of Wang Fuzhi’s claim that “the worship of body represents the existence of natural law,” the “body” once again came to be at the centre of the Chinese philosophical stage. After the Ming and Qing Dynasties, as a result of the introduction of the philosophy of consciousness, the main part of Chinese philosophy turned gradually to “consciousness” instead of the “body.”

It should be said, therefore, that, under the multiple impacts of the reflection on the crisis of modernity, Western influences on the East, and the reflection of Chinese intellectuals on Chinese philosophy, the issue of the body has once again entered the investigative horizon of Chinese philosophers. The Japanese scholar Yasuo Yuasa (Tangqian Taixiong) discussed the concept of body in Chinese philosophy, holding that the outstanding feature of the Eastern (including the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese) concept of body is “a harmony of body and mind.”⁵ The Western sinologist Kristofer Schipper as well as Wu Guangming and Angela Zito, respectively, through interpreting the Taoist concept of the body, the body thinking of Chuang Tzu, and the significance of the body in Chinese classical philosophy, maintained that the Chinese philosophical concept of the “body” involves a process of “the interpenetration of body and heart.”⁶ The Taiwanese scholar Yang Rubin, Huang Junjie, Huang Jinlin, Cai Biming and others investigate the following ideas deeply: the Confucian concept of the body, the East Asian concept of the body, the relationship of the body and politics in modern China, and the concept of body in Chinese medicine. The most significant impact has been made by the research undertaken by Yang Rubin on the Confucian concept of the body.⁷ A scholar from the Chinese mainland, Zhou Jin (Zhou Yuchen), building on the research of Taiwanese academics, endeavors to sort out the concept of the body through different cultural perspectives. Chen Lisheng from Sun Yat-Sen University has made a thorough study of Wang Yangming’s concept of the body. Zhang Zailin, a

⁵ Tang Qian Tai Xiong, *The Mysterious Eastern Concept of Body and Heart*, interpreted by Ma Chao (Beijing: China Friendship Publishing House, 1990), 8.

⁶ Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, trans. Koren C. Duval (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), original French version 1982; Wu Guangming, *The Bodily Thought of Chuang Tzu*; Angela Zito, “The Significance of Body in Chinese Classical Philosophy,” *World Philosophy* 5 (2006): 49-60; Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow, eds., *Body, Subject and Power in China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁷ Yang Rubin, chief editor, *The Theory of Qi and the View of the Body in the History of Ancient Chinese Thought* 中國古代思想史中的氣論與身體觀 (Taipei: Big Stream Book Company, 1993); Yang Rubin, *The Confucian View of the Body* (Taipei, 1998); Huang Junjie, “A New Perspective in the History of East Asian Confucianism: Some Reflections on Confucian Hermeneutics,” *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (2003): 235-260; Huang Jinlin, *History, Body, Nation: The Formation of Body in Modern China (1895-1937)* (Beijing: New Star Publishing House, 2006); Cai Biming, *Body and Nature* (Taipei: Taiwan University Publishing House, 1997).

professor at Xi'an Jiaotong University, has changed the investigative approach of categorization, taken by academics previously, into a method of integration of history and theory, by virtue of his criticism of consciousness, from the perspectives of Western phenomenology and philosophical ontology. He has made a broad analysis and engaged in research on the concept of body in Chinese philosophy which is innovative and faithful to text.

Three Dimensions of the Research on the Concept of Body in Chinese Philosophy

Huang Junjie discusses the studies about the body in traditional Chinese philosophy done by domestic and overseas academics before 2002, and divides them into three “new horizons” (as set forth). His arguments mainly focus on the studies undertaken by Japanese scholars, Western sinologists, and Taiwanese academics. Considering the latest achievements made by mainland academics, from the internal logic of the research on the concept of body, we can say that there are three general dimensions – “body for expressing the subject,” “body as a display place,” and “body as philosophy noumenon” – in the research on the concept of body in traditional Chinese philosophy.

Body for Expressing the Subject

Body as “body for expressing the subject” is primarily found in the Western philosophy of consciousness, which takes consciousness as the subject, and body as the object. Certainly, ontology has made a great effort to see body as the subject.⁸ The sinologist Wu Guangming’s notion of “body thinking” and the mainland academic Chen Lisheng’s concern about “the paradigm of body thinking” have also explored the connotation of the body as subject in Chinese philosophy.

As Huang Junjie says, the book, *On Chinese Body Thinking: A Cultural Hermeneutics*, written by Wu Guangming, offers a brand-new horizon for the “body” as a mode of thinking in the Chinese thought tradition that has been discussed in recent years. In the history of Western philosophy, most philosophers naturally regard “thinking” as an abstract and theoretical activity. The subject of such thinking activity is ‘consciousness,’ while the body

⁸ Pang Xuequan, “The Theory of the Body: The Attempt of New Phenomenology in Solving the Relation of Body and Heart,” *Zhejiang University Academic Journal* 6 (2001): 5-13; Yang Dachun, “The Subject of the Human Body and Subjective Body: Michel Henry and Phenomenology of Body,” *Jianghai Academic Journal* 2 (2006): 31-36. Pang Xuequan recommends the theory of the German “New Phenomenologist” Hermann Schmitz who argues for the “body as subject” by means of a theory of the “body” and “bodily dynamics,” while Yang Dachun introduces the Michel Henry’s interpretation of “body as subject” by the use of the ideas of “subjective body” and “transcendental body.” Both of their efforts are of significance for our reflection on the idea of “body as subject” in Chinese philosophy.

is considered as an object. On basis of this view, “body thinking” is simply impossible. Wu Guangming indicates that ‘body thinking’ can be expressed in two ways: The first is “bodily thinking,” where thinking activities occur through body as a tool, and the second is “body thinking” where the body itself engages in thinking activities. Differing from the Western abstract notion of thinking, Chinese thought is a concrete “body thinking.” Chen Lisheng points out as well that in Western and Chinese philosophy, body as a paradigm of thinking is actually a “logic of embodiment.” “Embodiment” is a technical term for breaking down the duality of spirit and body – and it offers a new paradigm.⁹

Whether one speaks of body thinking or uses the body paradigm, one sees the body as the body expressing the subject, which has an important and positive effect of enlightenment on helping us to grasp traditional Chinese philosophy and to discover the rich meaning of the body in Chinese philosophy. From the angle of philosophy, the body (which is acknowledged and pursued by the prevalent “body writing” in Chinese literary circles in recent years) can be assigned to the category of “body for expressing the subject.” The real meaning of ‘body writing’ is that, from the subject’s perspective, a woman expresses her own life experience by ‘writing the body,’ so that she can get rid herself of the limitations and controls of the culture of patriarchy, and create a field belonging to herself. Yet ‘body writing’ has experienced variations, owing to the impact of commercialization in modern Chinese cultural development and of the tendency to consumerism. It has, therefore, been subject to many criticisms. But, from an outsider’s point of view, it in fact represents a voice of taking the body as the subject in order to express the body. Just as Hélène Cixous said in *The Laugh of the Medusa*: “A woman’s body, with its thousand and one thresholds of ardor – once, by smashing yokes and censors, she lets it articulate the profusion of meanings that run through it in every direction – will make the old single-grooved mother tongue reverberate with more than one language.”¹⁰

Body as a Place to Display

In his work, *Four Types of “Body” in the Confucian Tradition of East Asia: Type and Topic*,¹¹ Huang Junjie points out that four understandings of the body may be found in the Confucian tradition of East Asia: body as a place to display political power; body as a place to display social norms; body as a place to display the cultivation of the spirit; and body as a metaphor. The body that serves as a place displaying political power has two meanings: first, the body of a governor is like a nation; second, each organ

⁹ Chen Lisheng, “Body as a Paradigm of Thinking,” *Oriental Forum* 2 (2002): 12-20.

¹⁰ Hélène Cixous, Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” *Signs* 1, no. 4 (1976): 875-893, 880.

¹¹ Huang Junjie, “Four Types of ‘Body’ in the Confucian Tradition of East Asia: Type and Topic,” *Confucius Studies* 5 (2006): 20-35.

of the body is like each official position in a political system. The writer takes the views of Han Dong Zhong-shu and the Korean Confucian Li Tui-xi as cases in point. The body as a place displaying social norms is the same as Yang Rubin's so-called "concept of the body's manner," examples of which are found in Confucius and Zhu Zi. Because this concept of the body is completely influenced by the norm of social value, the body becomes a specific place to convey the norms of social value. Body as a place for spirit cultivation is a body of spiritualization, and its representatives are Mencius and Xunzi. The fourth type is body as a metaphor; such advanced metaphorical thinking is a classic feature of East Asian thought, particularly traditional thought in China.

In his paper "'The Metaphor of Body' in Wang Yangming's Thought," Chen Lisheng indicates that the concept of the body in Wang Yangming always migrates from ostensive reference to metaphor.¹² He also analyzes how Wang Yangming viewed the metaphor of the body from seven aspects, including a body of consanguinity, a body that can feel suffering, a body whose limbs do different exercises, a body in case of emergency, a degenerative body, a sick body, and a suitable body. Furthermore, he claims that, if we extend the metaphor of body in this way, we can conclude that a free body without obstacles means a body of total sensitivity, and that the body will be everlasting, lively, vivid, and happy because of the "sensitivity"; the alternative is the paralysis of the body, that is, insensitive and unhappy. The responsibility of the Confucian is to live life in the universe vigorously, and to make paralyzed limbs able again. If a moral person is happy, then a moral person with a vigorous body will be more cheerful. The wisdom of life inspired by Wang Yangming's thought is, therefore, simple and realistic: the more realistic, the simpler; the simpler, the more realistic.

Huang Junjie's four types of body and Wang Yangming's body as "metaphor" (as analyzed by Chen) both focus on 'displaying,' and reveal another side of the body as "subject" in traditional Chinese thought. This is unlike the body as a 'display place' – as "object" or "target" – as in Western philosophy. The difference is that, for a long time in Western philosophy, the body has been enslaved by the soul and controlled by the heart. Yet in the Asian tradition, especially in the Chinese tradition, the body does not act as the object of the heart but as the source of political power, social norms, spirit cultivation, and metaphor. This opens another way for us to understand better the meaning of the body in traditional Chinese philosophy.

Body as the Noumenon of Philosophy

Starting from the vision of Western phenomenology, Zhang Zailin has made an all-around analysis of the body in traditional Chinese philosophy through an original philosophical insight. In a manner of speaking, the body

¹² Chen Lisheng, "'The Metaphor of the Body' in Wang Yangming's Thought," *Confucius Studies* 1 (2004): 61-73.

in Chinese philosophical thought as grasped by Zhang Zailin is body as a 'philosophy noumenon,' a body in the sense of phenomenology and also a body containing dialogue between male and female. A number of papers regarding the concept of body in Chinese philosophy, published by Zhang Zailin, have fully discussed the possibility and manifestation of "body as philosophy noumenon" in Chinese philosophical thought.

In "Ancient Chinese Philosophy as a 'Philosophy of the Body'," Zhang Zailin defines body differently than Yang Rubin and Roger T. Ames. Yang's definition for the body in traditional Chinese thought is an integration of "shape – air [Qi] – heart," while Angela Zito's comprehension of the body in Chinese philosophy is that of a three-dimension of "body," "shape," and "structure." Nevertheless, Zhang believes that the embodiment of the body in Chinese philosophy is the original unification of ego and non-ego, soul and flesh, internal world and external world.¹³ "Body" is not only a "manly body," but also an "ego of non-ego," thereby joining the entire boundless universe naturally. Thus, the body is not simply limited on the level of physical "shape – air – heart," but acts as a "latent body" of non-hypostatization in a phenomenological sense, that is, a "sleeping body with an active tendency." Therefore, the body reveals the infinite transcendence of metaphysics by "knowing the natural law by learning human truth": Chinese philosophy not only constructs a world schema by the body, obtains social ethics from the body, and seeks spiritual transcendence through the body, but also expands its history by an operational mode of the body rather than of consciousness. As a result, "ancient Chinese philosophy takes the body as its foundation, thus being named a philosophy of bodily ontology in which it is not 'consciousness' but the 'body' that is placed at the center of the Chinese philosopher's concern, and it is not 'I think, therefore I am' but 'living by settling down' that should be regarded as the programmatic conclusion of Chinese philosophy."

Zhang Zailin discusses his "Three Major Criticisms" regarding ancient Chinese philosophy of the body in "The Body in Ancient Chinese Cosmology," "The Body in Ancient Chinese Ethics," and "The Body in Ancient Chinese Religious Views," through which he further deeply analyzes the important position of the body in ancient Chinese philosophy from three perspectives including cosmology, ethics, and religion.

Zhang Zailin says that ancient Chinese cosmology, in an original sense initiated by *The Book of Changes*, is neither the same as traditional Western philosophy of consciousness, nor as the later Chinese philosophy that has forgotten its origin (for instance, "Neo-Confucianism" and "the philosophy of mind"). It is a theory of cosmology that has roots in the human body. The corporality of this cosmology not only manifests itself in the ancient Chinese view of regarding the entire universe as the incarnation of the human body, not only expresses itself in the sympathy between male and female

¹³ Zhang Zailin, "Ancient Chinese Philosophy as a 'Philosophy of the Body,'" *Humanity Magazine* 2 (2005): 28-31.

considered by the ancient Chinese as an “essential life mechanism” by means of an embryology of the body, but also manifests itself in an understanding of the concept of “time,” which acts as the principle of the universe.¹⁴ This argument, which discards a mechanical and formalistic understanding of the universe, fruitfully and creatively interprets Chinese philosophy as that which always comprehends the universe by the idea of “nature and man united as one.”

Concerning ethics, Zhang Zailin points out that ancient Chinese ethics, originating from The Rite of Zhou, is different from both the traditional Western ethics of mere-consciousness and the later Chinese ethics which tends to connect with Neo-Confucianism and the philosophy of mind. This theory roots ethics in the body and deduces human social relations from the body. This ethics, not only sees the body as the basis of social ethics by a reductive method of self-reflexive phenomenology, and not only regards the “ethics of man and wife” as a prototype of human ethics through an understanding of the embryology of the body, but it also expresses itself by managing behavior by practicing.¹⁵ The body in ancient Chinese ethics revealed by Zhang Zailin is of extraordinary significance to China and even to all of humanity. It is a radical reform of the authentic meaning of ancient Chinese ethics, and as well a representation of the earliest criticism of the idea of modernistic ethics which tends to become monological and idealistic.

As for the religious view, unlike the traditional religions of the West which see transcendence as external, Zhang Zailin points out that ancient Chinese religion focuses on interior transcendence. This transcendental internality belongs to the body rather than to the heart. Not only does this manifest itself in the origins of ancient Chinese religion as the holiness of the body and as the dialogue mechanism inside the body, but ancient Chinese religion seeks to restore the “sympathy between god and the human” and to complete the bodily “sympathy between male and female,” thus achieving a transformation from ancient primitive myth to ancient civilized religion, but this transcendence also manifests itself in the ancient religion of China, which – based on the discovery of the holiness of “time” – provides an approach for everyone to enter this internal transcendence.¹⁶ Zhang Zailin’s discovery of the nature of the body in the religious views of ancient China provides a forceful explanation for numerous human and Chinese cultural phenomena.

After his “Three Major Criticisms,” Zhang Zailin published “The History of Ancient Chinese Philosophy as a ‘Philosophy of the Body’,” in which he interprets the history of ancient Chinese philosophy from the perspective of the body. Differing from Yang Rubin, who categorized the Con-

¹⁴ Zhang Zailin, “The Body in Ancient Chinese Cosmology,” *Northwest University Academic Journal* 4 (2006): 10-17.

¹⁵ Zhang Zailin. “The Body in Ancient Chinese Ethics,” *Shaanxi Normal University Academic Journal (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* 5 (2006): 63-71.

¹⁶ Zhang Zailin. “The Body in Ancient Chinese Religious Views,” *Humanity Magazine* 6 (2006): 28-35.

fucian Chinese concept of the body into “two origins and three parts,” Zhang Zailin argues that ancient Chinese philosophy, which acts as a bodily philosophy, is not only in sharp contrast to Western philosophy by its outstanding features of *Dasein*, perception, and diachronism, but the logic of its entire history is also radically different from the history of Western philosophy. If the history of Western philosophy is a history of a linear theory, where the thinking of the ego is continuously approaching its object, then the history of Chinese philosophy is a history of a cyclical theory, holding that there is an action and a quiet shifting between Tao and the body. As for its general context, Pre-Qin philosophy marks the prosperity of body; Song and Ming period philosophy means the retirement of body and the awakening of consciousness; and Ming and Qing Dynasty philosophy represents the movement of the regression of the body.¹⁷ Zhang Zailin’s studies show that, just as the Enlightenment in Western philosophy propelled the development of modern civilization towards today’s post-modernity, so should the interpretation of the ancient Chinese “book of the body” spur Chinese civilization to make her distinct contribution to human civilization once again.

By virtue of his broad knowledge of Western philosophy and his in-depth knowledge of Chinese philosophy, Zhang Zailin has confronted the contemporary value orientation of “sacrificing the body,” the monological thought of “controlling all by one,” and the crisis brought about by the living situation of homelessness, and turns to the place of the body in Chinese and Western philosophy. Still, instead of being biased, he reviews ancient Chinese philosophy by taking a dialogical approach to thinking about the body in Chinese and Western philosophy. He takes the body in traditional Chinese philosophy as a philosophical noumenon, in order to avoid the “bodily theory of monologue” that takes the body as the subject of expression, as well as the mistakes made in Western philosophy (which regards the body as an object and target) and in some Chinese philosophy (which considers the body as a sort of place to display and toil, thereby “alienating” the body). He considers the body as a body with gender differences, from which he understands Confucianism as a philosophy of worship of the male, reflecting male discourse, and Taoism as a philosophy of worship of the female, that expresses female discourse more. This discovery helps us to resolve the thousand-year mystery of how “Confucianism and Taoism complement each other” in a real sense, by focusing on bodily language. It also sends out a strong appeal for eliminating male discourse and maintaining the dynamic balance between male and female discourse in Chinese culture. Zhang Zailin’s aim is, ultimately, to find a way of helping humanity to get rid of the crisis of modernity. Admittedly, Zhang has not been able to make a complete detailed in-depth study of the body in traditional Confucianism,

¹⁷ Zhang Zailin, “The History of Ancient Chinese Philosophy as a ‘Philosophy of the Body’,” *Journal of Northwestern University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* 37, no. 3 (2007): 52-63.

Taoism, and other schools, thus requiring further exploration by other experts to obtain a more complete account.

The Move towards a Paradigm of Dialogue: The Prospect of Research on the Concept of the Body in Chinese Philosophy

Huang Junjie once worried that the so-called “concept of the body” was actually initiated by Western learning; the concept of body that he advocates, which is a special topic with Chinese cultural characteristics, could be said to be a sort of “reflected orientalism” under the domination of the West, and, therefore, the new vision of research on “the concept of the body” in the Chinese history of thought perhaps still cannot be free of the “supremacy” discourse of humanistic studies in the West. Zhou Yuchen and Li Qingliang asked, then: In philosophy, the trend of thinking in the contemporary West is to talk about the “body,” ultimately, in order to deconstruct the traditional “subject” and “subjectivity.” Do both Chinese classical and contemporary thinking discuss the concept of the body for this same reason? To this we can say, when studying the concept of the body in Chinese philosophy, it is both possible and necessary to propose “a paradigm of dialogue” for research on the concept of the body. Such a “paradigm of dialogue” requires dialogue between the East and West and involves different dimensions of research. Of course, to some extent, dialogue about the relation of the body and the heart is also needed.

As for the dialogue between the East and West, during the three periods of the “eastward transmission of Western culture,” Western culture tended to overwhelm Eastern culture, bringing us more Westernization and without achieving a dialogue between China and the West. Today, with the body as the target of philosophical research and in light of the crisis of modernity in both East and West, what concerns us in China is how to pursue modernization while avoiding the negative consequences, and whether we can exploit the abundant and valuable resources of the philosophy of the body found in traditional Chinese culture in order to have an effective dialogue with the West. It should be noted that, when the Easterners realized the value of Asia, sensitive academics in the West had already been engaged with the understanding of the body in Chinese culture. The purpose of our research on the Chinese concept of the body is certainly not just, as it is in Western philosophy, to clear up the notions of the “subject” and “subjectivity.” What we need to overthrow is the tendency to monologue and the supremacy of a discourse, especially the monologue of the discourse of the philosophy of consciousness.

Regarding dialogue among different dimensions of research on the Chinese concept of the body, Huang Junjie once raised the question: Given his “three visions” of research on the Chinese concept of the body (i.e., body as thinking method, body for spirit cultivation, body as a place for displaying political power), which sort of “body” is more meaningful for people in China in the future, and which possesses more development po-

tential for research? This comes down to the issue of having dialogue among different dimensions of research on the Chinese concept of the body. The aim of dialogue is not to achieve the “hegemonic view” of “Those who resist shall perish” of an intolerant strongman, but the “common view” which Habermas regards as a “general view” for the harmony of diversity. The “body” in the distinctive context of Chinese philosophy is extremely diversified and versatile; as the Chinese poem goes: “From the side, a whole range; from the end, a single peak; far, near, high, low, no two parts alike.” Any angle can be taken as an entry point and can also have a style of its own. Nevertheless, whichever point one takes, it is important to maintain a dialogical attitude so as to achieve a state of harmony in diversity, here, concerning research on the concept of the body in Chinese philosophy.

The last and most important point is to achieve the fusion of horizons for both body and heart through some kind of effective dialogue between “body” and “heart.” In “Body: As a Paradigm of Thinking,” Chen Lisheng argues that philosophy always lingers between “metaphysics” and “physics” and, in such a binary of metaphysics and physics, “body” is simply screened out and forgotten. If “metaphysics” is thought based on the heart, and “physics” is based on the object, then “the theory of body” is based on the body. Chen hopes to eliminate a series of modes of binary oppositions, including “heart” and “object”; “soul” and “flesh”; “external” and “inward.” No doubt, he is aware of the strained relations between body and heart, yet, pursuing a learning of body is not and never can be our ultimate direction. From the beginning, body and heart are doomed to contradiction. Just because the body has been suppressed for quite a while, there may be an attitude of hypercorrection in response. What we can do and do well at present, perhaps, is address the question of how to promote an effective dialogue between the body and the heart, and to exploit (as Huang Junjie would say) the characteristics of “interaction of inward and external” of the “body” in Chinese culture, thus achieving a dynamic dialogue, balance, and complementarity between the “heart” and the “body.”

Karol Wojtyla on the Psychosomatic Integrity of the Human Person

Jove Jim S. Aguas

Introduction

Dualism is a central problem in the history of philosophy. Aristotle, based on his theory of hylomorphism, characterized man as a psychosomatic being, or a being composed of body and soul.¹ St. Thomas Aquinas elaborated further on these two principles in man, and further explained their relation. Descartes, too, distinguished the two separate substances in man, the mind and the body.² In all of these accounts, the mind is valued while the body is considered with suspicion, something that needs to be purged or cleansed if one wants to attain eternal life. But today, the body is appreciated as an integral part of our human identity, as an expression of our freedom, and as a vital component of human relations. Still, it must be emphasized that the human person is not just a body or mind/spirit, but a unity of body and spirit.

Drawing some insights from his Thomistic background, Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II) goes deep into the foundation of the psychosomatic unity of man and offers his own analysis of these two components, which he calls dynamisms. But these components must not be understood in a purely Thomistic or Aristotelian sense, for they are different from their Thomistic or Aristotelian roots; rather, Wojtyla interprets them with a phenomenological approach. Wojtyla does not equate the *psyche* with the soul or spirit. This psychosomatic integrity has a personal dimension precisely because the subject of such integrity is the human person.

¹ The word *hylomorphism* is a combination of two Greek terms *hyle*, which means matter, and *morphe*, which means form. For Aristotle's discussion of the nature of the body and the soul and their relations, see Aristotle's *De Anima*, Bk. 2, chaps. 1-3 (412a-415a).

² For Descartes' distinction of the body and the soul or spirit, see "Meditation VI – Of the Existence of Material Things, and the real distinction between the Soul and Body of Man" in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*, also "Part II – Of the Principles of Material Thing" in the *Principles of Philosophy*, and also "First Part – Of the Passions in General, and incidentally of the Whole Nature of Man," in *The Passions of the Soul*, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, vol. 1 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

The Meaning of Integration

One of Wojtyła's more complex notions is integration. Integration can be used as a method of analysis, and can be applied to the character of the human person as a unified whole. It is used to analyze human action, the human person more generally, and love and sexuality. Wojtyła understands integration as a holistic and complete analysis and synthesis of the different components of a particular subject or topic. He tries to analyze each component to its basic elements, and then integrate all components into a unified whole. What he wants to avoid are isolated fragments of a reality or a fragmented picture of a particular reality. Wojtyła explains that integration may denote a whole or the wholeness of a thing. He clarifies, however, that he uses the term to signify the manifestation of a whole and a unity emerging on the basis of some complexity, and not the assemblage of a whole which was previously disconnected or the putting together of disconnected parts. The term "integration" is derived from the Latin adjective *integer*, which means whole, complete, unimpaired. Hence, "integration" points to a whole or the wholeness of a thing. "To integrate" could mean to assemble component parts so as to make a whole; or it could mean the realization and the manifestation of a whole and a unity emerging on the basis of some complexity. Wojtyła points out that, in psychology and philosophy, the term "integration" denotes "the realization and the manifestation of a whole and a unity emerging on the basis of some complexity, rather than the assembling into a whole of what was previously disconnected."³

As an essential quality of the human person, integration refers to the wholeness of the person which emerges from some complexity. Wojtyła notes that the human person is a dynamic and complex unity of structures. From our common sense perspective, the human person has different aspects: the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual. Yet, persons manifest a dynamic unity of all these complex aspects in actions, such that all of these aspects are represented when a person acts. When man does a certain act, like writing an article, and reading and editing that article, all these aspects are somehow involved.

The Somatic Dynamism

The integration of the person is based on the two dynamisms of the human person, namely, the *psyche* and the *soma*. The term "*soma*" does not exactly mean "body," but rather refers to the bodily functions as they enter into lived experience.⁴ Wojtyła uses the term "somatic" to refer to the body, both in the outer aspect, that is, the visible body parts, and inner aspects of

³ Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person* [*Osoba i Czyn*], trans. Andrzej Potocki (Boston, MA and London: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1979), 191. Henceforth, AP.

⁴ See Peter Simpson, *On Karol Wojtyła* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2001), 34.

the system, like the movements of the muscles and the functions of the vital organs. Hence, somatic dynamism is the outer reality of the body, such as the limbs, the torso, their shapes and the inner reality, that is, the human body system and the collective functioning of all the bodily organs.⁵ Digestion, nourishment, and bodily malaise are somatic.

Somatic dynamism usually refers to the human body, both its external and internal aspects. Externally, the body is a material and visible reality which is accessible to sense; the access to it is, first of all, from the “outside.” The outer shape of the human body determines what is visible in man; it decisively affects his individual physical appearance and the definite impression that he makes on others. Internally, the human body is composed of different parts which have their respective places and proper functions: “The human body forms outwardly a whole that is proportioned in a specific manner appropriate to man alone. This applies both to the special distribution of bodily parts and to their mutual coordination in the whole of man’s outward form.”⁶ Wojtyla further describes the body:

The body has, in fact, simultaneously its own particular inwardness and on account of this inwardness we speak of the human organism. While the complexity is outwardly reflected by the diversity and the mutual coordination of bodily members, its inward reflection is in the diversity and the mutual coordination of the bodily organs. The organs determine that vitality or dynamism of the body which has somatic virtuality as its counterpart.⁷

The body is the basis of man’s corporeality and concreteness. It is what is visible and external in man.⁸ Man manifests and expresses himself through his body; he relates with others and the world through his body. It is through the person’s dominion over his body that the freedom of the person is realized and the person comes into contact with the external world.⁹

The Human Body and Nature

The body is the basis of the affinity of man with nature. Because of the body, man genuinely belongs to nature. This implies, according to Wojtyla, “on the one hand, his similarity to the rest of nature and, on the other, his partaking in the whole of the external conditions of existence that we also refer to as ‘nature.’”¹⁰ Man’s position in nature is closest to animals, partic-

⁵ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 201.

⁶ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 201.

⁷ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 201.

⁸ In the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational animal, the term “animal” refers to the body and denotes corporeality, the body is also basis of man’s individuality.

⁹ Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thoughts of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 159.

¹⁰ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 208.

ularly the so-called higher animals. This fact of the close connection between the human organism and nature, inasmuch as nature constitutes the set of conditions of existence and life, provides us with a way to define the somatic dynamism of man. Wojtyła describes this dynamism as *reactive*. “Reactivity” refers to the fact that the body does not perform conscious actions, but merely reacts to external or internal natural forces.

The body as an organism is by nature adapted to vegetation and reproduction. The vitality of the human body is essentially vegetative in nature; the external conditions of the body’s vegetative character are similar to those of the vegetative character of other bodies. These conditions are determined by the natural environment, e.g., the climate, the atmosphere – and by food and drink as the means of vegetative process and regeneration. The dynamic fabric of all the vegetative vitality of the human body consists of a sequence of purely instinctive reactions which follow from the way of nature. These reactions take place in human beings without any special influence of the will, without participation by a person’s self-determination. They simply happen in the person; they are not the acting of the person and they do not constitute his action.¹¹

Reproduction becomes possible through the sexual differentiation of the human body, through its organs which physically enable the formation of man and his development until the moment of his entrance into the world, and finally his birth and a biologically autonomous life. Wojtyła elaborates:

The body activates itself according to the inner design and purpose of vegetation and reproduction; the character of this activation of the human body is reactive. In this case “reactivity” denotes an instinctive and dynamic relation to nature conceived as a definite biological “environment,” as a system conditioning both vegetation and reproduction. The relation is purposeful inasmuch as the particular, instinctive somatic reactions have as their object either vegetation or reproduction.¹²

The internal dynamism of the human organism reacts to external circumstances with physiological events. These events, which essentially belong to vegetative and reproductive processes, and which are directed toward self-preservation and reproduction, happen without being caused by the participation of the will, and thus manifest the autonomy of the body.¹³ In this sense, the vegetative and reproductive processes are independent from the will.

It would seem that within the context of the integral subjectivity of the person that is reflected in consciousness, the body has a somewhat separate

¹¹ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 209.

¹² Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 210.

¹³ Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thoughts of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, 159.

“subjectivity” of its own. However, this apparently separate subjectivity does not affect in any way the ontological, as well as the personal, unity of man. Such separate subjectivity exists only in the sense that the body is purely the subject of reactions.¹⁴ The integrity of the human person is based on the perfect matching of “somatic subjectivity” with the efficacious and transcendent subjectivity of the person. Such integrity is the condition of the person’s integrity in action. Wojtyla states that any defects in this respect, wherein the somatic subjectivity is somewhat out of tune with the efficacious subjectivity, may threaten the unity of the person and may lead to his disintegration.¹⁵

Synthesis of Action and Motion

The reactive nature of the body points to the distinction between action and motion. While the terms action and motion may be used interchangeably, Wojtyla distinguishes between them: *action* refers to conscious activity, while *motion* refers to the movement of the body. A bodily motion is in itself somatic and strictly related to the reactive potentiality of the body or to its ability to react to stimuli. Wojtyla points out that this ability reaches into the inner system of the human body and is displayed as a distinctive power or skill, the *vis motrix* or motor power. Because it is a reaction to some definite stimuli, a motion may be wholly spontaneous and instinctive; hence, it is called an “impulse.” The occurrence of impulses in man is an external indication of a certain measure of independence of the body from the will, as well as of its potential ability and dynamic specificity.¹⁶

While action and motion are distinct, there is also a way in which the two correlate. In normal persons, the synthesis of action and motion takes place continuously. While impulses may be viewed as activations of the body alone that lack the moment of personal efficacy, personal efficacy is always present in the synthesis of action with motion. Wojtyla explains that in such synthesis a given motion being dictated by the will may itself constitute the action or it may form part of an action that consists of a broader dynamic whole.¹⁷ For example, motions in sports, like running, jumping, etc., are part of a conscious action.

Wojtyla points out that a particular person may have a skilled or unskilled body, which is usually reflected in his motions. He explains that the mobility of the body is innate in man and strictly connected with his somatic reactivity, which, in turn, may be converted instinctively and spontaneously in the appropriate nerve centers into definite motor impulses. Through bodily motions, man develops his first skills. In babies, for example, the earliest motor habits, called reflexes, are formed in connection with instinctive reac-

¹⁴ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 212.

¹⁵ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 212.

¹⁶ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 213.

¹⁷ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 213.

tions and impulses. Grasping, crawling, standing, and eventually walking, start as reflexes or involuntary movements until they become conscious activities. Wojtyla notes that at the early stage of motor development, this process begins to be influenced by the will, which is the source of motor impulses coming from the interior of the person; the impulses bear the mark of self-determination. At this moment, the synthesis of the action with motion, which functions as the frame of various skills, continues to develop.¹⁸

Because of skill in the motor dynamism, the whole of human mobility becomes so spontaneous and fluent that in most cases a person can no longer notice the causative effect of the will in the synthesis of actions and motions. An individual becomes aware of it only in the rare instances of motions that are exceptionally difficult or significant, for example, in sports activities, medical surgical operations, and other strenuous physical activities. In ordinary and usual motions, the element of proficiency or skill reduces the role of attention and thus weakens the experience of conscious efficacy; in habitual motions the will appears to be not in play.¹⁹ Wojtyla explains that the constant repetition of motions creates habit, which could then become a virtue. Once habit is solidified, the perception of efficient causality of the person can attenuate until it disappears. The body now spontaneously moves according to an indication of the will, as if anticipating it.²⁰

Now, the integration of the person in the action presupposes the integrity of the body. At the moment of self-determination, man puts into operation the reactive dynamism of the body and, in this way, makes use of it. In every conscious act, man uses the body and takes part in its operation.²¹ This becomes manifest in the dynamic synthesis of action and motion.

The Psychic Dynamism

The term “*psyche*” does not apply to the soul in the metaphysical sense; its first application is in a “physical” or phenomenal sense. It properly refers to the feelings, emotions, and perceptions as they are manifest in lived experience. Thus “*psyche*” and “psychical” apply to the whole range of manifestations of the integral human life that are not in themselves bodily or physical, but show some dependence on the body, some somatic conditioning.²² For instance, eyesight, feelings, and emotions are not in themselves physical, but are nevertheless dependent on the body. While the *psyche* pertains to the affective or emotional dynamism of the person, the *soma* pertains to the bodily dynamism. It refers to that which makes man an integral being, to that which determines the integrity of his components without

¹⁸ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 213-214.

¹⁹ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 214.

²⁰ Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thoughts of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, 160.

²¹ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 212.

²² Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 201.

itself being of a bodily or somatic nature.²³ While the *soma* is something that is shared with animals, the *psyche* is a component that belongs to man alone. The psychical applies to those elements of the concrete human being that in the experience of man are integrated with the body but that in themselves differ from it. Wojtyla elaborates:

The psyche is essentially different from the body. It has not the “external” attributes of the body; it is neither “matter” nor “material” in the sense the body is “material.” The whole inwardness of the human body – what we call the “organism” – cannot be seen as interchangeable with the psyche. The functions of the psyche are “internal” and “immaterial” and while internally they are conditioned by the soma with its own proper functions, they can in no way be reduced to what is somatic.²⁴

Although the *psyche* does not exteriorize itself in the same way that somatic functions do, all of the psychical functions of man are the basis of the integration of the person in an action. Wojtyla recognizes that the inwardness of man, or his “inner life,” does not only mean his spirituality; rather, it also includes his *psyche* and the whole of his psychical functions. These inner functions as such are deprived of the external manifestation of the somatic dynamism of the body. Motions are outwardly manifested, but emotions are inherently internal. However, the body serves to exteriorize and express them. Hence, it is through the body that one sees the emotions or emotional reactions of persons.

Nature of Emotivity

Emotivity is the most significant trait of the psychic dynamism of man. Wojtyla notes that the term “emotive” is usually associated with the term “emotion” in the same manner that reactivity is associated with reaction. He clarifies, however, that emotion refers only to a certain group of manifestations of psychical emotivity. According to him, “emotivity,” and its corresponding adjective “emotive,” do not refer to feelings alone:

[T]hey do not apply only to the affective side in man. Their meaning is broader and is connected with the whole wealth of the differentiated domain of human emotions, feelings, and sensations as well as with the related behaviors and attitudes.²⁵

²³ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 221. Wojtyla notes that although “psyche” is a Greek term which means soul, the two terms are not synonymous.

²⁴ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 222.

²⁵ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 224. Etymologically the words “emotive” and “emotivity” point to a movement or motion (from the Latin *movere*, to move) whose external origin is indicated by the prefix *ex*.

Wojtyła distinguishes emotivity from reactivity. He explains that although a psychical impulse depends to some extent on the body – and is in various ways conditioned by somatic dynamism – it does not belong to the body, and that it differs from it and its somatic dynamism. Excitement as a psychical impulse, for example, is to some extent affected or conditioned by the body; when one is weak or sick, excitement about good news is mitigated. But the excitement is different from the general bodily weakness: “An emotion is not a somatic reaction but a psychical event that is distinctive in its nature and qualitatively different from the reaction itself of the body.”²⁶ Hence, it is said that emotions are irreducible to reactions, and emotivity is irreducible to reactivity.

Since emotivity is so deeply rooted in and conditioned by reactivity, one often speaks of “psychical reactions.” When one describes someone as “reacting in such and such a way,” he means not only his bodily reaction but his entire comportment. So, in this regard, one combines the bodily reaction with the emotions in a particular action, which also includes his conscious response to a definite value. For example, the sight of delicious food elicits a bodily reaction like the watering of the mouth, an emotional response in the form of delight, and the act of eating the food. Because of integration and self-determination, there is a somatic reaction, an emotion and a conscious response to a value. Wojtyła elaborates further:

The integration of the person in the action indicates a very concrete and...a unique and unrepeatable introduction of somatic reactivity and psychical emotivity into the unity of the action – into the unity with the transcendence of the person expressed by efficacious self-determination that is simultaneously a conscious response to values.

27

However, the conscious response to values in human action is due to the integration of the whole psycho-emotivity of man, which is an indication of the sensitivity to values. Man’s sensitivity to values due to emotions is spontaneous, and, because of this spontaneous sensitivity to values, the emotion supplies the will with a special kind of raw material that remains to be cognitively evaluated. This is because, in choice and decision, an act of the will is a cognitively defined intellectual response to values.²⁸

It may seem that the psychical strand in emotivity borders between corporality and spirituality, but this does not mean that it separates the corporeal and the spiritual. On the contrary, it interweaves one with the other, bringing them together. The function performed by emotive dynamism consists in concentrating human experiences. Wojtyła further adds:

²⁶ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 224.

²⁷ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 225.

²⁸ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 226.

In spite of the distinct difference between the emotive dynamism and the reactive dynamism of the body, they are closely interrelated and condition each other. All that determines and constitutes the spiritual transcendence of the person – his attitude toward truth, good, and beauty with the accompanying faculty of self-determination – stimulates a very deep emotive resonance in the human being. The resonance – its quality and intensity – is thoroughly individual and in its own way also determines the quality and intensity of the personal transcendence itself...provides a special basis for the personal transcendence in man.²⁹

Emotivity, like reactivity, is strictly connected with the operation of stimuli. Reactivity is the ability to react to stimuli, and, alongside this ability and very close to it, is the ability to feel. At the somatic level, this ability consists in the reception of stimuli that come from material objects. However, the effect of these objects is not somatic and does not consist in a reaction or a movement of the body, rather their effect is psychical and is expressed in feelings. There are objects whose effect is not bodily but psychical or emotional, such that the generated reaction is likewise not bodily but psychical or emotional. The sight of a beautiful image, for example, does not elicit a bodily reaction but an emotional one. Although conditioned by a reaction at the somatic level, this ability to feel transcends the somatic reaction.

Feeling and Consciousness of the Body

It is a basic experience to feel one's body and its different states. Everyone has a feeling of their own body. The body's different states and movements are the source of sensation stimuli which play a decisive role in enabling man to experience his own body. In this experience, feeling combines with consciousness to form a single common basis. Still, the whole inner dynamism of the body, including its vegetative vitality or functions, remains beyond the reach of consciousness; but, through feeling and consciousness, man acquires a kind of general awareness of the body's inwardness and its inner dynamism. This consciousness, according to Wojtyła, is concretized by means of the corresponding sensations and feelings, for instance, bodily pain makes the inward workings of one's own body come within the scope of consciousness. This concretization of consciousness in feeling serves as the basis for experiencing one's own body.³⁰

In bodily experience there are sensations, feelings, and sensory stimuli that express the body and its reactive-motor dynamisms. These sensations reveal not a separate and independent "subjectivity" of the body, but the

²⁹ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 226.

³⁰ Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, 229.

somatic structure of the whole subject or ego.³¹ They reveal to what extent the subject is a body, and to what extent his soma participates in his existence and action. These sensations also manifest that, in man, the somatic and the psychical are integrated into the dynamic and complex unity of the person. This constant experience, resulting from many sensations and feelings, manifests itself as a general *self-feeling*. Physically and psychically, a man always feels more or less “well,” or more or less “bad.” Although the direct and proper object of this self-feeling is the whole somatic ego or the body, it is still intrinsically cohesive with the personal ego.³² Hence, when one says “I feel bad,” it is not just the body that feels bad, but his entire being or personal ego. Consequently, the general condition of the body affects the general condition of the entire person. For example, a disease, while an ailment that affects the condition of the body, nevertheless affects the entire person; hence, sickness does not only affect the body but the entire self. Furthermore, the feeling of being efficient or inefficient in what one does, brings into prominence the significance of efficiency in the motor-reactive dynamism of the body. From experience, one knows how this dynamism and its efficiency condition the so-called “higher psychological functions.” Physical weariness or fatigue adversely affect the mental processes of thinking, while rest reenergizes the mind and brings precision back to one’s thoughts. Here, one also realizes the intrinsic cohesiveness and mutual union of his somatic ego with the whole of the personal ego.

The feeling of one’s body is a necessary condition for the experience of the integral subjectivity of man; in this experience, the body and consciousness are bound together by feeling. However, the sensory reflection or feeling of one’s body in the *psyche* differs essentially from the reflexive function of consciousness, whose fundamental significance is in having the personal experience of a concrete human ego. Wojtyla points out that the interconnection in this experience of feeling with consciousness brings into prominence the general relation that exists in the domain of human cognition between senses and mind. The relation is bilateral, because the feeling one has of his body allows him to establish an objective contact with it, and at the same time reveals the psychical subjectivity integrated with the somatic body-subject.³³ Here, one can see that feeling is an important bridge between the body and consciousness, as well as between the mind and the senses.

According to Wojtyla, consciousness precedes feeling; because of our feeling, our subjectivity is revealed to consciousness. But one cannot assert the opposite, one cannot have a “feeling of consciousness” or that he feels his consciousness. It is in this sense that there is a precedence of conscious-

³¹ Descartes, with his exaggerated dualism of the body and the soul, posited that the body is a separate entity and operates independently of the soul or spirit. See Wojtyla’s discussion on this in “Thomistic Personalism,” in *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, trans. Theresa Sandok, OSM (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 169.

³² Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 229.

³³ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 230.

ness over feeling. This precedence brings with it a certain order and “subordination” of feelings, in particular the feeling of one’s own body to the condition of self-determination and also of self-governance and self-possession.³⁴ Feelings reveal the psychosomatic subjectivity of man.

Man not only feels his body, but has a more integral feeling of himself; he feels what determines his own ego and his dynamism. Moreover, he has a feeling of the world as a complex and differentiated set of beings, among which his own ego exists and within which he establishes different relations. The attainment by feelings and sensations of the conscious state shapes the experience of man’s own ego as being-in-the-world, and also shapes, in one way or another, his experience of the world.³⁵

Conclusion

The somatic and psychic dynamisms are identified with ‘what-happens-in’ man, in contrast to the human act, that is, what man does consciously in self-determination. Although both the psychic and somatic are extrinsic to self-determination, because they are not determined or controlled by the self, they are subordinated to self-determination because of integration, which turns these “happenings” into “doings” and allows them to take an active role in man’s acting. The sense of sight may just be at the level of the somatic and psychical, because man just sees with his eyes even without the control of the will. But, because seeing is somehow integrated into his acting, it is transformed into the personal level. Without the notion of integration, such “happenings” do not reach the level of the personal and do not take the meaning and quality that is proper to personal existence. In empirical science, these dynamisms are understood biologically, and are studied and taken in abstractions separate from the personal dimension of man. They are merely considered as physical and regarded as belonging to the biological aspect of human beings. For instance, a medical or biological practitioner may assume this perspective when he examines the body parts and their corresponding function for medical or biological purposes. But, with the notion or structure of integration, these dynamisms are understood as aspects of the person and, therefore, have personal meaning and value.

It is through human action that the wholeness of man is manifested, that is, when man performs an action, his action reveals his self-integration. When I perform an act, it is I, the whole subject, who acts, not just a part of me nor just my body or mind. I am a unity, and this unity or integration is shown or revealed in my actions. This unity or integrity is rooted in the unity of the body or of the *soma* and the *psyche*. The *soma* and *psyche* are two distinct dynamisms in the person, but they complement one another and provide the foundation for the psychosomatic integrity of the acting person. It is through action that we see the complexity of the human person, and

³⁴ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 230.

³⁵ Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 231.

such complexity is clearly manifested in the dynamisms of the *soma* and the *psyche*. The *psyche* and the *soma* belong to the natural, that is, in the biological and psychical dynamisms or aspects of the human person. But they acquire personal meaning and dimension precisely because they are dynamisms of the human person. The natural dynamisms of the *psyche* and the *soma* do not possess this meaning and this quality on their own; they attain these only because they are dynamisms of the human person. Separated from the dynamic unity of the person, they are devoid of personal character or quality.

The Human Being as Integrated Matter and Spirit and Its Meaning for Aesthetic Perception in the Global Age¹

Katia Lenehan

In aesthetic experience, our senses are elevated to their highest possible position. Thus, aesthetic experience allows us to better recognize the fact that human beings are composite yet unitary substances that integrate matter and spirit (body and soul). Moreover, in aesthetic experience other human powers – such as imagination, emotion, and intellect – become involved with perception, and this allows us to better realize the organic interplay of our powers as a whole.

In this paper, I appeal to a Thomistic approach to aesthetic experience. I use this approach because Thomas Aquinas' notion of man as an indivisible unity of matter and spirit permeates all of his philosophy. Thus, we have tenable reason to believe that the illustration of aesthetic experience from a Thomistic viewpoint will illuminate for us the way that human powers work as a whole, and help us to see clearly how our body and soul are unified in aesthetic appreciation. This paper attempts to understand aesthetic perception by synthesizing Thomas Aquinas' thoughts on aesthetic perception, Jacques Maritain's philosophy of art, and Umberto Eco's analysis and expansion of the aesthetics of Aquinas. Based on this understanding, we are in a position to reflect upon the union of body and spirit as a whole, and its possible meaning for aesthetic education in our global age.

Thomas Aquinas' Thoughts on Aesthetic Perception

Human beings cannot have knowledge without sensation. For Thomas Aquinas, judgment is the highest power of cognition. However, judgments cannot be made without sense data. In this particular sense, cognition refers to speculative knowledge, but of course there also exists a kind of cognition which is different from speculative knowledge, namely, aesthetic cognition. It is clear that aesthetic cognition also begins with our senses, since all of our cognition has to base itself in, as well proceed from, sense data. Moreover, in aesthetic experience the participation of our senses plays a more important role than in any other experience. Therefore, it is not surprising that Aquinas emphasized the importance of the senses in aesthetic experience:

¹ This research was sponsored by the Office of Research and Development, Fu Jen Catholic University.

“beautiful things are those which please when seen.”² According to Aquinas, all human powers are involved in aesthetic experience.

Beauty and goodness in a thing are identical fundamentally; for they are based upon the same thing, namely, the form; and consequently goodness is praised as beauty. But they differ logically, for goodness properly relates to the appetite (goodness being what all things desire); and therefore it has the aspect of an end (the appetite being a kind of movement towards a thing). On the other hand, beauty relates to the cognitive faculty; for beautiful things are those which please when seen. Hence beauty consists in due proportion; for the senses delight in things duly proportioned, as in what is after their own kind – because even sense is a sort of reason, just as is every cognitive faculty. Now since knowledge is by assimilation, and similarity relates to form, beauty properly belongs to the nature of a formal cause.³

And furthermore:

The beautiful is the same as the good, and they differ in aspect only. For since good is what all seek, the notion of good is that which calms the desire; while the notion of the beautiful is that which calms the desire, by being seen or known. Consequently those senses chiefly regard the beautiful, which are the most cognitive, viz. sight and hearing, as ministering to reason; for we speak of beautiful sights and beautiful sounds. But in reference to the other objects of the other senses, we do not use the expression “beautiful,” for we do not speak of beautiful tastes, and beautiful odors. Thus it is evident that beauty adds to goodness a relation to the cognitive faculty: so that “good” means that which simply pleases the appetite; while the “beautiful” is something pleasant to apprehend.⁴

Although in these two quotations Aquinas expresses his thoughts on aesthetic experience in a still embryonic stage, his discourses clearly indicate the human powers involved in aesthetic experience: first, aesthetic experience involves our cognitive faculty (“beauty relates to the cognitive faculty”); second, it involves our senses, especially sight and hearing, since they are the most cognitive senses; third, it involves a kind of pleasure, an emotion, because beautiful things are those which “please” when seen; and fourth, it also involves desire, which is calmed simply by being seen or known. While we may not be sure how Aquinas understood the unity of human powers in aesthetic experience, we can nevertheless be sure that if Aquinas discussed aesthetic experience in any situation, it must be an expe-

² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I. 5.4, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province.

³ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I. 5.4.

⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-I.27.1.

rience that simultaneously involves sense perception, intellect, emotion, and will; this experience can only be reached when one motivates all his internal powers as a whole in a harmonious way.

Jacques Maritain's Theory of Artistic Creation

Jacques Maritain dedicated his most important book concerning art, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, to the activity of artistic creation. Although he never wrote a book on aesthetic experience, in his theory of artistic creation he expounded on the process of artistic activity, in which all human powers integrate, using a Thomistic approach. Maritain's Thomistic approach provides important clues as to how Aquinas might have conceived of the process of aesthetic experience.

The most crucial concept Maritain found in Aquinas and adopted in his artistic theory is the concept of "knowledge through connaturality":

[Knowledge through connaturality] refers to a basic distinction made by Thomas Aquinas (Sum. Theol. II-II, 45), when he explains that there are two different ways to judge of things pertaining to a moral virtue, say fortitude. On the one hand we can possess in our mind a moral science, the conceptual and rational knowledge of virtues, which produces in us a merely intellectual conformity with truths involved...On the other hand, we can possess the virtue in question in our own powers of will and desire, have it embodied in ourselves, and thus be in accordance with it in our very being. Then, if we are asked about fortitude, we will give the right answer, no longer through science, but through inclination, by looking at and consulting what we are and the inner bents or propensities of our being. A virtuous man may possibly be utterly ignorant in moral philosophy, and know as well (probably better) everything about virtues – through connaturality.⁵

Maritain pointed out that, in Aquinas, there is a kind of knowledge – knowledge through connaturality – in which "the intellect is at play not alone, but together with affective inclinations and dispositions of the will, and as guided and shaped by them."⁶ Aquinas himself never used the concept of knowledge through connaturality in his discussions of the experience of beauty, but the integral trait of knowledge through connaturality gives us some hints about how Aquinas might consider aesthetic experience.

Maritain applies knowledge through connaturality to his theory on artistic creation. According to Maritain, "[the artist's] intuition, the creative intuition, is an obscure grasping of his own Self and of things in a knowledge through union or through connaturality which is born in the spir-

⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), 117.

⁶ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 117.

itual unconscious, and which fructifies only in the work.”⁷ The “spiritual unconscious,” or “preconscious,” is an occasion where the senses, intellect, imagination, emotion, and memory all come together into organic and harmonious interplay. For Maritain, it is

a spiritual milieu – a kind of fluid and moving world, activated by the diffuse light of the Illuminating Intellect, and seemingly asleep but secretly tense and vigilant – which is this preconscious life of intellect, and of imagination and of emotion, empty of any actual concept of idea, but full of images and full of emotional movements, and in which all the past experiences and treasures of memory acquired by the soul are present in state of virtuality. It is within this fluid and moving milieu that poetic experience and poetic intuition [creative intuition] exist, not virtually, but as an act or actuation definitely formed.⁸

When illustrating the interplay of the senses, intellect, imagination, and emotion in the spiritual preconscious, Maritain applies Aquinas’ concept of “knowledge through connaturality”:

it suffices for emotion disposing or inclining, as I have said, the entire soul in a certain determinate manner to be thus received in the undetermined vitality and productivity of the spirit, where it is permeated by the light Illuminating Intellect: then, while remaining emotion, it is made – with respect to the aspects in things which are connatural to, or *like*, the soul it imbues – into an instrument of intelligence judging through connaturality, and plays, in the process of knowledge through *likeness* between reality and subjectivity, the part of nonconceptual intrinsic determination of intelligence in its preconscious activity.⁹

In this way, emotion serves as an instrument which conveys the aspects in things that are connatural to the soul to the intellect. The obscure grasp of nonconceptual knowledge of the inseparable Self and things – poetic knowledge – is finally received by the intellect through the inclining and disposing emotion. But why is the intellect the receiver? Maritain writes, “I am speaking of a certain kind of knowledge, and emotion does not know: the intellect knows, in this kind of knowledge as in any other.”¹⁰

In *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, Maritain provides a complete theory which illustrates the whole process of artistic creativity. His application of the Thomistic concept of knowledge through connaturality is key to explaining the interaction of human powers in the artist’s creation. This

⁷ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 115.

⁸ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 301.

⁹ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 122-123.

¹⁰ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 119.

Thomistic concept, showing the possibility of a kind of knowledge resulting from the interplay of all human powers, may also be applied to aesthetic experience. As Kevin O'Reilly has said, "Maritain has not only unearthed a concept [knowledge through connaturality] which is capable of accounting for developments in contemporary artistic practice, but that it is...a concept which can bear fruit when applied to the receptive phase of aesthetic experience, that is to say, aesthetic perception."¹¹

Umberto Eco's Critique

For Umberto Eco, Maritain's interpretation of Aquinas may be problematic in terms of the role of the intellect. In *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, Eco attempts to faithfully present Aquinas' ideas of aesthetic perception. He argues that the intuitive act of intellect that Maritain described is actually foreign to Aquinas:

Maritain says that the intellect comes into contact with beauty only through the senses, because only the senses have the capacity for intuition that is needed for perceiving beauty. He asserts also that when the intellect is engaged in aesthetic experience it does not exercise its power of abstraction. The distinctive character of aesthetic *visio* is that it grasps the form in the sensible and through the sensible, and it is through the apprehensions of sense that the light of being enters the intellect. Aesthetic pleasure is the repose of the intellect when it rejoices without labour or discussion; freed from its natural labor of abstraction, it "drinks the clarity of being." The critical activity which properly belongs to the intellect comes afterward. The aesthetic moment is contemplative, uncritical, blessed.... [T]he kind of intuition that is discussed by Maritain, de Bruyne, and many others is a modern concept which is alien to the Thomist system.¹²

Aquinas did in fact write about sense intuition, but the question remains as to whether he also believed that there could be an intuitive act of the intellect which occurs either before or after its abstraction. For Eco, the answer is no. However, it seems to me that Maritain was willing to "develop" Aquinas's ideas concerning art, rather than merely to "restate" them. First of all, the concept of the "spiritual unconscious" is indeed a modern concept and, as a result, the operation of the intellect (or the preconscious life of intellect) in this spiritual milieu was obviously foreign to Aquinas. Nevertheless, we can be sure that Aquinas, had he known about the concept of the preconscious life of the intellect, would have understood that the intellect operates in the "preconscious." And if the intellect operates in the

¹¹ Kevin E. O'Reilly, *Aesthetic Perception: A Thomistic Perspective* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 59.

¹² Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 60-63.

preconscious, it must be intuitive, since in the spiritual preconscious – which is prior to all concepts and reflections and prior to distinctions between subject and object – it is not only the intellect that is involved, but also all other intuitive human powers (such as the senses, imagination and emotion).

Maritain himself knew very well that, for Aquinas, the human intellect is not intuitive in the way that angelic intellects are. Thus, he interprets creative intuition as such: “creative intuition and imagination do not proceed in an angelic or demonic manner. They are human, bound to the alertness of sense perception.”¹³ Here it is clear that the intuitive intellect is not an intellect that ascends to the angelic intellect; rather, it is an intellect which descends down to, or dissolves into, the human sensuous.

Assuming that Maritain’s discourses on creative intuition are alien to the Thomistic system, Eco suggests a process of aesthetic perception which he believes is closer to the original ideas of Aquinas. For Aquinas, Eco argues, an intellectual toil cannot be dispensed as Maritain suggests, because in the aesthetic *visio* we seek in an object “a complex formal reality, involving a structural tension among its elements – and not just among its empirical-physical elements, as if it were a wooden scaffolding, but also and especially in its metaphysical structure.”¹⁴

Looking at an object aesthetically means looking at its structure, physical and metaphysical, as exhaustively as possible, in all its meanings and implications, and in its proportionate relations to its own nature and to its accidental circumstances. It means, that is, a kind of reasoning about the object, scrutinizing it in detail and in depth. Only then can it be appreciated in its harmony and its formal structure. We are thus compelled to come to the following conclusion. Aesthetic seeing does not occur before the act of abstraction, nor in the act, nor just after it. It occurs instead at the end of the second operation of the intellect – that is, *in the judgment*.¹⁵

It seems that Eco is closer than Maritain to Aquinas’s position. However, Eco, like Maritain, does not only “restate” or “restore” Aquinas, but also “develops” Aquinas’ ideas and draws his own conclusions from them. Aquinas neither talked about the intuitive intellect, nor did he claim that the aesthetic *visio* (seeing) occurs at the end of judgment. To better deal with their arguments, we may also direct ourselves to aesthetic experience itself. In aesthetic experience, the subject does not exercise the intellect as he does in the cognition of objective or scientific knowledge. In Eco’s theory, it is difficult to differentiate between objective and aesthetic cognition. The overwhelming power of the intellect displayed in Eco’s theory contradicts the nature of our aesthetic experience, in which we employ, not just the in-

¹³ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 214.

¹⁴ Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, 196.

¹⁵ Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, 196.

tellect, but rather, an organic interplay of all human powers. Kevin E. O'Reilly's comments on Eco reinforce our stance:

...the most definitive exposition to date, namely that of Umberto Eco, an exposition which although accurate in so far as it goes is nonetheless defective in that it fails to consider Aquinas's understanding of rationality in its entirety. While it is true that Eco does make reference to the senses and emotions in his exegesis of Aquinas's embryonic aesthetic theory, he nevertheless disregards the latter's radically unitary conception of human being. He consequently ignores the influence of sense and emotion on the life of reason, that is to say, he is seemingly unaware that, for Aquinas, pure reason does not exist.¹⁶

It seems that our understanding of aesthetic perception is closer to Maritain's interpretation of Aquinas, and Aquinas' insistence on the unity of the human being also firmly supports this. Even so, Eco's understanding of Aquinas' aesthetics is not completely unsound. Eco argues that "beauty, in Aquinas' aesthetics, is not the fruit of psychological empathy, nor of imaginative transfiguration or creation of an object. Instead, it sinks its root deep into a complex knowledge of being." If we agree with Eco's understanding, the role of intellect in aesthetic perception remains problematic, since without intellectual engagement, can we really reach the experience of beauty? In the following section, I will try to reconcile the theories of Maritain and Eco in order to offer a possible understanding, in one way, to illustrate the harmonious interaction of the subject's internal powers and, in another way, to show the endless cycle of reflection on beauty.

Aesthetic Perception from a Thomistic Perspective: A Reconciliation of Maritain and Eco

One of the most remarkable characteristics of aesthetic perception is that we do not mind, but rather enjoy very much, re-experiencing the same aesthetic perception. As Etienne Gilson has aptly stated:

The beauty of intelligible truth is what pleases in the act of apprehending it. But this experience is very different from that of the beautiful in art. When we read a book for our own instruction, we no doubt reap great pleasure from understanding its meaning. The greater the effort necessary to assimilate its meaning, the greater is the pleasure we derive from the fact that we finally understood it. Whether it be science or philosophy matters little; the experience of learning remains the same, and what is typical of it is that the more successful it was, the less desire we feel to go through it again....The intellectual pleasures of discovery cannot be repeated; what we our-

¹⁶ O'Reilly, *Aesthetic Perception: A Thomistic Perspective*, 51.

selves have found once or learned from others is understood once for all...Not so with the pleasures of art. One can have understood something once for all, but one cannot exhaust the pleasure of reading a poem, of seeing a statue, of hearing a musical masterpiece. As an eighteenth-century critic, Abbé du Bos, aptly said it: "The mind cannot enjoy twice the pleasure of learning the same thing; but the heart can enjoy twice the pleasure of feeling the same emotion."¹⁷

However, can the repeatable trait of the emotional experience completely explain the everlasting pleasure caused by the presence of the beautiful? Perhaps not. The emotion we experience in aesthetic perception, for instance, when re-reading a poem or re-viewing an artifact, may strike us in different ways or at different depths from repeated experiences. I can read a poem now, five days later, one or even five years later, and it may still overpower me unexpectedly each time I read it. The artwork, if it is a good one, is something we cannot exhaust at one time. This reminds us of Eco's description, in which beauty "sinks its root deep into a complex knowledge of being"; we do not finish scrutinizing the complex structure of a work at one time, in all its "physical and metaphysical" meanings and implications, nor finish measuring at one time its "accidental against substantial form, substantial form against its matter, the object against its function, and so on."¹⁸ Moreover, the aesthetic subject also affects his grasp of the complex knowledge of the object's being, since "the depth of the aesthetic object is measured by the depth of the existence to which it invites us. Its depth is correlative with ours." No doubt, the aesthetic object's "depth can be grasped only as the correlate, and also as the image, of spiritual depth."¹⁹ In other words, the subject's spiritual depth determines how much or how deep he can realize and appreciate the object.

The experience of beauty is very complicated – it involves the deep knowledge of the aesthetic object's being as well the depth of the aesthetic subject, and so it is difficult to imagine that a true aesthetic perception can be reached without the toil or judgment of the intellect. However, the fact that aesthetic perception is related to intellectual effort does not mean that these efforts are necessarily conducted in the very moment of aesthetic perception. Yet this does mean that we need to be ready if we want to completely appreciate an aesthetic object in depth. Eco confuses, so to speak, our efforts in life to grasp the aesthetic object in depth, with aesthetic perception which can be completed merely in one moment.

All intellectual toil contributes to a momentary aesthetic experience. The more I understand a work, a masterpiece of painting, for example, in all its physical and metaphysical respects, its background, and its creator, the

¹⁷ Etienne Gilson, *The Arts of the Beautiful* (Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 2000), 26-27.

¹⁸ Gilson, *The Arts of the Beautiful*, 197.

¹⁹ Mikel Dufrenne, *Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 398.

more it is appreciated and the deeper it is apprehended when I once again stand in front of it. Self-cultivation also helps. In classical Chinese aesthetics, the subject's depth of being is especially emphasized both in aesthetic appreciation and in artistic creation. The principle of being, the Dao, is hidden in the work and one can never capture it if he does not have the corresponding depth. Self-cultivation needs the travails of the intellect, and these travails are not completed in one moment but throughout one's lifetime.

The fact remains that aesthetic perception is intuitive, and its nature escapes excessive intellectual speculation, since too much intellectual toil may easily imbalance the harmonious interplay between human powers. It is this harmonious interplay, in which no one human power dominates the other, that prevents aesthetic perception from becoming a speculative cognition. It is thus also in this harmonious interplay that we see even more clearly the inseparable workings of human powers as a whole than in speculative cognition. However, it should be said that this intuitive perception of beauty is not a simple intuition. Rather, the intuition is supported and underpinned by the aesthetic subject's deep knowledge of the object's being, as well as the depth of his own being. The aesthetic perception is progressive, since our knowledge of the object and our self-cultivation is progressive. I enjoy the same feeling through the same object every time, with nuances of depth that result both from my progressive knowledge of the object and from my progressive self as a human being. It is in this progressive trait of aesthetic perception that I find Eco's analysis of Aquinas' aesthetics to be most meaningful, especially in terms of aesthetic education.

We propose one tentative way to understand aesthetic perception in the Thomistic approach with a reconciliation of Maritain and Eco: as Maritain suggests, aesthetic perception is intuitive. The powers of the senses, imagination, and intellect all engage in the preconscious within aesthetic perception. In addition, emotion, which is extremely important and yet has no particular corresponding physical faculty, permeates the senses, imagination, and intellect, as they likewise permeate emotion. Through emotional conaturality with an aesthetic object, a kind of knowledge – with regard to one aspect of the object together with the subject's self – is conveyed through the emotions and finally grasped by the intellect. Efforts to deepen our aesthetic perception are always possible. The understanding of the physical and metaphysical structure of the object as Eco describes it – which requires the intellectual efforts of speculation, abstraction, and judgment – rather than happening in the very moment of the aesthetic perception, occur instead “in between” our aesthetic perceptions, and this is necessary for the deepening of our aesthetic perception. A deeper speculation and judgment of the object will always avail our next perception. This process is forever progressive and continuous.

Reflections on Aesthetic Education in Our Global Age

The human being, as a unity of body and soul, must dedicate his whole being to aesthetic perception in order to achieve it. The dedication of a subject's being is, first of all, the dedication of his entire powers, powers both from his body and from his soul. Aesthetic perception involves not only human powers but also an aesthetic object, through which those powers activate in harmony. My senses, imagination, intellect, and emotion are activated together in such a way that the object can be grasped. The interesting thing is that, somehow, the object is aesthetically grasped only when it is not grasped as an "object," the thing which is opposite to or confronts me.

Aesthetic grasp therefore involves an openness between the subject and the object; aesthetic perception presupposes this openness. The artwork invites us (and it is especially designed by the artist to invite us) not to know it as an aim that we intend, but rather to participate in it. "To participate in" is an act both of the perceiving being and of the object perceived. If an aesthetic subject accepts this invitation, he then opens himself up to the object and participates in an act of communion with it. Mikel Dufrenne's statement is sound in this context: "...in fact, to lay myself open is not merely to be conscious of something, but to associate myself with it. Feeling is an act of communion to which I bring the entirety of my being."²⁰

Based on this proposed understanding of aesthetic perception, we may further reflect on the openness between the aesthetic subject and object. These reflections will proceed along the following three directions: 1) how is the human being as a whole open to the artifact through which one encounters the other (the author/the artist) in aesthetic perception? 2) how can this openness in aesthetic perception help one to accept others and enrich oneself through others? 3) what can we do in aesthetic education to cultivate this openness which plays a meaningful role in our global age?

First, how is the human being as a whole open to the artifact through which one encounters the other (the author/the artist) in aesthetic perception?

Mutual openness of the subject and object marks a starting point of their communion in aesthetic perception. Openness is a readiness, for the subject, to engage his whole being into a common act with the object; and a readiness, for the object, to invite the subject to join it and to offer itself to the engagement of the subject. This openness, however, can bear a fruitful result only when communion between the subject and object is finally realized, that is to say, when an affective connaturality between the two is finally fulfilled. The concept of "affective connaturality" points to the way we open ourselves up to the artwork. In aesthetic perception, we open ourselves up to a work through the channel of emotion, a channel which has no corresponding human faculty, yet is related to all human powers, or more precisely speaking, to the subject's whole being.

²⁰ Dufrenne, *Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 406.

It is this affective connaturality which fulfills the engagement of my whole being in the aesthetic perception. As Maritain describes, “emotion carries the reality which the soul suffers – a world in a grain of sand – into the depth of subjectivity, and of the spiritual unconscious of the intellect.”²¹ The reality that the emotion carries is what I experience from the very depth of my being, but moreover is also a “given,” which introduces me to an interiority other than my own. In affective connaturality, the emotion, carrying the reality as one affective dimension of the object, is that in me which is not only a mode of my being, but also a mode of being which corresponds to the mode of being in the object. Only in this way can we claim that there is a movement of “connaturality” in aesthetic perception.

A certain quality of the object is revealed to us through emotion, and it is not only revealed to us as reality but also as depth. In aesthetic experience we encounter the object, which manifests itself as an unfathomable interiority, as a source of a world (or, in Maritain’s words, as a world in a grain of sand). The world expressed by the work is first of all the world of its creator. Indeed, the work expresses its creator. It is not only because the work is made by him, but also because it is formed in a way that is infused with his whole being. This is how, through the work, we encounter the other. And if this is how we encounter the other through the aesthetic experience of the work, then there exists a back-and-forth ontological movement, which is conducted emotionally. It is through the emotion that we are able to build up an ontological intimacy between the subject and the object. It is also through the emotion that the “connaturality” between the two can be fulfilled. In short, in aesthetic perception we open ourselves up to the work emotionally with our whole being as a profound substance, which is ready to be in communion with the mode of being in the object.

However, to repeat, the end of aesthetic perception is the achievement of knowledge rather than emotion. As Aquinas emphasizes, “beauty adds to goodness a relation to the cognitive faculty.” Emotion is the channel through which we enter the world of the work. It does not remain in us, but what remains is the reality that we capture emotionally in the work. It is a kind of knowledge stamped with an emotional odor.

Second, how can this openness in aesthetic perception help one to accept others and enrich oneself through others?

In aesthetic perception we must be emotionally open. In emotion, we “participate in” rather than “objectify” the object. So, in aesthetic perception, this openness is a readiness, not to treat the work as an object opposite to me, but to join something deeply in a way that is interior to oneself. There is a reciprocal relationship here: the world of the object is not open to me unless I am open to it; I am not able to reach the depth of it unless I respond to it with my own depth. As Dufrenne points out, “Aesthetic feeling has depth not only because it unifies us but also because it opens us up.”²²

²¹ Maritain, *Creative Intuition*, 122.

²² Dufrenne, *Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 405.

That is, to open myself up to a work is to let the work instruct me by causing reverberations within my soul. The work which reveals a deep and meaningful world enriches me, insofar as I welcome it with all that I am; moreover, this meaning expressed in the work becomes richer because I live it more deeply.

The aesthetic subject loses nothing in aesthetic perception. The more he allows the work to affect him, the more he gains. Amazingly, he remains himself despite the openness that gives him over to the work. This is the very secret of this aesthetic openness; openness blossoms by a depth which allows him to respond without losing himself. In fact, he becomes even more himself in order to more fully appreciate the work and more deeply penetrate its world. A sound cannot make an echo if it does not bounce back. Similarly, an artwork, such as a poem, a painting, or a melody, cannot reverberate in me if I do not respond to it with all that I am. What I have to do in aesthetic perception is just be myself and let the work affect me as what I am.

Aesthetic perception involves openness infused with depth. In this openness, the subject accepts the reality of the work with all powers engaged (activated in an affective connaturality), responds to the world of the work with all that constitutes him, and gives himself over to the work so that he might be enriched. Gadamer says it well:

A spectator's ecstatic self-forgetfulness corresponds to his continuity with himself. Precisely that in which one loses oneself as a spectator demands that one grasp the continuity of meaning. For it is the truth of our own world – the religious and moral world in which we live – that is presented before us and in which we recognize ourselves. Just as the ontological mode of aesthetic being is marked by parousia, absolute presence, and just as an artwork is nevertheless self-identical in every moment where it achieves such a presence, so also the absolute moment in which a spectator stands is both one of self-forgetfulness and of mediation with himself. What rends him from himself at the same time gives him back the whole of his being.²³

Third, what can we do in aesthetic education to cultivate the openness which plays a meaningful role in our global age?

The charm of openness involved in aesthetic perception is that one can be enriched by the plenitude of meaning expressed by an object without losing oneself. This says something to us in our global age. It demonstrates the kind of openness we need for our global times in which the rapid movement of peoples and cultures force us to accept or refuse others, that is, to keep or lose ourselves. In the aesthetic case, we leave out this “either-or” question, and see the possibility of both accepting others and being ourselves.

²³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. Marshall (New York: Sheed & Ward, Ltd. and the Continuum Publishing Group, 2004), 124.

Aesthetic perception practices a kind of openness, on the base of which the subject and object involved enrich, rather than exclude, one another. What makes this aesthetic openness happen? We have seen that this openness is a readiness, a readiness not to treat the work as an object opposite to us but to emotionally participate in the work, to let the work reverberate in us, and to respond to it with our whole depth constituted by all that we are. To make this happen, aesthetic perception requires some preparation from the subject. If our observation is true, this openness then requires us to make some effort. The education of aesthetic perception in our global times should give thought to this openness. From what we have discussed, there are at least three aspects related to the cultivation of this aesthetic openness.

To begin with, emotional balance in the subject is important for his ability to actuate all human powers and in order to participate in a meaningful world, derived from the object, as something interior and different from himself.

According to the concept of “emotional connaturality,” emotion, related to all of our powers, is key to concentrating and collecting ourselves, and is also key to being completely sensitive to all that we are. This emotion is solid enough to be soft, and soft enough to welcome something or someone as is. Aesthetic emotion prepares a readiness for giving oneself over to something, and for being completely receptive in a way that it is able to convey a reality which our soul “suffers.” This emotion helps to give oneself over to the object rather than to possess the object. And in this way, and only in this way, the aesthetic subject is able to participate in the object and penetrate its meaningful world. However, we should keep in mind that emotion is a channel through which the reality of the work is disclosed. Aesthetic perception needs emotion as its indispensable instrument, but it is not accomplished in it. Rather, it is accomplished in knowledge, a knowledge that results from the interplay of all one’s powers and yet is received by the intellect in the end. Like all other knowledge, this aesthetic knowledge, once achieved, becomes part of one’s being. This knowledge in turn contributes to the subject’s depth as a human being and also in turn supports and cultivates his own emotion, which permeates his ontological depth, to be even more balanced, more solid, yet more receptive to other aesthetic perceptions. In brief, what makes my emotion balanced, solid, yet soft, is not emotion itself, but my balanced being with depth.

Moreover, knowledge concerning the work, its creator, its historical background, and its ontological meaning helps to deepen the aesthetic perception. The aesthetic object has depth, not because it is a “thing” with material opacity, nor because it possesses a theme or tells a story, but because it contains in itself an interior, meaningful world, deeply hidden yet greatly expressive. Knowledge “concerning” the aesthetic object always contributes to the subject’s grasp of its world. This knowledge may originate from the work’s structure, its historical background, the intention behind the artist’s creation or, in the most abstract sense, the analysis of ontological aspects of the work. But this in no way means that knowledge of this kind can act as a

substitute for aesthetic perception. Such knowledge is entirely different from the knowledge we achieve in aesthetic perception, which is impossible to accumulate or pass onto others. In aesthetic perception, if we achieve an understanding of the structure of a work, the intention of its artist, and even its proportion of being to functions, we achieve these from “feeling” rather than from “speculation.” However, speculative or scientific knowledge concerning the work, when internalized as part of the spectator’s being, is able to contribute to our aesthetic perception. This does not mean that we must know or collect all of this information before appreciating a work, because, evidently, it is to put the cart before the horse.

The work as it “is” can only be known from our participation with it, rather than from opposition to it, characteristic of the approach of scientific knowledge. All knowledge gained from outside aesthetic perception is knowledge “concerning” the work, not knowledge “belonging to” the work. It is evident that a person who teaches art history is not necessarily one who has the best taste in art. Aesthetic taste can be elevated only in aesthetic perception, not outside of it. However, what “concerns” the work is not completely irrelevant. Knowledge concerning the work, when it is internalized as part of my being, avails my aesthetic perception. Because then it is not a knowledge used as a scalpel to dissect the object opposite to me, but as an altar offering me communion with the object.

For aesthetic education, I find Eco’s discourses are especially pertinent. In most cases, the aesthetic object, bearing in itself the source of a world, is too deep to be exhausted at one time; we can always be more informed and more prepared for our next perception of it. From this point, the teacher can provide some information concerning the work and prepare students for aesthetic perception. Indeed, this is what teachers usually do, that is, pass on knowledge “concerning” the work to students; because, though it may seem to be a shame, it is in fact a beautiful thing that the aesthetic experience itself is not something which can be taught. Teachers can help students to be more prepared and more informed for every aesthetic perception they encounter. But metaphysical knowledge is also necessary. It is the most abstract and the most deficient in aesthetic education, yet also the most helpful. Understanding how the object relates to itself as it is and to us (what Eco explains with regards to beauty) helps us to deepen our aesthetic perception, and at the same time deepen our aesthetic openness.

It is also worth noting that aesthetic education may pose serious risks if the teacher mistakes knowledge concerning art for aesthetic perception. Aesthetic education is then reduced to the teaching of the history of art and of its creator, or some analysis of visible structures of works. If so, the aesthetic openness we mentioned, which can only be cultivated in aesthetic perception, will be absent, unfortunately, in this kind of reduced education.

Finally, the aesthetic subject’s self-cultivation contributes to aesthetic perception and aesthetic openness. All speculative knowledge concerning the work, if internalized into part of one’s being, helps to deepen the aesthetic perception; in this way, the depth of the subject himself, drawn from

his own being, can contribute the most to aesthetic perception. In aesthetic perception, we see the depth of the subject through the depth of the object, just as we see the depth of the object through our own depth. The aesthetic object is deep because it expresses a meaningful world which it bears within itself. The aesthetic subject is also deep because there is a depth made manifest by the density of one's whole being in communion with the object. However, if superficial things exist, so do superficial people. The aesthetic subject is able to penetrate the depth of the object only when the subject participates in it with a corresponding depth of his own. The subject may fail to capture the object in the aesthetic perception because of his lack of depth.

If the aesthetic subject's depth is supported by what he is, and his self-cultivation determines all that he is, then self-cultivation is not something irrelevant to his aesthetic experience. Thus, aesthetic education is not a self-contained discipline, but a discipline correlated intimately with other disciplines.

Self-cultivation contributes to a person as a whole (both bodily and spiritually); it thus contributes to building up his depth as a human being. Depth, as we have stated, not only collects ourselves, but also lays ourselves open. A real depth nourished by one's being is in no way exclusive; on the contrary, it keeps itself most flexible and open in so far as it is always nurtured by the plenitude of meanings, either from people or from things. To repeat, the aesthetic subject with depth, and for the reason of this depth, welcomes the object and accepts it as it is.

Conclusion

The aesthetic experience depicted by Thomas Aquinas is an experience involving all human powers – to be more precise, involving the whole being of the subject (a unitary substance of matter and spirit). By following Maritain's development of Aquinas, based on the idea of "knowledge through connaturality," we see a possible structure of how human powers cooperate as a harmonious whole in aesthetic perception. From Eco's analysis of Aquinas' aesthetics, we see how speculative knowledge and metaphysical knowledge concerning the aesthetic object can deepen ourselves and our aesthetic experience.

The discourses of Maritain and Eco illuminate the way that an aesthetic subject engages his whole being in the aesthetic experience through which he opens himself up completely to the object. The aesthetic perception thus allows us to experience a kind of openness where the subject is enriched by the object without losing himself; instead, he deepens his whole being in this openness. Interestingly, yet paradoxically, the more he is open to the object, the more he becomes himself, for, in this openness, he has to respond to the object with all that he is. Thus, the more he accepts the object, the more he gives himself over to it, and the more he affirms himself in this engagement.

If we consider questions on man's condition in this rapidly moving society and the clash of multiple cultures, and if we consider his self-positioning and his best possible response to our global age, we will find that this aesthetic openness may be extremely meaningful and worthy of our attention. An understanding of the aesthetic experience from a Thomistic perspective, I have argued, shows some possible directions in cultivating aesthetic openness in our future aesthetic education.

Skillful Knowledge and an Epistemology of Embodiment

Cheng Sumei

Traditional epistemology discusses only explicit knowledge or propositional knowledge by expression for the various kinds of scientific axioms, theorems and laws. It defines knowledge as rational, universal, objective, and a kind of “true belief” that can be recorded, transmitted, and communicated by language. In recent years, phenomenology, the sociology of scientific knowledge, and the philosophical study of artificial intelligence have challenged this. Although the results of these studies have different purposes and objectives, a remarkable fact is that they invariably involve discussion about skillful knowledge. In terms of knowledge acquisition, skillful knowledge is related to the agent’s experience or action, and its acquisition is a dynamic process of constantly transcending old norms from non-contextually following the rules, to context-sensitively “forgetting” the rules, and to creating rules using practical wisdom. Therefore, it is more fundamental than propositional knowledge. At present, the philosophical study of skillful knowledge is giving birth to a new, interdisciplinary field of philosophy – the philosophy of expertise, i.e., the philosophy of the skills, knowledge, and opinions of experts, including scientists.¹ It also brings the discussion of knowledge back to the original condition of knowledge, potentially breeding a new epistemology – the epistemology of embodiment.² Unlike traditional epistemology, this epistemology internally integrates the subject, the object, the environment, and even cultural factors in their traditional senses from the beginning, so that the controversial dualistic issues automatically disappear. It provides a new perspective for understanding such concepts as intuitive judgment and creativity, which often had been simplistically classified as irrational, thus forming a new and important

¹ *The Philosophy of Expertise* (eds. Evan Selinger and Robert P. Crease [New York: Columbia University Press, 2006]) is a collection of theses which brings together a philosophical discussion of the expert issue. In this book, one keyword, “Expertise,” has at least three usages: expert opinions, special knowledge, and special skills. Here, all the three aspects are summarized and translated as “专长”.

² In the current literature in phenomenology and cognitive science, “embodiment” is a concept that appears very frequently. In Chinese academic circles, there are two translations for the word, one is “具身性” or “具身化” and the other is “体知合一”. The latter is adopted here because, in the history of philosophy, the discussion of the relationship between the body and the mind has undergone three stages: mind without a body, the opposition between the body and the mind, and the unity of the body and the mind. To translate the word as “体知合一” can better reflect the meaning of “the unity of the body and the mind” or “the mind embodied in the body.”

dimension for the philosophy of technology, moving towards internalism or the formation of an epistemology of science and technology in a real sense. Therefore, it is very worthy of concern.

Skills and Scientific Cognition

It is known that the results of scientific cognition are dependent on the cognitive skills of the scientists. However, the role that the acquisition of skillful knowledge plays in scientific cognitive judgment and the philosophical study of scientists' intuitions and expertises are still new topics.

The study of traditional philosophy contains three assumptions, first, it assumes the acceptability of science. Here, scientific justification is the main concern of philosophers of science, for example, clarifying the meaning of scientific propositions, expounding the changing of theories, and explaining the basis of scientific success, and so on. Second, it assumes the objectivity of knowledge. Here, philosophers of science are mainly concerned with how to understand the products of science, for example, whether the results or products of scientific cognition conform to nature, are linguistic attributes of meaning, and are useful tools of the illustration or appropriateness of experience. Third, it assumes deference. Philosophers of science focus only on the philosophical study of the products of science, potentially regarding scientists as a special group that has a high degree of self-discipline and ethos (as described by Robert K. Merton), and, therefore, should be deferred to. Judging from the distinctions between the internal and external history of science, and between prescriptive and descriptive sociology, the three hypotheses of the philosophy of science are also consistent with the research premises of the history of science and science studies. In philosophical study based on these hypotheses, however, little attention has been paid to how creative scientific ideas are produced, and still less effort has been made to connect skills with scientific cognition.

Parallel to the philosophy that engages philosophy of science through addressing the epistemological issues, continental European philosophy centered on existentialism, hermeneutics, structuralism, postmodernism, and has taken another approach to the philosophy of science. This approach is focused on the interpretation of scientific texts and the cultural criticism of science, which embodies a move from traditional scientific epistemology toward the ethics of science, the politics of science, and other philosophies of scientific practice. It reveals the decisive role played by interests, power, society, the economy, and culture in the production of scientific knowledge, and it views scientific knowledge as the result of the operation of power, negotiations of interests, and cultural influences, thus totally rejecting the truth of scientific knowledge, and even going to the extreme of anti-science. If the philosophy of science started from affirming science, then these studies have started from suspecting science, suggesting the illegitimacy of scientific knowledge. According to these studies, the products or the results of scientific cognition are not inherently legitimate, and the philosophy of sci-

ence is not to assume or justify the objectivity of science, but to study a number of questionable assumptions associated with scientists, so that it is quite natural to question and criticize scientific knowledge or the cognitive judgments of scientists. Although these studies focus on how scientific ideas are born, the focus of their concern is criticizing science, rather than philosophical research on the scientists' cognitive skills.

The approach to science studies centered on the construction of science, then, seeks to study the laboratory, where scientific knowledge is produced, from a sociological perspective, so as to open 'the black box' of the activity of science and scientific cognition, and to observe and describe the whole process of knowledge formation of the scientists. This research has occurred in three stages. First, there is a focus on laboratory research. The objective of this stage is to reveal the social and cultural factors contained in the observations that scientists obtain in the laboratory. According to this sociological approach, scientific results are not the results of scientific cognition, but are brought about by various social and cultural factors; only with the help of social forces can scientists ultimately address scientific controversies.³ Second, there is a focus on the overall expansion of scientific knowledge, that is, extending the scientific enterprise to understanding technology and to form a technological enterprise. Third, there is a focus on action research. The objective of this stage is, by case studies and by analyzing how scientists have become excessively respected in the entire scientific research network, to break the boundaries between scientists and laypersons, and to show that scientists are as biased as the layperson. These studies also raise issues of the illegitimacy of scientists and of their cognitive judgments. In studying the transfer of experimental skills and scientific action, they also look at the correlation between tacit knowledge and skills and scientific cognition – but this is only a by-product of their study.

With topics such as the theory-ladenness of observation, facts containing implicit values, and the underdetermination of evidence for a theory, philosophical study that establishes itself on the legitimacy of scientists and scientific knowledge is caught in a predicament caused by its basic assumptions. Moreover, for science studies that establish themselves on the illegitimacy of scientists and scientific knowledge, by criticizing the traditional view of science, they nevertheless make similar assumptions, which results in various dualistic oppositions, such as the objective and the subjective, internalism and externalism, scientism and humanism, facts and value, etc. The traditional approach of the philosophy of science focuses on the former parts of these dualistic oppositions and is vulnerable to sociological and humanistic challenges, while the approach of science studies favors the latter parts, and easily goes from anti-scientism to overall denial of science. By the end of the 20th century, philosophers of science and sociologists of scientific knowledge had realized that they were in need of a third approach to

³ See H. M. Collins, *Changing Order: Replication and Induction in Scientific Practice* (Shanghai: Shanghai Science and Technology Education Press, 2007).

transcend these dualistic oppositions. Thus, there have appeared, for example, studies of contextualism,⁴ studies of the rhetoric of science,⁵ and studies of action research,⁶ and so on. But none has yet been able to provide a satisfactory alternative framework.

Now, specific scientific practices – such as repeating scientific experiments, presenting the results of experiments, putting forward scientific hypotheses, and forming laws and axioms – are all activities that require skills. Philosophical study based on propositional knowledge implies an opposition between the body and the mind, so it is difficult to achieve any kind of transcendence of the two. In revealing the decisive role that skill acquisition plays in scientific cognition, the phenomenological study of embodied knowledge⁷ is quite enlightening. By emphasizing the important role of the body in human perception, it makes the integration of the body and the mind as a basic presupposition for acquiring skills. Embodied knowledge is the organic integration of propositional knowledge and skillful knowledge. The acquisition of propositional knowledge emphasizes analytical and computational thinking, while the acquisition of skillful knowledge emphasizes intuitive thinking. In the human mind, analysis and intuition are always a unity. Analytical thinking is helpful in skill learning and helps to clarify intuitive judgments. In turn, intuitive thinking helps to put forward creative propositional knowledge, and deepens analytical thinking. However, the phenomenologist's goal is to have philosophy return to life and practice, and they regard human understanding as a skill, i.e., knowing how to find one's own way of life instead of knowing facts and rules. Therefore, although this latter research has made the philosophical study of skillful knowledge a popular topic, it does not tend to expound the epistemology of embodiment.⁸

Borrowing from traditional phenomenology and based on his skill acquisition model, Hubert Dreyfus argues that human intelligence is better than machine intelligence; discusses such concepts as premonition, intuition, creativity, rationality, irrationality, and arationality; and promotes the philosophical study of skillful knowledge, while also indirectly revealing

⁴ See Guo Guichun et al., *The Trends of Contemporary Philosophy of Science* (Beijing: Economic Science Press, 2009).

⁵ See Marcello Pera, *The Discourses of Science* (Shanghai: Shanghai Science and Technology Education Press, 2006).

⁶ Harry Collins and Robert Evans, *Rethinking Expertise* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

⁷ In academia, “embodied knowledge” is usually used as opposed to “embrained knowledge,” and is translated as “经验型知识” or “具身知识.” Yet “经验型知识” is easily confused with “experiential knowledge,” while “具身知识” might suggest a neglect of the mind. So, in order to be consistent with the translation of “embodiment,” it is translated here as “体知型知识”. Of course, here “体知” does not equal “体知” in the Chinese philosophy.

⁸ See Evan Selinger and Robert P. Crease. “Dreyfus on Expertise: The Limits of Phenomenological Analysis,” in *The Philosophy of Expertise*, eds. Evan Selinger and Robert P. Crease (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 214-245.

the crucial role of skills in scientific cognitive processes. I will, therefore, take the remainder of this paper to examine the features and manifestations of skillful knowledge, and extract an epistemology of embodiment from the existing philosophical literature.

The Features and Manifestations of Skillful Knowledge

Skillful knowledge refers to the knowledge by which people know how to act in cognitive practices and in specific technical activities, and how to react flexibly in a specific situation without much thinking, or the knowledge that can only be acquired through physical practice or knowledge in action. We are interested in philosophically reflecting on skillful knowledge principally for two reasons. The first is that it will enable us to explain why the intuitive responses and the understanding of the world by scientists are not totally subjective. The second is that it makes it possible to clarify the dispute between traditional philosophers of science and scholars of science studies. As Don Ihde writes, as far as the daily use of technology is concerned, the technical tools used in scientific experiments are expanded and changed into body practice through “embodiment relations”; they are merged into the body experience of the world, just like Heidegger’s hammer or Merleau-Ponty’s blind man’s cane, and the kinds of objects that scientists produce will change with the change of the forms of embodiment.⁹ In further developing Merleau-Ponty’s concepts of ‘*le corps vécu*,’ ‘intentional arc,’ and ‘maximal grip,’ Dreyfus observes that “the intentional arc establishes the close relations between the agent and the world.” And when an agent acquires skills, these skills are “saved.” Therefore, we should not regard skills as attributes of the mind, but a reflection on the world; the maximal grip establishes the body’s intuitive response to the world without any psychological operation or activity of the brain.¹⁰ It is in this way that philosophical research on skillful knowledge can turn abstract research on the relationship between theories and the world into research on how scientists respond to their world.

Skillful knowledge is related to “doing” and “activities.” Based on the different degrees of abstraction in people’s operations, we can divide “doing” into three levels: direct operations, tool operations, and mental operations. Direct operations concern various kinds of training, such as athletic sports and instrumental performances, with the aim of acquiring a special skill. Tool operations include the operations of tools, such as means of scientific measurement and medical checkups, but also the operations of language and symbols, such as computer programming, with the aim of enhancing the ability of obtaining information or fulfilling certain functions. Mental operations include logical reasoning, such as induction and deduc-

⁹ D. Ihde, *Expanding Hermeneutics: Visualism in Science* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), 42-43.

¹⁰ See Selinger and Crease, “Dreyfus on Expertise,” 214-245.

tion, modeling, and kinds of designing such as artistic creation, with the aim of enhancing cognitive ability or creating something new. In this sense, in all cognitive activities, skillful knowledge is designed for people to be better prepared for truth exploration, rather than directly finding truth. Acquiring skillful knowledge involves, first, following the rules or steps, and then turning these operations into a skill, so as to produce an intuitive and instinctive (i.e., without thinking) ability to react, rather than directly confirming or refuting a theory or model. This type of knowledge is directly related to people's judgment, appreciation, understanding, and intuition, and only indirectly related to truth. It involves the integration of the body and the mind, and is the product of discovery or creation. Skillful knowledge has the following five basic features:

First, it is practical. This is one of the most fundamental and typical features of skillful knowledge. Skillful knowledge emphasizes "doing," and not merely "knowing"; the "process," not the "result"; and the internal perception of "learning through doing," not an external "instilling." "Doing" emphasizes individual practice, participation, experience, and kinaesthetic exercises, etc. In terms of the forms of skills, there is a sequence of continuous change from the concrete to the abstract, with the so-called "hard skills" or "body skills," i.e., all the "hands-on" (or direct operation) skills, at one end, and the "soft skills" or "intellectual skills," i.e., all the "brain" (or mental operation) skills, at the other end. In real life activities, as a result of the integration of the two, most skills are somewhere in between.

Second, there is a hierarchy. Skillful knowledge has different levels of difficulty and involves different amounts of knowledge. For example, it is easier to drive a car than to drive a big truck; general technology (such as repairing a sewer) requires less knowledge than high technology (such as electronic information technology and biotechnology); quantum mechanics is more difficult to grasp than Newtonian mechanics. Based on real life experience, Dreyfus divides the process of the acquisition of skill knowledge into seven stages:¹¹ (1) Beginner. At this stage, the beginner just consumes information and works according to established rules; (2) Advanced beginner. At this stage, the learner has accumulated some experience of dealing with real situations, begins to form an understanding of related contexts, and learns to identify related issues; (3) Competence. At this stage, the learner has more experience and can recognize and follow potentially related procedures, but still is not able to handle special cases; (4) Proficiency. At this stage, the learner assimilates experience in a non-theoretical way, replaces rational reaction with intuitive reaction, and replaces understandings of skill as expressions of rules and principles with the identification of situations; (5) Expertise. At this stage, the learner becomes an expert. He not only understands the objective of the skill, but also knows how to achieve it quickly, displaying the ability to identify the problem enthusiastically and ele-

¹¹ Hubert Dreyfus, "How Far Is Distance Learning from Education?," in Selinger and Crease, *The Philosophy of Expertise*, 196-212.

gantly and is becoming an expert; (6) Mastery. At this stage, the expert can not only intuitively identify and solve the problem, but also do it creatively, developing his own unique style; (7) Practical wisdom. Here, Dreyfus uses a concept taken from Aristotle. At this stage, skillful knowledge is internalized into a form of social culture, a practical knowledge or behavioral guide for people to deal with daily problems.

Third, there is a recognition of contextuality. Skillful knowledge always exists in a particular context, which can be grasped and understood only through practice and is internalized into internal qualities and sensitivities, such as intuition through good mastery, so as to enable people to grasp and deal with specific issues intuitively. In Dreyfus' model, in the first three stages the agent's mastery of skills is context-free, where he simply follows the rules and procedures without having acquired skillful knowledge and not being able to deal with special circumstances, let alone "acting according to circumstances." In the latter four stages, the agent has mastered some skillful knowledge and has become context-sensitive. That is to say, the skills have been internalized into the agent's language and behaviors, so that there is a kind of conscious context-sensitive behavior that can react intuitively to uncertainties in a timely manner. From stage 4 to stage 7, the degree of context sensitivity gets higher and higher, until, in the end, the habit of intuitively dealing with problems according to specific circumstances is formed, the integration of man and the environment is achieved, and a new norm or even culture is created.

Fourth, skillful knowledge involves intuitiveness. Skillful knowledge will finally be internalized into intuition, which is reflected in flexible intuitive reactions and judgments. Intuition is different from guessing. Guessing occurs when people reach a conclusion without sufficient knowledge or experience. "Intuition is neither wild guessing nor supernatural inspiration, but the sort of ability we all use all the time as we go about our everyday tasks."¹² "Intuitive ability" usually refers to the ability of quickly making a decision or choice without reflection; it has nothing to do with characterization, but is an ability of unconscious judgment and reaction. Only when skillful knowledge is internalized into human intuition can it be applied as a skill and with ease. In this state, the subject is deeply embedded in the world and can give intuitive responses to a situation; his or her response to the world is instinctive, unconscious, and variable, and cannot be expressed through language, where he or she is completely immersed in experience and sensitivity to the context. In that sense, whether in specific technical activities or in cognitive activities of scientific research, skillful knowledge is the prerequisite or "foundation" for explicit knowledge acquisition, the basic quality that we must have in creative work, and the ability to respond

¹² Hubert Dreyfus and Stuart E. Dreyfus, *Mind over Machine: The Power of Human Intuition and Expertise in the Era of the Computer* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 29.

to various possibilities in a related field, rather than choice-making by memorizing “rules” or following careful consideration.

Fifth, skillful knowledge requires embodiment. Skillful knowledge is embodied knowledge gradually internalized into individual behavior by trial and error through personal experience. There are various ways to acquire skillful knowledge; there is no unified framework and the results usually differ from person to person; the method that is effective for one person may not be effective for another. During the specific practice, the beginner’s conscious consideration of rules or procedures is internalized into intuition or practical wisdom that can be applied with ease, thus enhancing the efficiency of mental operations while promoting that person’s context sensitivity and intuitiveness. This sensitivity and intuitiveness, formed in the acquisition of skillful knowledge, is no longer purely subjective, but also contains something objective. If we use this view to understand scientific research practice, we will note that the scientists’ understanding of the world through mental operations is not the subject corresponding to the object, nor the object corresponding to the subject, but the movement from a low level of integration and coordination of the subject and the object, to a higher level of integration and coordination, or to a higher degree of the subject’s embeddability in the world. This process can only be discussed in terms of effectiveness, not in terms of truth and falsehood. This is because the integration of the subject and the object in one’s personal experience is integration in action. As far as action is concerned, we usually do not ask whether an action is true, but whether this mode of action is effective or desirable. So, the concept of truth in the correspondence theory is replaced by the concept of effectiveness or desirability, which makes the concept of truth related to the degree of objectivity. The deeper the subject is embedded in the context, the better his sensitivity and intuitive judgment of the problem, the higher the degree of objectivity, and the more reliable his understanding of the world will be.

Judging from these features, skillful knowledge is a personal knowledge, but not the same as “tacit knowledge.” The two concepts were first raised by the British physical chemist Michael Polanyi in his two books *Personal Knowledge* (1958) and *The Study of Man* (1959),¹³ and they were

¹³ According to a good deal of Chinese literature circulating on the Internet, Polanyi first put forward the concept of “tacit knowledge” in *The Study of Man*, which identified as being published in 1957; this, however, is an error. According to its copyright page, the book was based on Polanyi’s Lindsay Memorial Lectures held in the University College of North Staffordshire in 1958, and published by the University of Chicago Press in 1959. The book comprises three lectures. The first is “Understanding Ourselves”; the second is “The Calling of Man”; and the third is “Understanding History.” Moreover, Polanyi wrote in the preface to the book that the three lectures were the extension of the research made in his recently published *Personal Knowledge*, and that it could be viewed as an introduction to *Personal Knowledge*. That proves that *The Study of Man* was published after, not before, *Personal Knowledge*, which was first published in 1958. Therefore, *The Study of Man* clearly was published in 1959, not 1957.

later discussed in more detail in *The Tacit Dimension*.¹⁴ According to Polanyi, in science, absolute objectivity is a false ideal. In fact, all knowing is personal and relies on commitments that can be wrong. Human capabilities allow us to use three epistemological methods: reason, experience, and intuition. Personal knowledge is not subjective opinion, but more like the knowledge of making judgments in practice and making decisions in specific situations. Tacit knowledge is the opposite of explicit knowledge, referring to knowledge that cannot be communicated through words. Using Polanyi's famous assertion that "we can know more than we can tell," we may define tacit knowledge as what we know minus what we can tell. But skillful knowledge can sometimes be expressed with the help of rules and procedures. Thus, the scope of skillful knowledge is larger than that of tacit knowledge. According to H. M. Collins' classification of knowledge,¹⁵ tacit knowledge exists in cultural knowledge and embodied knowledge, while skillful knowledge, in addition to existing in cultural knowledge and embodied knowledge, also exists in conceptual knowledge and symbolic knowledge. Moreover, the mastery of tacit knowledge and tacit skills is also a kind of skillful knowledge.

Skillful knowledge can be manifested through at least three kinds of capabilities: ability on the cognitive level related to reasoning; social skills on the social level related to culture; and skillful ability on the operational level related to skills. From this point of view, Collins' view of skillful knowledge is not very comprehensive. According to Collins, skillful knowledge usually refers to knowledge that exists in the scientific community – more precisely, knowledge that exists in the culture or way of life of the knowledge community. It is "knowledge or abilities that can be passed between scientists by personal contact but cannot be, or have not been, set out or passed on in formulae, diagrams, or verbal descriptions and instructions for action."¹⁶ This understanding of skillful knowledge is actually equating skillful knowledge to tacit knowledge, and, therefore, narrowing the scope of the research on skillful knowledge. Philosophical reflection on

¹⁴ Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1958); *The Study of Man* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1959); *The Tacit Dimension* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967).

¹⁵ Building on H. M. Collins ("The Structure of Knowledge," *Social Research* 60, no. 1 [1993]: 95-116), Blackler classifies knowledge into five categories: embrained knowledge, which relies on conceptual skills and cognitive abilities; embodied knowledge, i.e., actions oriented towards or made up of contextual practices; encultured knowledge, i.e., the process of reaching mutual understanding through socialization and cultural assimilation; embedded knowledge, which makes connections of the relations between rules, skills and procedures within a complex system; and encoded knowledge, i.e., information communicated through linguistic symbols (such as books, manuscripts, databases, etc.) and information of decontextualized practical coding. See F. Blackler, "Knowledge, Knowledge Work and Organizations: An overview and interpretation," *Organization Studies* 16, no. 6 (1995): 1021-1046.

¹⁶ H. M. Collins, "Tacit Knowledge, Trust and the Q of Sapphire," *Social Studies of Science* 31, no.1 (2001): 72.

skillful knowledge acquisition has given birth to a new epistemology – an epistemology of embodiment, and is likely to form a new framework for the philosophy of science.

An Epistemology of Embodiment

Polanyi first addressed the issue of skillful knowledge in expounding the concept of personal knowledge in 1958. He used the results of Gestalt psychology to reform the concept of cognition. He regarded cognition as an active understanding of the cognitive object, i.e., an activity that requires skills. Skillful knowledge and activities are achieved through skillful achievements (theoretical or practical) as a way of thinking or method. The action of understanding is irreversible at this stage, i.e., neither an arbitrary action nor a passive experience, but a responsible action that calls for general validity. Therefore, according to Polanyi, such cognition is indeed objective in establishing links with a hidden reality.¹⁷ Polanyi's argument shows that, even if skillful cognition is related to the individual, the cognitive result still contains objectivity. Here, "cognition" is not equal to "knowing" or the obtaining of pure information but, more importantly, contains the sense of "understanding." "Knowing" is usually associated with propositional knowledge; it may mean grasping truth expressed by propositions, one after another. "Understanding" is associated more with skillful knowledge, including a subject feeling or grasping the links between the parts of something. Thus, "cognition" has both a descriptive dimension associated with the status of the facts or conditions, and a prescriptive dimension associated with value judgments or evaluations, i.e., a dimension not related to what we do or what to believe, but to what we should or must do or whether we are qualified to believe it or do so. Therefore, the acquisition and internalization of skillful knowledge pose a challenge to the dominant naturalized epistemology. This conforms to the opinion in Michael Williams' book *Problems of Knowledge*, that cognitive judgment is a special kind of value judgment which is difficult to be completely "naturalized."¹⁸

Skillful knowledge emphasizes understanding through practice, and mastery through understanding, which involves the active commitment of the body and the mind, and not the passive acceptance of experience. There is a dynamic process from following rules to internalizing rules, from the non-contextual stage to the context-sensitive stage, and from conscious judgment and decision-making to unconscious or intuitive judgment and decision-making. Such characteristics of skillful knowledge transcend the dualistic logic of traditional epistemology. It is widely known that traditional scientific epistemology is influenced by Cartesian dualism and is based on the dualistic opposition between the subject and the object, believing that

¹⁷ Polanyi, "Preface," in *Personal Knowledge*.

¹⁸ Michael Williams, *Problems of Knowledge: A Critical Introduction to Epistemology* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2001).

the cognitive subject and object are always separated, never coming together. Therefore, the discussion of truth naturally became a key issue. For hundreds of years, philosophers have been proposing various views of truth, never ceasing in their arguments with each other, and never being able to reach a consensus. Karl Jaspers summarizes this situation of philosophical study in “Philosophical Logic” as: “we have acted as if there were a valid kingdom of truth and we just needed to master it, or, that if truth were there, we just needed to find it, and it would never change.... We have listened to and talked about truth, which seems all right. We have believed that truth would be carried out in the world on its own...”¹⁹

Based on the criticism of traditional epistemology, Hans Reichenbach, in expounding his probabilistic empiricist views, distinguishes three tasks of epistemology: the descriptive task, the critical task, and the advisory task.²⁰ The problem, however, is that, when Reichenbach confines epistemology to the three tasks of knowledge reconstruction, rational criticism, and reasonable advice, he divides the originally unified process of the context of scientific cognition into the context of discovery dominated by irrational psychological factors, and the context of justification dominated by rational/logical reasoning. The history of science and technology shows that such a division has, at best, a logical import, but no practical value. This is because, whether in scientific cognition or in skillful activities, it is very difficult for us to divide scientific cognition into a rational part and an irrational part. In the development of human cognitive ability, the rational and irrational factors are mutually inclusive and prerequisites for one another. Judging from the features and forms of skillful knowledge, intuition or understanding is neither entirely subjective nor entirely objective, but is the result of the integration of the subjective and the objective. Such a result, as Polanyi puts it, is the agent’s active understanding of the cognitive object. The process of understanding contains both inference and intuition.

Theoretically, in specific scientific cognitive activities, scientists should try to avoid irrational behavior, but it does not follow that rational behavior should be made the ultimate goal. In fact, the operation of tools in a laboratory and the mental operations of mathematizing, modeling, and formalizing the world, are both somewhere between the rational and the irrational. Dreyfus calls these activities “arational” actions. The word “arational” comes from the Latin word “ratio,” meaning estimating or computing, which came to be associated with computational thinking and, therefore, has the meaning of “getting a whole by putting together the parts.” An “arational” action refers to the action of unconscious decomposition and reconstruction. According to Dreyfus, competent behavior is neither rational

¹⁹ From Werner Schubler, *Jaspers* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2008), 152-153.

²⁰ Hans Reichenbach, *Experience and Prediction: An Analysis of the Foundations and the Structure of Knowledge* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1938), chap. 1.

nor irrational, but arational, and the expert acts in the arational sense.²¹ Following this line, we can say that the scientists can make creative cognitive judgments only in the arational sense.

There are many examples of what Dreyfus calls “arational” actions in the history of science. For example, when Max Planck put forward his quantum hypothesis in order to derive the radiation formula, his theoretical derivation was self-contradictory, and he himself was not aware of the significance of his work. He intuitively held the formula before finding its physical meaning. He admitted that his quantum hypothesis was “a long shot gamble” in a “helpless situation.”²² As the quantum hypothesis violated the widely accepted “principle of continuity” or “*natura non facit saltus*” in physics and mathematics, Planck later tried several times to give it up. The ingenious “intuitive” speculation by Planck was neither the product of pure logical reasoning nor completely based on experimental facts, much less a groundless whim, but on something arational. Just like a skilled driver who is ‘one with his car,’ and experiences himself driving and making intuitive judgments and responses according to the road conditions, so Planck intuitively put forward his quantum hypothesis in response to the problem of black body radiation which even he himself could not believe.

The history of science shows that scientists’ judgments during this process are cognitive judgments of embodiment, which cannot be reduced to results generated from experience or be simply regarded as something irrational. When scientists are in the practice of problem solving, there is no opposition between theory and practice, subject and object, or rationality and irrationality; all their judgments are reasonable reactions in a natural and smooth state in the context; all are intuitive judgments. In this sense, qualified scientists are agents of embodiment who are embedded in the objective world that they reflect on. The acquisition of their cognitive skills is not in order to transcend their embeddability and contextuality in the world, but to deepen and expand such an embedding or contextual relationship,²³ and this is an epistemology of embodiment.

According to this epistemology, the cognition of scientists is acquired through personal experience, the result of the integration of the body and the mind. As Merleau-Ponty says, the agent’s body is the permanent condition of experience; the primacy of perception means the primacy of experience and, therefore, perception becomes an active dimension of construction.²⁴ The agent is always intertwined with the cognitive object. Cognition is the result of the interactions between the agent and the cognitive object through

²¹ H. Dreyfus and S. Dreyfus, *Mind Over Machine: The Power of Human Intuition and Expertise in the Era of the Computer* (New York: Free Press, 1986), 36.

²² Pan Yongxiang and Wang Mianguang, eds., *The History of Physics* (Wuhang: Hubei Education Publishing House, 1990), 467.

²³ R. P. Crease, “Hermeneutics and the Natural Sciences: Introduction,” in *Hermeneutics and Natural Sciences*, ed. R. Crease (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997).

²⁴ See M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

various operations. This kind of epistemology has two advantages. First, it emphasizes the integration of the body and the mind, thereby getting rid of the predicament facing traditional epistemology. It turns the abstract study of the relationship between man and the world into the specific study of the embedding or contextual relationship between man and the world, which endows scientists' intuitive answers to scientific problems with objective meaning. Second, it aims at expounding the acquisition of skillful knowledge and, in its discussion of epistemological issues, it pays more attention to the acquisition of cognitive ability by internalizing and transcending rules than to the source of knowledge and truth, so that normativity will no longer be an infinite goal, but a dynamic process of creating new norms in the process of scientists' creative activities. However, from the perspective of traditional philosophy of science, it is usually held that the epistemology of embodiment is faced with two major problems.

The first problem is what Douglas Walton calls the "inaccessibility thesis,"²⁵ that is to say, that, since it is very difficult for experts to describe the steps and rules of cognitive judgment in the form of propositional knowledge, their judgment is not accessible to non-experts.²⁶ When we extend this idea to understanding science, it can be said that the results of cognitive judgments by scientists are difficult to trace back to the premises and principles of reasoning that they are based on. For example, Planck never explicitly stated how he came to put forward the quantum hypothesis. Therefore, a scientist's judgment is always associated with personal creativity, sometimes even with a cultural brand. Thus, it is inappropriate for us to ask scientists to "rationalize" their "intuitive" cognitive judgments in the form of propositional knowledge (e.g., rules or procedures); the rational reconstruction of scientific cognition may filter out the scientists' creative knowledge that manifests their cognitive ability and, thus, lead to knowledge loss.

The second problem is how to avoid the predicament of naturalized epistemology. According to the epistemology of embodiment, scientists are not always in a state of introspection. In what Thomas Kuhn describes as the 'normal paradigm' stage, they usually solve the problems in a standard way. Only when their activities cannot be effectively carried out – or, in Kuhn's words, only in a time of scientific revolution – will they engage in introspection about their ways of practice. This kind of introspection alone is able to push scientists to move from practical reasoning to theoretical reasoning, i.e., to make them look back at their own activities. New rules and norms are usually put forward in the context of such introspection. In that sense, if we accept the phenomenologist's idea of embodiment as a whole, i.e., only emphasizing the return to the body and experience, and viewing cognition and thinking as biological phenomena rooted in the sensory nerve

²⁵ See D. Walton, *Appeal to Expert Opinion: Arguments from Authority* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

²⁶ Walton, *Appeal to Expert Opinion*, 109.

system, we will go from the extreme of “a mind without a body” to the extreme of “a body without a mind,” and, once again, get trapped in the predicament of naturalized epistemology. Therefore, how to transcend the phenomenologist’s excessive emphasis on the body is the key to expounding the epistemology of embodiment.

In a word, the epistemology of embodiment based on the research of skillful knowledge has raised a series of new issues worthy of further study, for example, ontological questions like whether there is a limit to the mastery of skillful knowledge or the development of human cognitive ability; epistemological questions like what are the distinctions and relations between skillful knowledge, tacit knowledge, and explicit knowledge, and how we should understand the objectivity of skillful knowledge; and normative questions like what is the body in embodiment and how the cognitive activities based on personal activities take place. There are also derived philosophical problems that are related to experts, for example, how the layperson can make a reasonable choice between contradictory conclusions if two recognized experts in the same field make opposite judgments on a problem; what are the criteria for being an expert; and how the philosophical study of skillful knowledge can be applied in the modern education system, and so on. This paper serves only as a modest spur to incite such further investigation.

Body as a Garment: Understandings of Body in Christianity

Dan Chițoiu

Understanding the values underlying a cultural pattern that left its mark all over the Eastern part of Europe requires ascertaining the presuppositions that determined the fundamental lines of the cultural model called 'Byzantine.' It is not easy to achieve such a project, as there is an obvious rift between what modernity regarded as *value* and the *hierarchy of values*, and the foundations of a cultural attitude whose purpose was the fulfilment of a certain Christian ideal. I refer to a *certain Christian ideal* because modernity and its set of values imposed by the Enlightenment provided a different assessment of the meaning of Christian life. This is, in fact, the source of the difficulty of accurately receiving the message that Eastern Christianity attaches to the Christian experience. The belief in the superiority of modernity in its capacity to make sense of the phenomenon of culture and of its emergence in terms of modernity's own structures, has caused us to accept only reluctantly that, in European history, there was a period when the understanding of the notion of *value* was not only largely different but also rather paradoxical. This is because this belief has caused us to project our vision onto what preceded us in the course of the history of culture, especially in the European area. This attitude became visible especially beginning with the Enlightenment, a cultural movement which aimed to be a decisive step forward in the development of the human spirit and that claimed that *reason* is truly man's distinctive feature and the faculty that must be fostered at all costs to ensure the fulfilment of man's destiny. This reason, however, was described in a limited and narrow manner, and was confined to logical and formal matters.

Early Modernity imposed a new ideal of man's *self-edification*, which had to be guided by the ideal of Enlightenment. The term 'Enlightenment' itself carries signs that distinguish the cultural and social project of modernity from the interval which the moderns themselves called, with little positive intent, medieval. There was an implicit rejection of anything that showed any signs of obscurity whatsoever, and that could not conform to the explanations offered by rational discourse. It was a time when the word *mysticism* was assigned ever more pejorative connotations. The representatives of this cultural movement, which conspicuously adopted connotations of revolution and which eventually would become an ideology, had little respect for anything that did not resonate with the new ideal.¹ The history of

¹ Hans Georg Gadamer drew attention to the meanings and consequences of the attitudes of the Enlightenment on the description of man and his abilities. Cf. H. G. Gada-

European culture was reinterpreted through this mental frame and, for example, Voltaire regarded as ‘pathetic’ a cultural history such as the Byzantine one.² Given that, in Byzantine cultural development and its spiritual ideal, there was almost nothing that reflected the Enlightenment’s ideals, the period was deemed at best one which preserved the values of Antiquity. Byzantium came to be seen as languishing, immobile and unoriginal. This interpretative stance marked, in an overwhelming manner, the reception of Eastern European spirituality and culture over the last three centuries. Only with philosophical existentialism and, afterwards, philosophical hermeneutics did ways of interpreting and understanding emerge that could restore a rationality different from the one based on the rationalist-Enlightenment description.

Yet a dimension of the Eastern Christian understanding of man that is less known nowadays is related to the theme of the *garment of skin*. This theme refers to a passage in the book of *Genesis* which describes the state of man after the fall, and the fact that God made ‘garments of skin’ for the first people.³ This passage has always been of particular interest to Christian authors, starting with Origen, as it has been highly important to clarify the anthropological dimension of this garment – that it was added to man, not as an outer piece of clothing, but as a part of the self. In his explanation, Origen hesitated about whether the addition was the body or a supplementary dimension of it. That was obviously due to his Neo-Platonic training, which undervalued the body, regarding it as exterior and unessential. Yet the Church Fathers severely condemned this hesitation because of the dangerous implications it involved, which would have completely changed the understanding of the path to salvation and the meaning of salvation itself.⁴ Gregory of Nyssa as well as Maximus the Confessor argued that the “garments” had a double role, and that they must be viewed from the beginning as an expression of God’s mercy, for the two original parents had been banished from Paradise and were living and suffering on the arid and deserted land. The garments signified their power to survive in the new circumstances which they incurred due to their disobedience. The interpretation provided by the Church Fathers is that the garment should be viewed as a *thickening* of the original body, an addition of something supplementary that comes from a kind of nature that had previously been unknown to man, i.e., the non-rational nature. The body then became biological. Biology was not a feature of the original state of humanity for, as the book of *Genesis* recounts, the two inhabitants of Paradise did not eat the fruit of the trees because of hunger, but as a sharing in certain gifts and virtues (this particular

mer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London: Continuum, 2004), 26.

² Alain Ducellier, *Les Byzantins. Histoire et Culture* (Paris: Seuil, 1988), 9.

³ *Genesis* 3: 21.

⁴ Panayotis Nellas, *Deification in Christ: Orthodox Perspectives on the Nature of the Human Person*, trans. Norman Russell (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press: 1987), 79.

interpretation had been emphasized by Philo of Alexandria and his disciples). Yet with the fall into disobedience, the human condition passed from *living* to *surviving*. The biological character of the garment of skin has a double role. Besides being God's blessing that enables man to endure the new terrestrial surroundings, this new dimension of the body signified the fulfilment of the warning that said that if the two ate from the tree of knowledge they would know death. There are, then, on the one hand, a blessing and, on the other, a fulfilment of the warning of punishment. Yet this is not a permanent curse, since biology and its accompanying decay brings the release from the state of the fall through death. If biological death did not exist, the improper situation of humanity after the fall would never end. The body became dense and solid, and even the functions of the soul become corporeal, along with those of the body.⁵ Mortality, thus, becomes a part of human nature and signifies that man is in a permanent state of dying, so that death itself is the end of dying, the death of death (so that evil cannot be immortal). The separation of the body and the soul at the moment of death is understood by the Church Fathers as the opportunity to restore the human nature – though not by itself, but only through the redemption in Christ. In this manner, the consequences of Adam's fall are reversed for his good and his salvation. Patristic anthropology provides a deep and differentiated understanding of the current state of human nature. Thus the dispute between creationism and evolutionism can be overcome, in favor of describing a double dimension of corporality, which, while not denying the link with animal biology, does not reduce the body to this dimension only.

Of great significance to this anthropological perspective is how this "thickening" of the body has been interpreted and described. Gregory of Nyssa and others pointed out that the adding of the garment should be seen as being more than something merely biological. Nowadays we could use the term 'interface' to describe the patristic hermeneutics of the *Genesis* scene. Symbolically, the 'thickening' refers to all the human capacity of interacting with the world. Biology is not the only way of interacting with the world as there is an additional essential dimension, which may be summed up as *man's cultural way of being*. The twofold character of this new anthropological dimension is evident: on the one hand, the need for culture means a decrease in certain capabilities and of a different previous state; on the other hand, it ensures not only Adam and Eve's survival but also a meaningful existence and the orientation towards what can be termed value. Through culture, humans are able to survive in not just biological terms and can fulfil an essential need, i.e., the need for knowledge. The term in the Scriptures refers not only to rational knowledge, but to a broader and more comprehensive being with and within the world and also beyond it. Something remains from the dignity of 'master of creation' that Adam had had in Paradise. Culture is a garment in the sense that man cannot relate in unmediated manner not only to the surrounding reality but *to oneself*. The

⁵ Nellas, *Deification in Christ*, 83.

latter aspect is vital for understanding humanity's current condition. We cannot have access to ourselves in an unmediated way, but must resort to categories that have been established by our cultural environment. Obviously, the role of intuition should not be underestimated, as it can be regarded as a radical way of reaching the self or the other, but even the outcome of this capacity is filtered by the interpretative and value-laden categories of culture. The level at which cultural filters operate, even in *mystical experience*, is open to debate. What is at stake is not the mindset of a particular era or area, but the need of man to make sense of what he experiences or intuits, which he cannot do without cultural information.

This applies to all human beings. Thus, wo/man cannot have behaviors that exclude the "interface" of culture. However, from the perspective of patristic anthropology, wo/man's need for culture concerns one's current state, though it does not define humanity in absolute terms. The quest for wo/man's essence, as undertaken by Western metaphysics and anthropology ever since the Renaissance, cannot, therefore, be valid from the Patristic perspective which was explored and expanded in the history of Eastern Christianity. It is not an essence which is absolute, but is relative only to a certain condition which was neither the original nor the ultimate one. Only with Dilthey, at the end of the 19th century, did hermeneutics investigate modernity's claim of describing a human essence.⁶ Present-day anthropology owes a great deal to the attempt to view human nature as an essence, something that is stable and that can be, at least indirectly, observed through research. This approach originates both in metaphysics and in science. Metaphysics focused particularly on the essence, undervaluing sensation in favor of the exercise of reason. Conversely, when this understanding was accepted through the postulation of the existence of an essence, the attempt to find proof in support of this view involved recourse to the method and instruments of science. Science obviously cannot know essences, but anthropological study was viewed as an indirect path to validating the thesis of the existence of an essence that defines the human. The proofs provided by the various sciences that studied man related mostly to his biology, yet the very existence of a genetic code could be understood as an argument in favor of a stable human essence (nowadays, however, neuroscience provides elements that undermine this path of interpretation, especially in terms of the relationship between the mind and its material basis, the brain).

The patristic anthropological perspective, which discerns that present-day man is not generic man, but is at an intermediate stage, between a lost condition and one that could be attained, has had, and has, a crucial impact on the articulation of the Eastern Christian cultural model. Humanism, as expressed during the Renaissance and modernity in the West, did not have an impact on Eastern Europe, because in this area the focus was not on

⁶ Wilhelm Dilthey, "The Formation of Historical World in the Human Sciences," in *Selected Works*, trans. Rudolf A. Makkreel and John Scanlon (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 73.

wo/man's present state but on the way to restore it.⁷ It is worth highlighting, therefore, a favorite presupposition of the Byzantine cultural model and, later, of the Eastern Christian model in general, i.e., *the simplicity of the mind as a meta-cultural ideal*. It may seem strange today, when the goal of the formation of the individual is the development of ever more complex mental skills, to state that such a presupposition outlined a European cultural model which lives on, albeit in a less obvious way, in a certain area of the continent. Even from the perspective of our own cultural horizon the idea seems absurd, as it would signify the reduction of man's capacities instead of their development.

The theme of the *simplicity of the mind* was formulated by some authors of the Patristic era, notably St. Maximus the Confessor. Maximus describes Adam before the fall as being bare through simplicity. Man, in the Adamic state, is described as beyond any quest for being; and, through his unsophisticated life, he is free from life that needs any sophistication. Without cover and garment, he is free from the passionate union of the senses and the sensitive, adding that he did not have an inbuilt need to make sense of what he observed through the senses for the sake of knowledge. He had only the simple ability of virtue and of unitary and simple knowledge.⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, who translated the text of St. Maximus into Romanian, noted in a footnote that one should conclude that Adam took no interest in the natural reason of things, and that his reason was focused on simple and unitary knowledge.⁹ This interpretation of the powers and nature of present-day reason compared with Adam's reason established the overtones and outlines of the Byzantine cultural model. In Byzantium, erudition and scholarship were never esteemed because the accumulation of knowledge was simply not viewed as a way to perfect the human person. Gaining knowledge for the sake of knowledge could in fact backfire, distancing man from the goal of culture: orientation towards restoring the state of simplicity of the mind.

The path towards restoring the *simple and unitary* attitude in knowledge is reached through culture, yet the aim is to *go beyond culture itself*. The formation that man acquired through culture was viewed as activating the capacity to unify the powers of the soul and the acts of the senses and, thereby, move towards a higher level of knowledge of the reasons of the world – of creation – which means a radical transformation of man. This is a transformation that could not be achieved without grace, without co-working with Christ (who opened the possibility of man's restoration through his sacrifice on the Cross), i.e., *theandry*. This is the only path to-

⁷ Although in the 14th century there were intellectual groups in Byzantium, their influence was not considerable. At the time, a famous argument, called the *hesychast controversy*, asserted that the specificity of the Byzantine spirit is another model of understanding man, which does not depend on a humanist view.

⁸ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, ed. Dumitru Stăniloae [Colectia Parinti si Scriitori Bisericesiti (PSB), vol. 80] (Bucharest: Ed. Institutului Biblicii de Misiune al B.O.R., 1983), 301.

⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, Footnote to "Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*," 301.

wards understanding the literature, the fine arts, the architecture, and the social structure of Byzantium and of the Byzantium after Byzantium (to use the expression of the Romanian historian, Nicolae Iorga) that is the area that also includes the cultural history of Romania. The Enlightenment and rationalism regarded with condescension the cultural history and heritage of Byzantium because they focused on a particular understanding of the aims of culture. Perhaps the origins of this attitude lie in the shift of perspective that occurred during the Renaissance, which discarded the medieval symbolic codes in art and focused on the study of man in his natural and biological state, thus proposing a different ideal of the accomplished human person, i.e., *universal man*, who had all the talents and gifts, and who explored and experienced everything. Yet, without the interpretation key offered by the assumption of the *mind's simplicity ideal*, one cannot understand the cultural attitudes that shape Eastern Europe to this day – attitudes which have outcomes different than those presented by the Western cultural landscape and which have, more often than not, an informal character. Yet the crisis that the cultural model of modernity now faces – especially the crisis affecting (not only) Modern man, who finds himself lost in the scientific description of the parts that make him up – is an occasion to reclaim a different understanding of the role of culture. Secular humanism failed by losing sight of man along the way, and it is therefore necessary to restore those cultural paradigms that lead man back to the self and restore his genuine character. For this reason the perspective described in Byzantine anthropology is worthy of serious consideration.

Recognizing Who We Are: Arendt and Ricoeur on the *Bios Politikos*

Mark Gedney

Hannah Arendt's account of the distinctiveness of action represents a unique response to the horrific violence and failure of politics in the 20th Century – one that took a “step back” from the answers provided by liberalism and Marxism while still affirming the centrality of the political for human flourishing. Her retrieval of ancient Greek anthropology, which held that human flourishing was found in the transfiguration of the merely “natural” (ζωή) into a more truly human life (*βίος*), was coupled with a deep skepticism about the dominant theory of politics (associated with a certain reading of Plato) that arose from this tradition. It is this tradition, she argued, that had finally reached a crisis point in modern society insofar as freedom had been lost to necessity and politics and been reduced to the reproduction of natural or “bare” life. Faced with the accelerating loss of the authority of particular political and religious traditions in the modern world, the “universality” of bare life, with its natural affinity to ever expanding global economic activity and growth, presents an almost irresistible attraction as the default means by which to coordinate human interaction. For Arendt, however, this apparent universalism represents not a bright promise but a dark menace. Rather than providing a new way forward for human flourishing and action, it represents the elimination of true human freedom. Only a proper understanding of action can reveal the dangers of this new biopolitics and open the way to discovering the true promise of politics: a promise that moves us beyond totalitarianism and the violence that feeds it.

Labor, Work and Action

It is in *The Human Condition* that Arendt developed her notion of action by distinguishing it from human doing bound by biological necessity. The most obviously biological of the two modes of human doing, other than action, is laboring, where the life process exerts itself in the conversion of the object into a means for survival. For Arendt, rather than producing a free human world or culture, laboring “thrown back upon itself, concentrates upon nothing but its own being alive, and remains imprisoned in its metabolism with nature without ever transcending or freeing itself from the recurring cycle of its own functioning.”¹ As an eternal cycle of biological repro-

¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 115.

duction, the violence here is continuous but equalizing as one part of the system is consumed by another and then in its turn consumed.

Though the second mode of doing, work, initially represents an experience of power and freedom over nature, this freedom is conditioned by the value that makes the end originally desirable. In modern production, these ends are stripped of their metaphysical authority, and the objectivity of the work now is found only in the unceasing repetition of evanescent fabrication; a making of nothing in particular, driven by mere desire. If this is the case, then “neither the driving necessity of biological life and labor nor the utilitarian instrumentalism of fabrication and usage can establish the power of the human being to endure and resist the violence of necessity.”²

The exposition of the political freedom found in the *vita activa* in *The Human Condition* raises a number of difficulties, however, given this reduction of work to labor. When the radical antagonism between action and all other modes of human doing is coupled to her reading of ancient Greek life where the satisfaction of biological necessity is ruled according to the despotism of the household, one seems to be left with the unacceptable result that modern life, structured as it is according to the immediacy of human desire, that is, mere biological need, leaves most human doing under despotic rule. What passes as political life is nothing more than the technical calculation for infinitely maximizing these immediate desires. That is, modern society and its politics seem to be reduced to *biopolitics*. The life of action, on this account, is completely alien to the common world in which we now live. As John McGowan succinctly puts it: “Arendt seems to achieve stability and nonviolence in the political sphere by trivializing that sphere.”³ Such a quixotic conclusion seems at odds with Arendt’s desire to present an account of modern life that makes possible new experiments in political thinking in order to “distill from [our traditional political concepts] their original spirit.”⁴

In order to free Arendt from these paradoxical conclusions, it is necessary to re-evaluate her understanding of the biopolitical nature of modern society. We shall begin by elaborating a more productive account of biopolitics that argues that Arendt’s work is best read along the lines of Michel Foucault’s subtle development of this concept, rather than the more radical and dualistic theories of biopolitics found in thinkers like Giorgio Agamben. This revised understanding of biopolitics that resists any reduction to “bare life” will serve as the foundation for a re-reading of Arendt’s central political ideas of natality, self-revelation and judgment. Finally, Arendt’s notion of acting in concert, which lies at the apex of her account of the promise of

² Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 174.

³ John McGowan, “Must Politics be Violent? Arendt’s Utopian Vision,” in *Hannah Arendt and the Meaning of Politics*, eds. John McGowan and Craig Calhoun (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press, 1997), 268.

⁴ Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future; Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Viking Press, 1968), 15.

politics, will be developed in light of Paul Ricoeur's defense of the foundational nature of the desire to live together for human flourishing.

Biopolitics: Dangers and Possibilities

Foucault articulates the radical biopolitical character of modern life in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*: "Certainly for the first time in history the biological finds itself reflected in the political. The fact of living is no longer this inaccessible source that emerges from time to time in the risk of death and its finality. It has now become part of the domain controlled by knowledge and under the intervention of power."⁵ This introduction of the biological into the political overturns the classical Aristotelian distinction between the political and the biological: "Human beings, for centuries, remained what they were for Aristotle: living animals that were capable of political existence. In modernity, human beings are animals within the political realm in which their very being as living things is in question."⁶ These famous passages establish both a sharp distinction between biological necessity and political freedom and the dismal prospects for free political action in the modern world.

Such a sharp opposition between necessity and freedom, nature and action, and ζῶη and βίος may seem to reflect a shared vision of a tragic conflict within biopolitics. Claire Blencowe has recently challenged such a tragic and radical reading of Arendt and Foucault by thinkers like Agamben. She argues that Foucault, while acknowledging the roots of the discussion of biopolitics in ancient Greece, rejects Agamben's radical and transhistorical opposition between ζῶη and βίος. In fact, the biological life that Foucault examines only truly came into existence in the recent past and cannot serve as a transhistorical concept that can be opposed as the negative element in the play of sovereign power.⁷ It is not raw nature or life that is at issue, but life as understood and conceived in light of modern conceptions of governance and individuality. Blencowe argues that "rather than demonstrating that such and such political discourse is "untrue," both Arendt and Foucault, in the tradition of genealogy, seek to demonstrate where the discourse and its values come from and what is the nature of its appeal."⁸ Even labor escapes mere natural re-production insofar as it transforms desires and symbolizes this transformation as the infinite process of human self development. This is not the ancient Greek sense of the infinite circularity of nature, but an historically active and understandable infinite movement towards the future; it is evolutionary.

⁵ Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité: La volonté de savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 187.

⁶ Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité: La volonté de savoir*, 188.

⁷ Claire Blencowe, "Foucault's and Arendt's 'Insider View' of Biopolitics: A Critique of Agamben," *History of the Human Sciences* 23 (2010): 117.

⁸ Blencowe, "Foucault's and Arendt's 'Insider View' of Biopolitics," 120.

The point is that as a culturally developed symbolics of the evolution of the human species, biopolitics resists any simple opposition to human political action. In fact, it presents itself as the common sense that surrounds us. Such a view opens up the possibility of interpreting biopolitics in light of Arendt's writing on the common world (the result of fabrication or work) that originally served as the intermediary, even in *The Human Condition*, between bare life and free action. This common sense or environment (*Welt* rather than *Umwelt*), is *not* necessary, but the work of human beings.⁹

One could accept that biopolitics is a cultural, that is, a human, phenomenon, rather than immediate bare life, and yet repeat the claim that, for Arendt, the modern world is inimical to human freedom because it is a world in which individual humans have no important place. Certainly the processes in which we participate are not due simply to extra-human forces of nature (divine or otherwise), but this human doing operates at the transpersonal level. What "acts" is history, whether in Hegel's sense of Absolute Spirit or Marx's material equivalent or the invisible hand of the free market, it is not truly free individual action at all. As Arendt argues:

What is significant in our context is that this law can never be used to establish the public realm. The law of history – and the same is true of all nineteenth-century laws of development – is a law of movement and thereby in flagrant contradiction of all other concepts of law that we know from our tradition. Traditionally, laws are stabilizing factors in society, whereas here law indicates the predictable and scientifically observable movement of history as it develops.¹⁰

For Arendt, the nature of modern biopolitics is grounded in infinite law-like processes that, if not simply biological, are understood to operate at a level that reduces the individual to a moment in the process and thus eliminates anything like free action in the sense she advocates. Rather than rushing to accept this revised notion of biopolitics, it is helpful to follow Foucault's notion of biopolitics one step further, even if it is a step that is not as easily detected in Arendt's thinking. Foucault, in the lecture series previous to *Naissance de la biopolitique*, had already noted the need to recognize that biopolitics could only be understood in the context of liberalism itself and its notion of governance. Rather than a biopolitics linked to a governing structure based on ancient conceptions of family despotism and privacy, Foucault argues, as Blencowe notes, "that with the emergence of the population the family disappears as a model of government, becoming instead its privileged *instrument*. Not "family style totalizing despotism," but individualizing, regularizing, even autonomizing and definitely dispersed *govern-*

⁹ As such, it is not necessarily "totalitarian," insofar as it does not absolutely destroy the common world. Such destruction of "common sense" is an essential feature, for Arendt, of totalitarianism. See Hannah Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, 2nd ed. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), 348ff.

¹⁰ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 88.

mentality characterizes modern society.”¹¹ The central tenet of neo-liberal governance is that individual flourishing is naturally connected to social coherence and health and, thus, outside of a despotic control guided by transcendent ideals or ideologies. Personal desire is not cultivated towards any transcendent end. Rather, the cultivation of individual desire is itself the social aim and good. This cultivation is governed by careful and expansive rational investigation into all human activities to ensure that the maximal plurality of human aims – of human modes of subjectification, to use Foucault’s term – is created.

Foucault’s analysis of neo-liberal values uncovers two principles of governance: first, that all aspects of human life, from birth to death, should be evaluated in terms of maximizing and protecting each individual’s fundamental desires. This first principle leads to a second that affirms that government must coordinate the naturally irreducible plurality of such desires according to rules that are acceptable to all and which impinge as minimally as possible on individual action. The first principle is grounded in what Foucault, in his lecture series of 1978-79, calls *pastoral power*. This power is developed into a concrete theory of governance with the aid of neo-capitalist ideas of rationality (rational choice theory) and the centrality of capital expansion. If the biopolitics of liberalism has opened up governance to all manner of human desire and action, it does so according to the evaluative grid of the “economic person” who is judged according to how efficiently and productively she maximizes the social capital at her disposal. She is, as Foucault states, an “entrepreneur and an entrepreneur of herself.”¹² The second principle is developed in light of the rationality used to give concrete form to the first principle. In other words, governance at this level can be judged according to how well it maximizes the greatest number of desires for the greatest number of individuals, while treating each individual fairly, that is, insofar as this distribution treats all desires equally in its calculations.

For Foucault, biopolitics as it is developed in the neo-liberal world is not at heart despotic, despite its pervasiveness and real negative possibilities, because it lacks any principle which would justify a demand that the individual sacrifice her interests in the name of some higher duty.¹³ The conflicts that naturally arise are regulated, not by choosing one interest over another, something that would require a higher principle than mere interest, but rather by the application of the same rational principle that organizes individual life; “This means that we no longer try to govern according to the truth, but rather according to rationality.”¹⁴ An individual is satisfied when she sees that the rules of the game are rational, that is, that they maximize her goals against the background of a plurality of other persons. Such an

¹¹ Blencowe, “Foucault’s and Arendt’s ‘Insider View’ of Biopolitics,” 126.

¹² Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique* (Paris: Seuil, 2004), 232.

¹³ Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique*, 279.

¹⁴ Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique*, 315.

understanding of governance and anthropology presents us with a permanent critique of classical despotism, and challenges Arendt's attempt to maintain a radically private and biological definition of the family against which one would oppose a pure political freedom (as Agamben reads her).

The price paid for the neo-liberal conception of desire, however, is the elimination of any rationality that might be called uniquely political. It resists a certain form of totalitarianism, but at the expense of the individual's ability to see her desires and the actions that arise from them as valuable in themselves – just as a company can be compared to others in terms of profitability without any consideration of the specific nature of the product. The ultimate ends or desires of an individual's life lack a space or means whereby this aim itself can be evaluated and judged objectively in itself. Politics, for Arendt, was supposed to be the place where a unique objectivity was possible beyond the radical incommunicability of mere desire and the absolute communicability of theoretical reason or metaphysics.

Following Foucault's exposition of the positive character of neo-liberalism's biopolitics, however, one is no longer left with the simple opposition between private desire and absolute political freedom. Against the dichotomy of practical wisdom, as established by the Greeks, that adjudicates and deliberates about the best means to achieve our ends, and theoretical wisdom that would eternally and necessarily determine the ultimate ends of all human beings and thus lie outside any deliberation, we could imagine a space wherein such desires are presented for something like deliberation. This space would be one which accepts the radical plurality of ends, even those that seem the most natural and "necessary," and yet calls them into the light of some form of rational discourse. This unique form of "cooperating with others" is called "acting in concert" by Arendt, and is at the heart of her thinking.

Against the backdrop of the prior discussion of biopolitics, it is now possible to develop this concept in three stages: (1) the need for self-expression and affirmation (governed by Arendt's notions of natality and persuasion), (2) the desire for an enlarged mentality (developed from her re-reading of Kant's theory of aesthetic judgment), and finally (3) the desire to be oneself in acting and being with others. It argues that this last move, though it is one that Arendt resists or at least never truly acknowledges, finally expresses what is most fundamental about the political, and that such a Ricoeurian reading of Arendt's notion of acting in concert provides a justification for her claim that political action is antithetical to violence.

Biopolitics and the Promise of Politics

The most obvious resource in Arendt's thinking for establishing a role for politics in light of the modern affirmation of the plurality of human desires is her account of natality and the need for self-expression that arises from it. Natality is not our birth *per se* but the primordial relationship to our

birth that is the foundation for our sense of our own uniqueness. As she says in the *Human Condition*:

With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance. This insertion is not forced upon us by necessity...Its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative.¹⁵

As Miguel Vatter powerfully describes it: “[N]atality tears life out of life (*ζωή*) in order to throw it into the world, but not before having singularized it. Natality is the caesura of life that turns men into creatures.”¹⁶ According to Arendt, this phenomenon (and it is essential that it is phenomenologically concrete) is the “ontological” condition of politics: “The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, “natural” ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted.”¹⁷ This ontological root of action, however, remains pre-political. It is the expression of this uniqueness of our desires that initiates action.

As has been defended above, biopolitics does not simply describe a mechanism of survival (“bare life”), but also includes the idea of the development of one’s fundamental resources or interests. The tension that arises is that the individual’s actions only have objective value insofar as they “fit” into norms of productivity, that is, whether or not someone has maximized her desires. Beginning with Socrates, Arendt finds an alternative epistemology which is suitable to the human need for self-expression or revelation in the context of a plurality of other unique individuals. The individual is not only his desires – something that remains simply a positive fact that can be described and which states “what” a person is – but he is also, according to Arendt, capable of claiming that this is “who” he is: “This disclosure of the “who” in contradistinction to “what” somebody is – his qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which he may display or hide – is implicit in everything somebody says and does.”¹⁸ When I speak or attempt to communicate what I desire, I do not just make clearer what I want, but affirm that “I” desire this and in so doing give it value, in fact, present it as *my* value. Refusing both absolute theoretical justification as well as privacy and non-communication, this speaking accepts that what is said is not simply true, but the world as it appears to me. Arendt claims that to “Socrates, as to his fellow citizens, *doxa* was the formulation in speech of what *dokei moi*, that

¹⁵ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 176-77.

¹⁶ Miguel Vatter, “Natality and Biopolitics in Hannah Arendt,” *Revisita de Ciencia Política* 26, no. 2 (2006): 157.

¹⁷ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 247.

¹⁸ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 179.

is, 'of what appears to me.'...To assert one's own opinion belonged to being able to show oneself, to be seen and heard by others."¹⁹ This persuading is not a failed form of true knowledge, as Plato goes on to interpret it according to Arendt, because the "as it appears to me" is irreducible. This is so not because of the benighted nature of human knowing, but because what is affirmed is the reality of my being in a world which, while shaped by common culture, also represents a coming into the world that is also unique, a new birth (natality) that confronts the uniqueness of others. It is not a matter of being "for or against" another, where my aim would be imposed on the other, but rather it is the willingness to be seen and heard by others, to affirm and reveal who I am and risk their judgment.²⁰

Even if it is true that this needs to be seen and heard and, thus, achieve a permanence or objectivity is not necessarily "against" the other and even requires the other, it remains equally true that Arendt's discussion of this particular need to act in concert with others appears to be limited to the fundamental drive for self-affirmation or revelation (the desire for immortality). I need the other person to act with me as I appear in the political realm, but this need is driven by my desire to be more than a "what" but also a "who" – to have my distinctiveness affirmed. It is driven by a duality in myself that initiates in thought but carries over in action, propelled by the question: Am I who I think I am? Such a judgment, insofar as it is not a judgment about necessary things (geometric truth for example), but rather a judgment concerning my distinctiveness, forces me into relation with others as the only means to test who I am. This means an expanded view of myself, but it does not necessarily mean an interest in a common world shaped with others into which I commit "who I am." In other words, it remains fundamentally an agonistic project, where I seek to persuade others of my opinion.²¹ Such persuasion, however, while needful, non-coercive, and productive of a sort of action in concert, does not represent a direct or primary desire for such community or its creation and, thus, seems inadequate as a check against violence and coercion.

Beyond the agonist activity of persuasion and self-revelation, the desire to appear in the world also can be seen to aim at a universality that arises out of this very engaging of plural perspectives. The desire here is that my belief can be judged to be universal. This is not a determinative judgment which achieves objectivity by placing the individual appearance under a concept or rule, that is, subsuming it, but it is rather a type of reflective judgment, such as that developed by Kant. For Kant, such judgments open up the possibility of an experience of an individual appearance that does not result in subsuming it under an appropriate concept. Rather, it turns one

¹⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics* (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), 14.

²⁰ Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, 180.

²¹ Roberts-Miller gives an excellent account of the unique character of Arendt's notion of persuasion and her rehabilitation of rhetoric. See P. Roberts-Miller, "Fighting without Hatred: Hannah Arendt's Agonistic Rhetoric," *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 22, no. 3 (2002): 585ff.

back to the experience, on the pleasure found in the free play of our mental faculties in the act of reflection itself. For Kant, this experience is neither merely subjective nor is it determinative and necessary. Instead, it is universal insofar as it can be communicated to others with the expectation of agreement. Rather than persuading another to accept my point of view in a simply agonistic fashion, the expectation is that things that appear to me in a certain way will also appear in the same way to others. As Kant puts it, we desire and even expect that our particular state of mind can be made part of an “enlarged mentality or extended way of thinking” (*eine erweiterte Denkungsart*), which is tied to a sort of *sensus communis*.²² This promise of universality is not grounded in an empirical agreement (e.g., a sociological fact of some community), but rather in the essential unity of the faculties of the transcendental ego.

Arendt’s appropriation of Kant’s theory of judgment, while agreeing that it is not empirically or sociologically based, eliminates such transcendental or metaphysical supports. The central way that Arendt appropriates Kant’s theory of judgment is in terms of the discussion of the spectator – one who becomes disinterested in the prospective use of things, focusing rather on the settled values of our common world and past actions. This means a double restraint that is parallel to aesthetics:

The activity of taste decides how this world, independent of its utility and our vital interests in it, is to look and sound, what men will see and what they will hear in it. Taste judges the world in its appearance and its worldliness; its interest in the world is purely “disinterested,” and that means that neither the life interests of the individual nor the moral interests of the self are involved.²³

Though Arendt links this to agonistic persuasion and self-revelation, what is at issue here is the common world that we inhabit. We agree, not about the necessary truth of the world, but how it appears to us, that is, how my opinions and my actions exemplify what matters in this common world. My interests have what Arendt calls “exemplary validity.” The objectivity desired is not simply that others respond to the interjection of myself into the world, but the recognition that my opinion matters in a world that has come into being through our mutual interaction and in which we find a mutual home. It is here that my opinion achieves a sort of recognition that reinforces my dignity as an individual and where I may appear in the permanence offered by the common world in which my actions arise.

But this side of judging, based on the Kantian emphasis on disinterestedness and the role of the spectator, risks ignoring the prospective and committed character of judgment. As Weidenfeld notes: “Arendt’s surpris-

²² Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1963), 146.

²³ Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, enlarged ed. (New York: Viking Press, 1968), 222.

ing retention of Kant's intellectualism makes it difficult for her to think the role of judgment in action; that is, Arendt begins to see judgment as a capacity exercised solely by those with the ability to stand apart and look back."²⁴ Against this past-oriented and spectral reflection that "rises above" artists, statesmen, and philosophers, Arendt also repeatedly spoke of how culture and politics involve the present and the future. Our judgments do not aim only at judging truly about the world as it is, but rather they aim at "the judicious exchange of opinion about the sphere of public life and the common world, and the decision what manner of action is to be taken in it, as well as to how it is to look henceforth, what kind of things are to appear in it."²⁵ This judging is aligned with a sort of *phronesis* – the art of making decisions that shape our common world. Here it seems we are pushed to understand a commitment to acting in concert, that is in front of us and, even more importantly, to come. It is not simply the desire to appear within it, but a desire aimed at acting in concert itself. Rather than entering (or creating) the political space in order to allow my fundamental desires and aims to appear and be tested, even more than expanding my sense of self so that my individual actions can be seen as being in accord with others, that is, exemplifying the common sense of our actions, I enter the political space *in order to* act in concert, out of a desire to share a life in common. As Ricoeur famously puts it: "Let us define "ethical intention" as aiming at the "good life" with and for others, in just institutions."²⁶

Acting in Concert as the Desire to Live with and for Others

It is not possible in the limited space here to develop the details of Ricoeur's demonstration of the fundamental character of the desire to be with others that is equiprimordial with the desire to be a self. But this basic idea can help us navigate the lacunae in the account of self-revelation and judgment given so far. First of all, it must be noted that no answer has been given yet for what drives the need, or better, the necessity, of political judgment. It is certainly, as noted above, neither a demonstrative judgment based on necessary metaphysical principles (the *rejection* of which is central to Kant's account) nor is it a judgment based on universal principles or conditions of subjectivity (something that *is* central to Kant). If the communal sense is based in neither of these, then what drives our desire for this "enlarged mentality"? Why am I committed to see myself in light of this communal understanding? Perhaps one can still preserve the Arendtian notion of self-revelation, where the communal is simply the horizon or setting in which one's deeds are given a permanence and stage on which to appear

²⁴ M. C. Weidenfeld, "Visions of Judgment: Arendt, Kant and the Misreading of Judgment," *Political Research Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (2013): 262.

²⁵ Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 223.

²⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 172.

(or is “intensified,” to use a helpful description of Vatter’s²⁷), but this seems less convincing if one thinks prospectively. In other words, the judgment that leads to action is also for the sake of the continuation of oneself as a member of this community. It also represents a desire for this enlarged common sense, not just as a theoretical construct, but as a living, growing community with which I align myself and thus desire for itself. It is the desire, not only to reveal myself and be affirmed by others, but to act with others for the construction of a common world. While the institutions of civil society (family, work, art, religion, etc.) have their various ends that determine what rational discourse and deliberation lie within each specific sphere, the desire to forge a unique constellation of these interests into a common world or society necessarily lies outside any of these particular concerns. It is the desire, as Ricoeur notes, for a “communal understanding, exercised in the realm of public discourse,”²⁸ and it is this “condition of wanting to live together and to establish a public discourse that makes a society a unique enterprise of cooperation.”²⁹ This acting in concert is for the sake of acting in concert.

Another way to think about this can be found in the second principle of neo-liberal biopolitics, namely, the aim of preserving the essential plurality of human desires. The focus earlier was to show how biopolitics is not necessarily despotic but, rather, is shaped by the neo-liberal value of individual flourishing in the maximizing of her resources and interests. This was then developed in a more Arendtian fashion to show how this flourishing requires others, in terms of self-revelation in the attempt to persuade others of who I am and, further, in the retrospective judgment which creates an enlarged mentality or communal sense. The former, however, and even the latter to a certain extent, is caught up in a notion of plurality as a necessary condition, but not something that is desired in itself as central to our happiness or well-being. If we move to the prospective sense of judging as a commitment to the project of acting in concert with others, which in its particular expression of desire always already desires this very plurality itself – and, as we shall see, is even solicited by it – then politics as the space where we create this *sensus communis* becomes not only something for which we *might* find a place in our understanding of human flourishing, but is in fact an essential part of human flourishing.

By beginning with Foucault’s rethinking of the role of biopolitics, it has been possible to move beyond the simple dichotomy of the competing triads of labor/family/necessity and action/politics/freedom. This re-aligning of Arendt’s thinking continued through the analysis of her notion of judging

²⁷ Vatter, “Nativity and Biopolitics in Hannah Arendt,” 157.

²⁸ Paul Ricoeur, “The Moral, the Ethical and the Political” in *Paul Ricoeur and the Task of Political Philosophy*, ed. G. S. Johnson and D. R. Stiver (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 20.

²⁹ Ricoeur, “The Moral, the Ethical and the Political,” 18.

until it was finally linked to Ricoeur's thesis that the desire to be oneself is fundamentally connected to the desire to be with others.

One may underline this final point by noting in conclusion another intriguing connection between Arendt and Ricoeur. Though religion plays different roles for each of these thinkers, they both reflected on the story of the plurality of human beings in the creation story of *Genesis*. Arendt, at the end of her essay, "Philosophy and Politics," goes so far as to write:

If philosophers, despite necessary estrangement from the everyday life of human affairs, were ever to arrive at a true political philosophy they would have to make the plurality of man, out of which arises the whole realm of human affairs – in its grandeur and misery – the object of their *thaumadzein*. Biblically speaking, they would have to accept – as they accept in speechless wonder the miracle of the universe, of man and of being – the miracle that God did not create Man, but "male and female created He them."³⁰

They would have to accept, in something more than resignation of human weakness, the fact that "it is not good for man to be alone."³¹

Ricoeur, in an essay on the *Song of Songs*, explicates and complicates this idea. On Ricoeur's account it is in *Genesis* that the value of individuals as individuals and a new conception of temporality are established in a founding moment of mutual solicitation. Adam named the animals according to their type, but in this catalogue something was missing. It cannot be merely gender, according to Ricoeur, for it seems as though all the members of the biological kingdom were created fully functional in terms of the mere perpetuation of the various species. The story of Eve's creation in the second chapter of *Genesis* must point to a more fundamental lack, namely, the other as other person (not just as other gender). It is "this one here" that fills what is lacking. As Ricoeur points out,

before the creation of the woman, language is certainly there, but simply as a system of signs [*langue*], that is, as a simple repertoire of appropriate words assigned to other living creatures. It is only with the woman that language comes to be once and for all a living or spoken language [*parole*], or, to be more precise, as sentences filled with deictic terms ("this here" – expressly repeated two times and "this time here").³²

My birth as an individual into the world is solicited by those before me, by a world of other individuals that call to and make space for my own desire to be myself with and for others.

³⁰ Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, 38-39.

³¹ Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, 38-39.

³² Paul Ricoeur and André LaCocque, *Penser la Bible* (Paris: Seuil, 2003), 468.

Of course, this solicitation that individuates and arouses desire has been developed in many ways. For Ricoeur – and as has been argued here, for Arendt – this solicitation is not ordination or accusation (though in situations after one’s birth, where the desire to act in concert has been perverted, such ordering and accusing is appropriate, even necessary), but is a call to cooperation, that is, a call to act in concert. The modern biopolitical turn, despite real dangers, allows for the first time an affirmation of the irreducible plurality of human desires, while equally denying any ultimate retreat into the privacy or privilege of family, religion, nation, or race. It also, if one reads this along the lines developed here, opens the way for an account that sees human flourishing in the cultivating of these many desires and values in the free space of political engagement and cooperation. This call to act together to both shape a world but also to engage in discussion about the very “shape” itself begins, of course, in the small communities that give us birth. But, stripped of any final metaphysically determined (extra-political) limits, it also calls us to act together with anyone whose path crosses our own. This cultivating of the world with my neighbor (whether the one across the street or, thanks to modern technology, across the globe) is not “natural,” but a true cultivation in the risky but good and ever-expanding plurality of human acting together.

On the Self-Awareness of Life

Yu Xuanmeng

Introduction

I have studied philosophy for some thirty years, but I am always asking myself the question ‘What is philosophy?’ There are many schools and disciplines, and each of them differs greatly. I read Plato and Aristotle of classical Greece; Descartes, Hume, Locke, Kant, and Hegel of modern times; and analytic philosophy, phenomenology, and existentialism of the present time. They have different themes, methods, and conclusions. Already, by the end of the 19th century, there came a cry that philosophy is at an end or that metaphysics should be eliminated. Engels said “with Hegel, philosophy as such comes to an end.”¹ We can read the same expression in the topic of Heidegger’s thesis, *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*.² Eliminating metaphysics is another expression of the end of philosophy; it touches the reason why philosophy should end, for metaphysics had been taken as the core of traditional philosophy. It is to be noted that, even when people fight against metaphysics, their understanding of it is different. For, as we know, Heidegger is against traditional metaphysics but, in Rudolf Carnap’s famous paper, “The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language,”³ Heidegger’s philosophy or thinking is criticized as a standard example of metaphysics. There has never been a science like philosophy whose object could not be defined.

The condition goes from bad to worse if I try to find the definition of philosophy in various popular books about Chinese philosophy, for almost all of these books formulate the history of Chinese philosophy according to the notion, framework and the themes of Western philosophy. For instance, once upon a time, the history of the Chinese philosophy was viewed as the struggle between two approaches, materialism and idealism – a framework that reaches back to late 19th century Europe, via the former Soviet Union. After the 80s of the last century, Chinese scholars begin to imitate Western philosophy directly. The most popular books, for example, those written respectively by Professor Feng Yu-Lan and Professor Feng Qi, take Hegel as the model.

¹ Friedrich Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Chinese version (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1972), 11.

² Martin Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*, in *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1977), 369-392.

³ R. Carnap, “The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language,” in *Logical Empiricism*, Chinese version, ed. Hong Qian (Beijing: Commercial Publishing House, 1982), 13-36.

Feng Qi, a professor at East China Normal University, has maintained that “the history of philosophy could be defined as: ‘the dialectical knowing movement rooted in a human being’s social practice and focused on the issue of the relationship between thinking and existence.’”⁴ Clearly, the argument between materialism and idealism is preserved here. It seems that Professor Feng Qi took the direction of epistemology to do philosophy. But when he talked about logical development, he cannot but have logic-determined categories in mind, for only the logic-determined categories could perform the logical movement. He even maintained that logical development shows itself as a spiral moving upward, an expression borrowed from Hegel. Another famous professor, Fung Yu-Lan maintained that “philosophy is the reflection of human spirit.”⁵ He said: “Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* is entirely a philosophical work in both form and substance”;⁶ “Hegel’s *Logic* is a more abstract abridged version of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.”⁷ Obviously, for both professors, Hegel is the model. There is no need here to go deep into the issue of whether the history of Chinese philosophy can continue to follow Hegel, who is criticized or rejected in the West now. We also see others try to formulate Chinese philosophy according to phenomenology, analytic philosophy, and even symbolism. There is no other science than philosophy that has no accepted definition.

The present condition of philosophy has confused those who wish to learn philosophy. But, at the same time, it leaves plenty of room for the scholars to search for a new meaning of philosophy. I read the Chinese classics, and I rethink what I have learned from the West. Gradually, I have come to the idea that, at the deepest level, philosophy is the self-awareness of life. It is impossible to give a comprehensive argument for the point in this short paper, for it requires reviewing the whole history of philosophy, both in China and the West, which lies beyond my competence. So, whatever is said here is the personal experience of one who has been learning philosophy for more than thirty years.

Western Philosophy: Towards the Awareness of Life

If we discard the framework of traditional Western philosophy, it is easier to defend the claim that the characteristic theme of Chinese philosophy is that one develops a self-awareness of life. Arguing for it, I have plenty of materials to cite. Moreover, it seems that the theme of being self-aware of life has little to do with Western philosophy. Probably most people would say that the meaning of philosophy, as the word originally was understood,

⁴ Feng Qi, *The Logical Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy*, Chinese version (Shanghai: Shanghai Publishing House, 1983), vol. 1, 11.

⁵ Fung Yu-Lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Chinese version (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1982), vol. 1, 9.

⁶ Fung Yu-Lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, 11.

⁷ Fung Yu-Lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 1, 11.

is the love of wisdom. However, after the beginning of Western philosophy⁸ with Plato and Aristotle, philosophy turned in the direction of knowledge, which dominates the history of Western philosophy up to Hegel. So, in a sense, Emmanuel Lévinas is correct when he criticizes traditional philosophy; he says: “knowledge is not the first philosophy,” “ethics is the first philosophy.”⁹ But why should knowledge be moved from its position as ‘first philosophy’ and put under suspicion? Since Plato, knowledge has been supposed to lead to the truth, the essence of things, and the laws of nature, for which we have the term science. For the most part, the term ‘science’ could be substituted with the term ‘knowledge.’ If we enjoy a better life due to science, isn’t it also due to knowledge? What is wrong with knowledge as ‘first philosophy’?

Knowledge, in the final analysis, comes from the knowing of the world. Knowing the world is a method of how the human being is to survive in the world. To put it another way, in order to survive in the world, human beings need to know the world. Knowing the world helps human beings to survive – and knowing itself is the main part of the ways of survival. Thus, people rarely think of knowing and survival as two different dimensions. We have knowledge which tells us where the human being comes from, the biological structure of the human body, the cure of disease, and so on. It seems that everything can be uncovered and understood through knowledge. We can know the things in the world as this or that, but the same thing might be recognized differently due to various ways of knowing it. That is the reason for the people to deal with a certain thing differently. If the above issue shows that, besides the question of “knowing what,” there is the question of “knowing how,” the latter question goes deeper than the former one. Still there is the issue of a person’s feeling, willing, and sentiments, which are something inside of a person. They are not the object of knowledge, but they are not senseless when it comes to understanding the meaning of life. In short, knowledge cannot cover the totality of human life; there are many things which we cannot know as knowledge but which should be understood in our lives – something unknowable but understandable, most probably because it is not knowledge of some object, but the condition of one’s own self.

⁸ When Hans-Georg Gadamer dealt with the beginning of philosophy, he wrote, “the crucial thing in my lectures on the Pre-Socratics is that I begin neither with Thales nor with Homer, nor do I begin with the Greek language in the second century before Christ; I begin instead with Plato and Aristotle. This, in my judgment, is the sole philosophical access to an interpretation of the Pre-Socratics. Everything else is historicism without philosophy.” See his *The Beginning of Philosophy*, trans. Rod Coltman (New York: Continuum, 1998), 10.

⁹ Cited from Richard A. Cohen’s paper “The Face of the Other, Ethics as First Philosophy,” presented at the pre-conference “Culture and Philosophy as Ways of Life in Times of Global Change” of the 23rd World Congress of Philosophy, August 1-3, 2013, Athens, Greece.

We are aware of all the things that we can know and understand. This awareness is the awareness of me as the totality of life. If this awareness is inevitable for life, nothing can suppress or conceal it. Knowing is part of this awareness. Though knowing plays a very important role in human life, it can never substitute for the other elements of one's awareness. This condition shows itself in the history of philosophy.

When philosophy takes knowledge as its main task, it pushes the other parts of this awareness aside, even conceals them. For Plato, especially, knowledge is strictly defined. He distinguishes knowledge from opinion. What we know about our world is opinion, while knowledge is the knowledge of the world of ideas. At first, it may seem very strange to have such point of view: how could there be a world of ideas which is substantial? For Plato, our perception of the world is various and changeable and, therefore, we cannot have a real grasp of the world. What he offers is a universal concept by which we can speak of a same kind of various concrete things. For instance, the term "shape," as an idea, is supposed to cover all the different shapes, whether they are round, square, a triangle etc.; the term "virtue" covers all the concrete virtues, such as moderation, courage, justice, etc.¹⁰ Since we can see only the concrete shape or experience a concrete virtue, when the idea of shape or virtue is grasped, we activate in our consciousness a kind of faculty which is called thinking. The idea is something "one out of many," and "the unchangeable among the changeable." It helps people to grasp the things and communicate with each other more easily. But in covering all the things of the same kind, the idea itself must not one of them; it is beyond concrete things and, hence, is universal. Single ideas are not yet knowledge. Knowledge is the linking of ideas into propositions. This kind of knowledge, in contrast to opinion or daily common sense, is called universal truth or absolute truth. In order to manage the linking of ideas, there comes logic. Gadamer said: "The relationship of ideas to one another is the most interesting point. Only in this way does the *logos* exist. It is not the simple appearance of an individual word but the link of one word with another. Only in this way is logical proof possible..."¹¹ It is Plato who opened for us a world of truth. At the same time, he stimulated in our minds a special way of consciousness, i.e., conceptual thinking.

We can comment on the significance of Plato's philosophy in various ways. From the perspective of this paper, it is conceptual thinking which opens up a special way of human existence. This existentiality depends and operates greatly on natural science, as Kant elaborates in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. However, conceptual thinking shows one aspect of the vitality of human beings; it can never represent that vitality as a whole. The life of a human being contains multiple aspects. One has to keep the whole of this vitality ready for responding to all kinds of challenges, depending on the various conditions of life. Though conceptual thinking, i.e., rational think-

¹⁰ See Plato, *Meno*.

¹¹ Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, 55.

ing, plays a significant role in life, a human being will not let it conceal the other aspects of vitality. This tendency shows itself in the disputes about philosophy, of which four events should be noticed.

The first event is the dispute between Plato and Aristotle. According to some scholars, a disputation did happen between the two great philosophers. In Plato's *Parmenides*, Plato addressed some challenges which were raised by Aristotle,¹² though the latter was the student of the former. Especially in his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle openly criticized Plato's theory of ideas. He rejected the existence of the world of ideas, though he thought that reaching the level of the universal is the most important characteristic of philosophy; he said: "Now of these characteristics that of knowing all things must belong to him who has in the highest degree universal knowledge."¹³ When it comes to knowledge, art is higher in degree than experience; "The reason is that experience is knowledge of individuals, art of universals."¹⁴ What Aristotle meant by "universal knowledge" is not just the "knowledge of all things" but the universal apart from all individual things. To show the difference between the two, consider the following: 'universal' is the word for Plato, while 'general' (which is not absolute but relative) is the word commonly used by Aristotle. In the long run of history, neither one of the two disappears. Each has its own supporters. This dispute extends into two campaigns: rationalism and empiricism. If one theoretically stands on one side, he would hold that the opposite is wrong. But, in fact, no one of the two can defeat the other. It is a fact that, in doing philosophy, both the way of rationalism and the way of empiricism are contained in the human being's way of existence. They are constituent of a human being's vitality.

The second event that I would like to mention here is the so-called "epistemological turn" of philosophy in modern times. The focus is on how we can get knowledge. The two different movements, here, understand knowledge differently. For one movement, represented by Descartes, when people talk about knowledge having clearness and clarity, they often took the mathematics as the example. By knowledge, then, they meant knowledge with the characteristics of universality and necessity, though these terms were not mentioned clearly until Kant. This movement is called rationalism. The other movement, empiricism, represented by a group of English philosophers, like John Locke, David Hume, etc., did not agree with rationalism about knowledge in the above sense. These figures challenged rationalism: How can we get concepts for formulating knowledge that have universality and necessity? Descartes, answering the challenge, said that, we have those concepts as innate ideas. But Hume argued that we cannot find these universal concepts in experience. The famous example is the concept of causation. There is no winner in the debate. Later Kant summarized that

¹² This is a claim made by Lloyd Gerson. See Tom Rockmore, *Art and Truth after Plato* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 48.

¹³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982a21.

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 981a15.

both perceptual experience and transcendental categories are needed for the formulation of knowledge, especially for knowledge with necessity and universality. Within Western philosophy, this is called the “epistemological turn,” i.e., to turn from ontology to epistemology. One could see it as a change of focus within philosophy, and this shift, from the known to knower, is implicated in the meaning of philosophy. But if we bear in mind the strict definition of philosophy given by Plato or Aristotle – the search for the truth in a world of ideas, or, dealing with the being as being – then, we cannot but think that philosophy breaks through its limitations for the first time. From this time on, philosophy does not only focus on knowledge, but also the knower. Philosophy enlarged its scope.

The above account shows the tendency that philosophy is going back to the human being. But as the knower entered into philosophy, the way we do philosophy has not been changed. One sees the knower as if one sees an object. But as the knower as an object came out, the real knower became concealed. What would the next step be?

We see the third event in phenomenology. When Husserl created phenomenology, he tried to explain how, in our consciousness, the intended object and our intentionality are related to each other. Here the object is not separate from our intention. But the object is not something outside of consciousness. All that is and can be talked about are the phenomena of consciousness. Therefore, phenomenology is also called phenomenology of pure consciousness. The problem of the existence of the outside world is suspended. What concerned the philosopher is the essence, not the existence of the things, i.e., what the thing is, or what the meaning of the thing is. Yes, the consciousness of the human being is an outstanding feature of human life compared to other living beings. However, the human being has both a body and consciousness. The two are integrated into one. A human being can never have consciousness without a body. Besides, for the most part, either consciousness is accompanied by action, or the action of the human being has consciousness with it. Therefore it is not enough to consider only the phenomena of consciousness. Such a consideration anticipates the phenomenon of life.

The above consideration leads us into the fourth event of philosophy – Heidegger’s thinking. The phenomenon of human life can exist only when there is a suitable environment to nourish the living body and, in turn, the body bears this consciousness. The fact is that the phenomenon of life is integrated into a fundamental pair of elements: environment and vitality. Vitality can show itself as desire, will, imagining, thinking, spirit, consciousness, etc. Depending on the different type of vitality, the environment will be shown as nature, world, matter, object, concept, body, etc. It is impossible to understand one side of the pair without understanding the other side of the pair. How can we reach such an understanding in language? We find such an understanding in Heidegger’s work. He provides a term, *Dasein*, to denote every person, me. Here, “Da-” means “here,” the natural environment. The “-sein” means Being; Being in the Heideggerian idiom is

not in the same sense as in traditional philosophy. In traditional philosophy, being means the most universal and the highest category, and, as a category, it is logically determined. But for Heidegger, Being is not a category but, grammatically, “to be” (Zu-sein), the possibility of being this or that. It is a phenomenon which occurs here and which discloses itself as it enters into here. This is just the phenomenon of life, the phenomenon of everyone, of me. To think, I come to this world (Da-, here) to disclose for myself the world as it is – to be a person with identity, while comporting myself towards the world and others. The question of the meaning of being is enquiring into the meaning of life (in Heidegger’s early works). Heidegger’s thinking shows a significant turn in Western philosophy. It changes the theme and the framework of philosophy, turning from knowledge to the phenomenon of life, pushing traditional first philosophy backwards, by substituting fundamental ontology for ontology. In his later works, being is enlarged to mean providence or Dao. The task of Dasein is to follow the Dao. Is this not the theme of the self-awareness of life?

Superficially, there seems to be a sudden change in the theme of knowledge, from epistemology and phenomenology of consciousness to the theme of the self-awareness of life. But a brief retrospect into the history of Western philosophy shows that it is simply natural to go from the former theme to the latter theme. Philosophy starts by knowing the world, whether it is the truth of the world or knowledge of the perceptual world, but a deeper question is how we know the world. It leads one to inquire into the condition of the knower, the subject. Such an enquiry leads to epistemology. Underlying this inquiry is a relationship between the subject and the object. What stimulated Husserl was the special relationship between subject and object, that is, the relation to the object as a category, essence, or idea. This cannot be found in the perceptual world. It forced Husserl to take a step backward into pure consciousness, where he revealed the relation between the object as intended and the subject as intending. If the subject and the object are integrated in one point, i.e., in me, it naturally leads to the question: Since I do not exist as pure consciousness, what kind of existentiality do I have? Where am I from? What can I be? Where am I going? These are the questions concerning the meaning of life. Heidegger formulated them in his analysis of the existence of Dasein. And, on my view, the structure of Dasein in Heidegger is an enlargement of the structure of intentionality in Husserl.

Since we are human beings, there is no theme more important than the meaning of life. How can philosophy abandon the theme of the meaning of life? Though Western philosophy begins with the inquiry into knowledge of the world, it ultimately reaches the theme of the meaning of life. People understand that philosophy is a discipline inquiring into the deepest and the most important questions. Every road leads to Rome, because Rome is the destination of the passengers. The theme of the meaning of life is the ultimate aim of philosophy, since it goes into the deepest and the most important questions.

Yes, there is still a question – Does Heidegger’s philosophy represent the direction of the future of Western philosophy? Indeed, we see many other philosophies in the present day. All of them go deeper than those before in some sense; otherwise they cannot exist. But as to whether they are also the most important ones I am not sure, since they go in the direction of linguistic analysis, a technical way of thinking, which is just one possible way of a human being’s existence. Compared to analytic philosophy, some French philosophy is close to the theme of the meaning of life, though it is not correctly and exactly expressed. For instance, at the beginning of this paper, I mentioned Lévinas’ theme: “Knowledge is not the first philosophy,” “ethics is the first philosophy.” The first sentence does not express the view of traditional philosophy correctly. For not any kind of knowledge is considered as ‘first philosophy.’ ‘First philosophy’ is also called the first principle. Only knowledge that has universality and necessity could be the principle which governs all knowledge in various domains. It is a contradiction to say that ethics is the first philosophy, for, as a doctrine, ethics also belongs to knowledge. If knowledge is not ‘first philosophy,’ how can a special kind of knowledge be first philosophy? Still, there is something positive in Lévinas’ words. He at least rejected knowledge as first philosophy, and tried to find first philosophy – the most important theme in philosophy – on the side of the human being. Future philosophy cannot lose the theme of the human being as well as the world, i.e., the -sein and the Da-. Only if it is understood as a phenomenon, can the theme of philosophy in the future be available to us.

Self-Awareness: The Main Theme of Traditional Chinese Philosophy

If I am asked what the theme of Chinese philosophy is today, I would have no hesitation to say that it is to be self-aware of life. This is true for both Confucianism and Daoism, although there are some differences in degree. (To prove this point requires a complete history of Chinese philosophy, which is impossible in this short paper.) To begin this survey, we can look at the book of *Zhou Yi*, which is recognized as the origin of both Confucianism and Daoism. The book says: “The sages made the *Yi* for the purpose of being in conformity with the principle of life.” Again, “[the trigram is made] to harmonize with the way and virtue, to recognize righteousness according to the vein (*Li*). It exhausts the vein (*Li*), let the nature (of every man and thing) be put into full play, hence to reach the destiny of life.”¹⁵ This theme is recognized by later scholars. In the preface to the commentary on this book, Chen Yi (A.D. 1033-1107), a Confucian of the Song Dynasty, wrote: “What the book contains, covers the whole, without anything being missed. It yields to the principle of life, clarifies the cause from the dim to the bright, exhausts the nature of all things and shows the Dao of opening

¹⁵ *Zhou Yi, Shuogua (Appendix of Remarks on the Trigrams 周易.说卦).*

the world and completing the human being's cause."¹⁶ The key word here is "the principle of life" (性命之理), which shows that this book is focused on the self-awareness of life.

The book consists of two parts. The first part is called *Yi Jing*, which made up of sixty-four hexagrams. Each hexagram has six positions from the bottom to the top, so the diagram is more precisely called a hexagram (*Gua*). In each position is a sign, either Yin or Yang. Since the hexagrams can have different signs in each of the positions, they differ from each other; the total number of such hexagrams is sixty-four and no more. The diagrams (as trigram) were said to have been created early in the legendary time of the King Fu Xi. The document records that the founder of the Zhou Dynasty, King Wen, rearranged the hexagrams, and gave each of the hexagrams a name. (Before him, there were two different arrangements of the hexagrams, which are called *Lian-Shan* in the Xia Dynasty, and *Gui-Zang* in the Shang Dynasty, respectively.) The above story happened before the 11th century B.C. The function of these hexagrams was to do divination or sorcery. So *Yi Jing* is originally a book of divination or sorcery, in order to predict the destiny of people.

The decisive step for the book to change from being a book of divination to a philosophical book was made by Confucius. He studied the book for a long time. He made notes and also added a commentary or appendix to the book in ten parts; this is called the ten accessories (十翼). What we read today is this version of the text; it is called *Zhou Yi*, containing *Yi Jing* and the ten accessories. It is due to Confucius' work that *Zhou Yi* became a great philosophical book. Otherwise it might have disappeared long ago.

As a matter of fact, there has been some dispute among the Chinese scholars about whether Confucius wrote the ten accessories. Some held that *Zhou Yi* was formulated much later than Laozi and Confucius' *Analects*.¹⁷ This issue is important for whether *Zhou Yi* is the origin of Chinese philosophy. On my view, there is no one besides Confucius who could have composed the ten accessories. There is more than one document that says that Confucius, in his later life, expressed his resolution to make a thorough study of *Yi Jing*. We can also read in the *Analects* many points that are directly in accordance with *Zhou Yi*. In the ten accessories, we read "Zhi (子) says" again and again which, in many ancient classics, denote what Confucius says. What is more, we find further proof in the discovery, in 1974, of relics from a tomb from the Han Dynasty. It is a book of fragments of *Zhou Yi* written down on several pieces of silk. In one of the pieces titled "Yao" (meaning the main points), there is a story about when Confucius began to

¹⁶ See the Preface of the *Brothers Cheng's Commentary on Zhou Yi* 周易程氏传易传序, 见《二程集》下卷(北京:中华书局,1981),第689页。

¹⁷ This dispute began in the Song Dynasty, and continues up to now. Today, the negative side is still active. For instance, Fung Yu-Lan, in his final book, *A Brief History of Chinese Philosophy* [中国哲学简史] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 1985), placed *Zhou Yi* as a book composed during the period of the Warring States.

study *Yi Jing*, and what achievement he made. It says that Confucius began to study *Yi Jing* in his later days; according to the *Analytics*, it was after he was fifty years old. Since he did not touch *Yi Jing* before and was even opposed to talking about divination, one of his disciples, Zhi Gong, wondered why he had changed his mind and turned to *Yi Jin* – for the master had taught his disciples not to touch sorcery or divination. Confucius replied:

I am behind the sorcerer and diviner in learning *Yi*. But what I intend to learn is the integrity and meaning of it. For me, to operate the hexagram is to pursue an astronomical tendency; to clarify the astronomical tendency is to reach integrity. Then I will be benevolent and act morally. One would be a sorcerer if one operated the hexagram without reaching the astronomical tendency; and one would be an official historian if one knew the astronomical tendency without reaching integrity. The divination of the sorcerer and the official historian is not something that can be realized by following it to enjoy it; it will turn out to be wrong. Perhaps in the future there will be someone wondering about Qiu (the name by which Confucius referred to himself); it will be perhaps because of *Yi*. However, what I am pursuing here is integrity only. I take the same way as the sorcerer and the historian does, but I have a different destination from them. The gentleman gets good fortune by moral action, and so rarely does sorcery; the gentleman gets favor by benevolence and righteousness, and therefore divination is hardly to be seen.¹⁸

This passage provides us with much information. It confirms Confucius' work on *Zhou Yi*. What is more, it reveals his purpose of working on the book. He does not take it as a book of divination or sorcery. Rather, he changes it into a book focusing on human affairs.

For instance, the first hexagram is Qian, formulated by six lines of Yang, and depicting an active force using the metaphor of a dragon's experience: It starts in hiddenness, appears in the fields as growing, leaps up into the sky or dives deep down in the water to show its ability and, then, gives a full display of itself; at the end, it shows regret for exceeding its proper limits. The story shows, by the symbolic hexagram Qian, the process of all living things in nature. A further explanation of the story is made by Confucius to provide a view about human existence. It says: "Heaven moves as the hexagram Qian denoted. The gentleman, in accordance with this, acts with his own strength ceaselessly." "It is the sage who knows how to advance and to retire, to maintain and to let perish; and that without acting incorrect-

¹⁸ The silk book was written with the characters in the Pre-Qin style, and it is difficult to be read. Liao Mingchun, an expert in this area, made the text accessible. I have done this translation based on his text. For the original Chinese text, see "Silk Books 'Needs' Interpretation," in Liao Mingchun, *A Treatise on the Silk Book Zhou Yi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Publishing House, 2008), 389. "帛书'要'释文", 见廖名春:《帛书〈周易〉论集》(上海古籍出版社, 2008), 第389页。

ly. Yes, it is only the sage who does so.”¹⁹ The essential meaning here is that a person should act according to his situation in the moment. The situation of a person is always changing. Confucius used the *Yi Jing* to show various possible situations, and discussed how a wise man can act appropriately in the moment.

Taking the above for granted, some people have maintained that *Zhou Yi*, and hence Confucianism, concerns only the discipline of morality. Since moral philosophy, according to the usual classification of Western philosophy, belongs to practical philosophy, it is lower than metaphysics. Despite the present suspicion of metaphysics as the first principle of philosophy, *Zhou Yi* never limits itself to morality. It “covers the whole and without anything being missed.” However it must be very difficult to express in language such an idea as ‘nothing left.’ Confucius was clearly aware of the difficulty. In *Yao*, he says, “*Yi* dealt with the Dao of heaven, but it could not be exhausted by listing the sun, the moon, creation, and time. So Yin and Yang were formulated. *Yi* dealt with the Dao of the earth, but it could not be exhausted by listing water, fire, metal, soil and wood. So it was defined into strong and weak. It dealt with the Dao of human affairs, but it could not be exhausted by listing father and son, emperor and minister, husband and wife, and the antecedent and the consequent. Therefore, it was summarized as lofty and humble. It dealt again with the change of the four seasons, but it could not be exhausted by listing all things. So the eight trigrams were formulated. *Therefore, as a book, Yi could not cover all of this by any one of the kinds except by focusing on the issue of change* (Italicized by the translator).”²⁰

The preceding way of doing philosophy is very different from that of traditional Western philosophy. Traditional Western philosophy is formulated by a kind of knowledge, i.e., universal knowledge. However universal it might be, it divided the knower and the known into two parts. The knower is always outside the known. Even when man himself becomes the object of knowing, he is still behind as the knower. Universal knowledge cannot exhaust all. The above citation shows that Confucius knew this key point. Therefore he did not want to generalize from heaven, earth, and human being into general (or universal) knowledge separately, i.e., what will be separated into different areas and cannot cover the whole. Instead, he focused on the issue of “change,” which will integrate heaven, earth, and human being into one process. Nothing is missed in the discipline. Therefore we read in *Zhou Yi* not only the change of human being, but also the change of nature (the heaven and the earth). Chinese philosophy traces all kinds of phenome-

¹⁹ *Zhou Yi*, ch. 6, 36.

²⁰ See “Silk Books ‘Needs’ Interpretation,” 389. 原文如下：故“易”又天道焉，而不可以日，月，生，辰尽称也，故为之阴阳；又地道行焉，不可以水，火，金，土，木尽称焉，故律之以柔刚；又人道焉，不可以父子，君臣，夫妇，先后尽称，故要之以上下；又四时之变焉，不可以万物尽称也，故为之八卦。故《易》之为书也，一类不足以亟行之，变以备其请者也。

na to the interaction of two forces, Yin and Yang, which, in turn, originates from one ultimate, Tai-Ji. The heaven and the earth are created from the interaction of Yin and Yang, which, in turn, creates human being. Therefore the heaven and the earth are the ground for the human being's action. The human being is accountable to the heaven and the earth as the ground. We read in *Zhou Yi* that usually every hexagram represents a natural phenomenon but, at the same time, it also implies something about human life. For instance, the hexagram of Qian, the beginning of the whole book (as we cited above) describes the movement of heaven; it also says how a gentle man should act. Again, consider the hexagram *Sun* (损): the Chinese character *Sun* (损) means decrease, and represents the natural phenomenon of the change of weather from autumn to winter. But it should not be understood as an absolute decrease, for by the decrease of the strong element, the weak element increases. In accordance with this situation, a man should be humble. Thus, he can get help and he will not lose everything. In another hexagram, *Yi* (益), the character means increase, and represents the turning of spring into summer. This is the season for living beings to grow. It begins with what is helpful and ends with what is harmful, for it gets old and begins to decrease. Wang Bi (A.D. 223-249) remarks: "located in the ultimate of Yi, it is exceeding."²¹ This makes sense for both the weather and human affairs.

Of course, human affairs cannot be separated from natural phenomena, as *Zhou Yi* shows, but there is no doubt that the emphasis lies on human affairs. In other words, though *Zhou Yi* talks about nature, it is not a book primarily about nature. The general picture it gives of nature is as follows: "Therefore *Yi* has Tai Ji (太极, the Great Ultimate), it yields two elements. The two elements produce the four symbols, which again produce the eight trigrams. The eight trigrams serve to determine good and evil, and in turn, that which causes the great matters of life."²² This is the world outlook found in Chinese philosophy, which is in accordance (though very dimly) with the modern science of the big bang theory.

This source of Chinese philosophy shows many differences from traditional Western philosophy, although we cannot discuss the details here. But one thing that we have to mention here is that this theme of Chinese philosophy determines the way of doing philosophy. That is, since human beings and the heaven and the earth (nature) come from the same origin, or in a sequence where the former originates from the latter, human beings cannot act in any way that they wish. Basically, they should follow the way of nature. This – which is the main task of Chinese philosophy – comes from the idea of Dao. To fulfill the task, self-cultivation is needed. So we can see that

²¹ Lou Yulie, "Wang Bi's Collection and Interpretation," (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1980), vol. 2, 430. 楼宇烈,《王弼集校释》下册(中华书局,1980),第430页。

²² See *Zhou Yi*, the Appendix, Sect. 1. 原文如下: 是故《易》有太极,是生两仪,两仪生四象,四象生八卦,八卦定吉凶,吉凶生大业。

the great philosophers in Chinese history are those who are examples of carrying out self-cultivation in both body and mind.

Confucianism, with a period of interruption in the Sui and Tang Dynasties, revived in the Song and Ming Dynasties as Neo-Confucianism. The philosophical theme of self-awareness became more and more central in the Neo-Confucian movement or tradition. Neo-Confucians call their learning the doctrine of being a sage.²³ To be a sage means to be self-aware. Many issues were discussed in this movement, with one of the key points being the very nature of human being. For instance, the brothers Cheng explained “What the great learning teaches is to show the illustrious virtue”²⁴ by the following: “the illustrious virtue is what man has been given by heaven. It is virtual but not blind, and it keeps all principles with it in order to respond to the changes of all affairs.”²⁵ Note that “To illustrate the illustrious virtue” is the first of the three requirements of a Confucian initiate.²⁶ As I understand it, “illustrious virtue” means the nature of a man in the sense that he exhibits everything. It is not going in the direction of knowing the world, but of being aware of the self. It reminds us of the theme of Chinese philosophy: to be self-aware.

Neo-Confucianism developed into two branches, Li-Confucianism and Heart-Confucianism.²⁷ Though Li-Confucianism was stronger than Heart-Confucianism, the real successor of Confucianism was the latter one, as Professor Mou Zongsan²⁸ has said. I believe that he is right, for the former put the emphasis on *Li*, the principle (knowledge) governing both nature and mind (though being a sage is also a theme for them), while the latter focused on the heart, the organ in charge of thinking. It leads directly to the self-awareness that touches the ground of knowledge, for knowledge is the result of the encounter of man and his surroundings. In this encounter, the

²³ Liu Zongzhou (1578-1645), “The Doctrine of Being a Sage,” in *The Complete Collections of Liu Zongzhou* (Beijing: Zhejiang Ancient Books Publishing House, 2007) vol. 2, 192, 228. 《刘宗周全集》(浙江古籍出版社, 2007), 第 192, 228 页。

²⁴ This is the first sentence from *The Great Learning*, the first of the four basic Confucian classics, selected by the Confucians in the Song Dynasty. 原文如下: 大学之道, 在明明德。

²⁵ See Zhu Xi, *A Commentary on the Four Books*. The original text is as follows: 明德者, 人之所得乎天, 而虚灵不昧, 以具众理而应万事者也。

²⁶ The other two requirements are, to be close to the people, and to rest in the highest excellence.

²⁷ “Li-Confucianism” and “Heart-Confucianism” are my translations for 理学 and 心学; the usual translation is “rationalist Confucianism” and “idealist Confucianism” (see Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963]) – terms which are too westernized. Li is not reason, since the character 理 comes from the vein of rock or jade. The character 心 is not mind, because it is the organ of the heart. The ancient Chinese held that the organ for thinking was the heart not the brain. Mencius said that the function of the heart is thinking.

²⁸ See Mou Zongsan, *Heart and the Nature of Human Being*, 牟宗三, 《心体与性体》(第一卷) (Shanghai: Ancient Books Publishing House, 1999).

human being shows himself as more and more active. His way of comporting himself into the surroundings largely determines the realm, shape, and form of knowledge. The issue of human being is deeper than that of knowledge. Here, the human being is not the object of knowing, but is the knowing, the way of existence of every one.

Though the theme of self-awareness is attractive, Heart-Confucianism has not been known widely. Will it fade along with the other schools of philosophy? All depends on whether self-awareness comes to be the theme of our lives.

To Be the Heart of Heaven and Earth

The practical life is always calling human beings to be self-aware. In ancient times, the so-called sages took on this responsibility. As society becomes more and more democratic, this task falls to every individual.

If we realize that not all of the races or peoples that have existed on the planet have survived up until now, we can start to understand the importance of the self-awareness of life. We find through archaeology and through legend that a number of races have disappeared. As far as we know, the causes of their fall might be natural disasters or wars, that is, either from invasion from the outside or from fighting from within. We know that there have been great climate changes on the planet, which caused a large number of species to disappear. We also know that, even in modern times, certain races were brutally eliminated by colonialism. In contrast, those that survived must have been able to overcome various difficulties and challenges. They produced their own supplies, built dwellings to protect themselves from the bad weather, and invented medicine to protect and cure disease. They were told or forced to behave properly towards the others within, and to protect themselves from invaders; on this basis society was organized. I do not believe that people knew how to do these things innately. There must have been teachings from their ancestors. The customs, festivals, and various cultural practices are the accumulation of many years of human experience. In ancient times, because of the low level of productive forces, most people lived in their culture without a real understanding of it. Only a few persons understood and preserved the tradition, renewed it, and taught the people to live this way or that way. They had a true understanding of the meaning of the ways by which people lived. People called them sages, in a secular sense, or prophets, in a religious sense. In fact, they were the people with a self-awareness of life.

Today, the situation has changed greatly. As a member of society, the average person now has the right to choose his way of life and can express his opinions in public. In short, in a time that is more and more democratic, the way of life is determined, not by a few people, but by all. This requires everyone to be self-aware. Only in this way can people establish a society based on reason and have a proper and better life.

Every generation experiences the concrete implications of self-awareness according to the situation in which it finds itself. What kind of situation do we have today? From what I can see, the most conspicuous features of the current situation are the development of the sciences and the respect for human life. Science and technology help people extend their lifespans and increase their power to transform nature. The respect for human life is shown in the increase of the world population and individual freedom after World War Two. But still we face many challenges, even some deadly challenges. One of the serious challenges is the damage to the environment. The soil has been polluted, and the climate becomes warmer and warmer. This harms the food which we eat every day. People might worry about whether the earth will be a suitable place for living in the future. Another major challenge concerning people is terrorism which is on the increase. Though terrorists are few in number, we cannot simply dismiss them as crazy when they kill so many innocents. We should reflect on the traditional views about human nature, and the ideals on the basis of which society is established. All of these call on us to be self-aware in life.

To be self-aware does not mean simply to be aware of oneself as a mere individual. For life in general is a phenomenon. This phenomenon contains vitality and the environment which nourishes and supports this vitality. Without the latter, there could not be life. Therefore to be aware of life is to be aware at the same time both of the vitality of the individual and of the environment. The environment contains both nature and society. Indeed, society exerts an influence on human life no less than nature. In this sense, to be self-aware means to be conscious of both oneself and the world. We have heard the saying by Zhang Zai (1020-1077), a Confucian of the Song Dynasty: “(one of the four tasks for the Confucian is) to be the heart for heaven and the earth.”²⁹ This means that, in being self-aware, I am not only the master of myself, but the master of life as a phenomenon. This is needed because life cannot exist without a suitable environment. To be the master of life is, at the same time, to be the master of the environment. Among all the animals, only human beings can be such a master. This is why we say that the human being is the essence within heaven and earth.

One might wonder how a human being's heart could be the heart of the earth and heaven. If one limits oneself to one's body, he would not experience himself as the master of heaven and the earth. Yet, in practice, there are many cases where one will consider himself as a master beyond his body. For instance, when presenting at some big occasion, one will consider having a decent jacket as an inseparable part of him. He is the master of the jacket. On a very cold day, when one feels uncomfortable, he will try to make the room warm or wear more clothes. He is the master of the conditions of survival. Again, in driving, one is absolutely the master of the car.

²⁹ Quoted from Zhu Xi, *Recent Contemplations*, in *The Complete Works of Zhu Xi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Book Express and Anhui Education Publishing House, 2002), vol. 13, 190; the original text is as follows: 原文如下: 为天地立心.

The same is true in social life. In communicating with others, a person may be the master of the speaker. And if he wants others to have something done, then he should consider the effect of his remarks, which includes a consideration of others. He is the master of this business. He has already been the master of heaven and the earth, positively or negatively. Self-awareness is to be aware of such a position that one already has.

Now it is urgent that the human beings should be the masters of their own living conditions, i.e., the master of survival in their environment. Most probably we are aware of this by the negative elements in our lives: say, the pollution of the earth, the air, water, climate and food, and the reduction in the level of natural resources. These conditions not only harm life in the present, but also affect the survival of future generations. It is a serious concern whether the survival of human beings can be sustainable on this planet. One idea that is sometimes discussed now is that perhaps human beings can move to other planets in the future. This is not fiction, for some scientists are already working on this task – they are busy searching the cosmos for a suitable planet and improving the means of communication. Suppose we can achieve this dream. Yet, if we live in the same way on *that* planet as we live on *this* planet, it is certain that we will damage that planet as we are doing now on earth. And if that is the case, why do we not protect *this* earth so that it can be sustainable for living beings, rather than repeat this tragedy in the future? I believe human beings have the wisdom to change the present situation. It needs human beings to unite and to rectify some of their ways of life. One of the obstacles here is individualism, which focuses everyone on his own interests. People are divided into different classes. They consume different amounts of energy, based on the amount of property that they own. The rich live a comfortable, even a luxurious way of life. To rectify their way of life, then, the rich, more than the poor, need to reduce their consumption; this is not only a problem of inequality between the rich and the poor, but also a problem concerning the destiny of the whole human race. Fortunately, many problems concerning the environment have become a matter of international interest. The key issue here, then, is to establish the idea of life as an integral phenomenon. According to this idea, the earth is a living body, and it can sustain the survival of the species because, one could say, it does this consciously. Indeed, the earth has a heart, and humanity is its product.

In the social realm, the condition seems to be more complex. There are quarrels between various opposite “isms” – such as liberalism vs. conservatism, collectivism vs. individualism, democracy vs. authoritarianism, etc. A full study of these problems requires another paper but, here, we can ask What is the ground is for each of them? In comparison with the idea of the phenomenon of life, I would say that the basis of all of the above argumentation must be very limited.

I believe that people will come to recognize and reach this idea of the phenomenon of life. Human beings have wisdom. They have already recognized the challenges. Though people have different interests at present, they

can also see that the most important interest is the sustainable survival of human beings. If the earth is severely damaged, no one can live. A Chinese proverb goes: “When the nest is overturned, no egg is left unbroken.” This is the most convincing argument. It will teach people to rectify their way of life. However, it is philosophy’s responsibility to tell the truth right away. The ancient Chinese philosophers did not foresee today’s conditions, but they provided us with the ideas of being self-aware and aware of life.

Western philosophy is going in the same direction. As mentioned earlier in this paper, Heidegger’s term for human being is *Dasein*. By this term, the essence of the human being is considered, not from the perspective of the object nor from the subject, but from the perspective of the Being of *Dasein*, that is, from the way that the human being comports himself towards the world. This is the phenomenon of life. One might think that, by calling for the authentic Being of *Dasein*, Heidegger seems to be rather individualistic. But there is a point that we did not mention in the discussion above. In his later work, though the issue of the meaning of Being was still his theme, Heidegger actually put Being on a broader ground than *Dasein* – to use his own words, providence, destiny, or the way. This means that, although a human being can choose his own way to exist, those chances are not determined by him alone. Every human being is ‘thrown into the world’ by some force, the force that he calls Being. “Man is the shepherd of Being,” he says.³⁰ Obviously, Heidegger does not think that man could act however he wishes. Man should not act blindly as well. So does this mean anything else but self-awareness? Though he does not use the word “self-awareness,” the point is very clear.

In closing, I would like to cite Zhang Zai’s words: “By enlarging his heart, one can experience all the things under heaven. If there is something that he has missed, it is because there is still room outside his heart.”³¹

³⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, see *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1977), 234.

³¹ Zhang Zai, *Zhengmeng: The Great Mind* 《正蒙 大心篇》. The original text is as follows: 大其心则能体天下之物. 物有未体, 则心有其外.

Perception, Dualism, and Free Will

Chen Gang

Introduction

Since Descartes, the doctrine of dualism has come under attack. The fatal difficulty with Cartesian substance dualism is that, if the physical and the mental are two different substances – the physical takes up space but does not think, the mental thinks but does not take up space, as Descartes said,¹ – how are they causally related? Cartesian dualism provides the foundation for modern philosophy of mind, in the sense that philosophers either chose to amend Descartes' dualism, e.g., parallelism by Spinoza, Leibniz, Malebranche, etc., or to deny his dualism altogether, e.g., materialism by Hobbes, immaterialism by Berkeley, etc.

In the 20th century, with the rise of behaviorism (e.g., Hempel,² Ryle,³ etc.) and various versions of materialism, e.g., the Mind-Body Identity Theory by U.T. Place,⁴ J.J.C. Smart,⁵ Eliminative Materialism by Paul Churchland,⁶ dualism had fallen out of fashion in philosophy. However, monist materialism faces severe criticism from functionalism, e.g., Putnam's thesis of multiple realization.⁷ Churchland's proposal to eliminate mental vocabularies, such as "pain," is impossible, because pain, which everyone experiences, cannot be eliminated as a concept. Donald Davidson's property dualism emerged from this context.⁸ The problems of property dualism include theoretical ambiguity and self-conflict. In order to resolve these problems,

¹ R. Descartes, *Meditation and Other Metaphysical Writings* (London: Penguin Books, 1998).

² Carl Hempel, "The Logical Analysis of Psychology," in *Carl C. Hempel: Selected Philosophical Essays*, ed. Richard Jeffrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³ Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, University Paperbacks, 1965).

⁴ U. T. Place, "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?," *The British Journal of Psychology* 47 (1956): 44-60.

⁵ J. J. C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes," *Philosophical Review* (1959), also in *The Nature of Mind*, ed. David Rosenthal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 169-176.

⁶ Paul M. Churchland, *Matter and Consciousness* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984).

⁷ Hilary Putnam, "Psychological Predicates," in *Art, Mind, and Religion*, eds. W. H. Capitan and D. D. Merrill (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967), 37-48, also as "The Nature of Mental States," in *The Nature of Mind*, ed. David Rosenthal (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 197-203.

⁸ Donald Davidson, "Mental Events," in *Essays on Actions and Events*, reprinted (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 207-25; "Thinking Causes," in *Mental Causation*, eds. J. Heil and A. Mele (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3-17.

Davidson introduces the concept of supervenience into the discussion. Jaegwon Kim analyzes Davidson's property dualism and argues that it is not a viable position.⁹ In this paper, we criticize Davidson from another end. The real problem with Davidson's property dualism is that, ontologically, it is a version of monism, namely, "anomalous monism." But his "properties," "characteristics," or "predicates" fall short of causal agency.

Of course, it is impossible to answer many questions concerning the human mind. Still, we need to explain why some physical systems have both mental and physical properties, while other physical systems have only physical properties. In what way are mental events, such as pain, real? How is mental causation, i.e., the psycho-physical interaction which forms everyone's common experience, possible? Do we have free will, which would make us morally and legally responsible for our actions?

The objective of this paper is to propose a version of dualism. We hold that substance dualism is impossible, since progress in neuroscience has shown that all mental events are realized by neural events. Therefore, we propose a version of dualism whose ontological description of the mind-body relation is stronger than property dualism, but weaker than substance dualism. This view can explain the common sense phenomena of mind-body interaction, and resolve the surface conflict between free will and natural necessity. It is compatible with contemporary scientific research, and can prove the value and reality of the mental. It can also provide scientists with a solution to the puzzle of the mind-brain relation, and can help them to interpret the large number of complicated findings in their works. We will, then, construct a version of perception dualism to meet the theoretical objectives.

The Ontological Distinction between the Mental and the Physical

What is the difference between a human brain and a piece of rock? The obvious answer is that a human brain supports a human mind, while a piece of rock is a purely physical object. But this is clearly not the answer we are looking for, because it provides us with no new understanding. Going deeper, we require further analysis. I would like to start my analysis with a simple fact. For a piece of rock, there is only one kind of observation; for a human brain, there are two kinds of observations or perceptions. To be more precise, for a long time in history and pre-history, before the emergence of neuroscience, there was thought to be only one kind of perception, which encompasses our perceptions of our pain, joy, volition, thinking, reasoning, etc. Since the 1960s, we have developed an array of brain imaging technol-

⁹ Jaegwon Kim, "The Myth of Nonreductive Materialism," *APA Proceedings* 63, no. 3 (1989): 31-47; "Supervenience as a Philosophical Concept," *Metaphilosophy* 21 (1990): 1-27; "Can Supervenience and 'Non-Strict Laws' Save Anomalous Monism?," in *Mental Causation*, eds. J. Heil and A. Mele (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 19-26; "The Non-Reductionist's Troubles with Mental Causation," in *Mental Causation*, eds. J. Heil and A. Mele (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 189-210.

ogy for another kind of systematic observation of the human brain. Thereafter, we have discovered two kinds of observations. Then, what is the difference between these two kinds of observations or perceptions?

It has long been held among philosophers that mental states are private by nature. You cannot know other people's minds with certainty. We can only know other minds by observing external behaviors (e.g., language, body and face expression, gesture, etc.), although human beings are capable of restraining the expression of mental states in bodily forms of expression: indeed, people can lie about what they are thinking.

This thesis of privacy has faced some challenges from recent progress in neuroscience: polygraphs can tell if a person is telling a lie or not. Further progress in neuroscience proceeds with more and more advanced brain scanners (CAT, MRI, PET, fMRI, MEG, etc.), which can tell why one person is good in mathematics, while another person is good in arts. It can also tell if a person is happy or sad, angry or grateful, in pain or pleasure. Will the new progress in neuroscience lead to a subversion of this privacy thesis? I believe not. However, the thesis needs revision. You can certainly know other people's minds, but mental perceptions are still private by nature. With an instrument such as a brain scanner, you can detect certain forms of neural firings in the brain and monitor its operation. But what you detect is a physical event. You only *know* he is in pain; you cannot *feel* his pain.

Now we are ready to characterize these two kinds of observations. Our traditional observations are private, first-person, and internal by nature; our new scientific observations in essence are public, third-person, and external. Corresponding to these two kinds of observations, there are two kinds of events. A physical event is what we observe from an external point of view. It is public. A mental event is what a person perceives from an internal point of view by oneself, and therefore is necessarily private by nature.

To take an example: a piece of rock can be observed only from an external point of view. No matter how we carry out the observations – seeing its surface with the naked eye, or detecting its internal structure by x-ray – all these observations are external observations in the sense that the observations are public, and can be shared by more than one person. This is also what we said about “scientific” observations. Since there is only one kind of observation, the rock can only be perceived as a physical event. For a human brain, the situation is fundamentally different. The human brain is the result of billions of years of cosmological change and biological evolution to its current stage of development. Centralized signal processing systems support the emergence of self-awareness, which enables direct access to its operations from an internal point of view. Progress in neuroscience in the mid-20th century began to provide another kind of external observation. Therefore, for the human brain, there are two kinds of observations: the operation of a brain can be perceived both as a set of mental events and as a set of physical events.

Mental events and physical events have two respective sets of properties. Mental events are subjective, private, first-person, and internal; physi-

cal events are objective, public, third-person, and external. According to Leibniz's "Identity of Indiscernibles," if two things are identical, they must share the same set of properties. Mental events and physical events have two different sets of properties, therefore they cannot be identical.

Are mental events and physical events really distinct, or simply one and the same thing? Take a coin, for example. Observations from two sides do not allow us to say that there are two coins. Here, the underlying question is whether a difference in perceptions is a sufficient reason for two different kinds of existence or two different worlds. We usually believe that things exist by themselves, regardless of whether we perceive them or not, and regardless of how we perceive them. Perception is something epistemological, not something ontological. But, I am afraid this notion of perception is only true of external physical objects. For situations in the internal world, to perceive is the most essential feature of self-consciousness; the existence of mental events depends on perception from an internal point of view. Perception is not a feature of the physical; it belongs to the mental. If we deny the existence of the mental, perception will be totally impossible. If we plan to admit the existence of the mental and to understand its relation to the physical, we have to start with perception.

Yet I think that the "coin" analogy does not hold. Mental events and physical events are not two sides of a coin. When I see a coin from two opposite perspectives, both perspectives are external. They are the same in nature. The difference between internal perspectives and external perspectives is more substantial than the difference between two external perspectives. Roughly speaking, you can regard the mental event and the physical event as one and the same event. But strictly speaking, they are two distinct events belonging to two different worlds (I explain this further in what follows). As we know, a stone can only be perceived from one kind of perspective, whereas a brain can have two kinds of perspectives. The internal point of view is what a brain has but a stone does not. If we deny the internal point of view and the reality of mental events, a brain would be the same as a stone in terms of perceptions.

Internalism vs. Externalism

What is the internal point of view? How can we know that someone has internal points of view and, more specifically, that they are in pain? In actuality, we have no direct reliable means. The best we can have is an indirect or unreliable means, i.e., by observing the patterns of neural firings and blood circulation in certain parts of the brain, and by mapping between mental events and neural events accumulated in the past. This mapping is not reliable, since there is some kind of plasticity to the human brain. Brain surgery has proved that: after the removal of one hemisphere, some of its functions can be taken on by or recovered in the other hemisphere. This is the so-called "multiple-realization" phenomenon. Therefore, there is no general psycho-physical law to support this kind of mapping. So, to take the

example used above, it turns out that the only thing that I directly know for sure is that I have an internal point of view and that I am in pain at the present moment.

According to Descartes, the knowledge that I can have with the highest certainty is the fact of my existence (*cogito, ergo sum*).¹⁰ All my other knowledge is based on this. What Descartes illustrates here is the priority of internal perception and the reality of self-consciousness. Though the Cartesian dualist theory of mind is out of fashion, Descartes' philosophical project as a whole has had significant influence in modern philosophy. His motive was to refute skepticism about human knowledge and Christian faith. However, to that end, Descartes examined the foundations of knowledge through his radical doubt. The only thing he found indubitable was his own existence. From there, he re-constructed a system of knowledge on a firm foundation. People usually believe that the Cartesian egocentric approach and the emphasis on internal perception set up a philosophical tradition that has a propensity to solipsism. But I believe that Descartes spells out a fundamental truth about human mental phenomena and sets up the foundation for a kind of internalism which does not necessarily lead to solipsism, as I will show later.

We come to a more accurate expression: a mental event is what I perceive from my internal point of view. It is accessible to myself only through an internal point of view. If I perceive the operation of my brain from an external point of view using a brain scanner, what I perceive is no longer a mental but a physical event. Is internal perception, in some sense, weaker than external perception? Strictly speaking, there is no independent external point of view, that is, there is no independent external perception. All of my knowledge is from my internal perception. When we talk about external perception, we are talking about my internal perception of the external objects coming into my brain as sense data. External perception becomes possible only after it goes through internal perception. It is my internal perception that makes external perception possible.

As shown on the mind-body diagram below, my internal perception can be either sense data representing something from the external world, or pure mental events (e.g., my will and my decision, which are caused by sense data within my mind). We employ the concept of external perception only for the first kind of internal perception, before it comes into my mind. Of course, that external object can be my brain, specifically, its neural event for sense data and neural event for will and decision. I can perceive a neural event in my brain from my internal point of view as a mental event. I can also observe the operation of my brain through a brain scanner, by watching the changing pattern on the screen. The pattern finally comes into my mind as a mental representation of a physical event. Internal perception is an immediate direct perception, while external perception is an indirect observa-

¹⁰ R. Descartes, *Meditation and Other Metaphysical Writings* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 24.

tion. Here the concept of ‘perception’ is more general than the conventional usage of the word, which is actually the first kind of perception in the preceding context. The second kind might be called introspection.

If internal perception, as an immediate direct perception, is more fundamental than external perception, can we say that a mental event has a stronger existence than a physical event, in some ontological sense? A positive answer would support – or be supported by – George Berkeley’s immaterialism. According to Berkeley, “‘To be,’ said of the object, means to be perceived... ‘To be,’ said of the subject, means to perceive.”¹¹ Not only did Berkeley grant high priority to internal perception, he almost came to a state of denial about the mind-independent existence of the external world. If Berkeley had lived in our time, driving on the Autobahn at a speed of 160 km/h, would he have had a hint of suspicion about the existence of the external world outside of his car? Would he still think that the car in his blind spot does not exist when he plans to change lanes? Well, do not ridicule the priest and come to a conclusion too fast. For John Nash of Princeton, some external objects do not exist even when perceived. Actually, Berkeley revealed a logical gap between the internal world and the external world, that is, the self, i.e., the subject of knowledge, which is isolated by an internal point of view, can never logically prove the existence of external objects. Of course, for most of us, if we want a coherent account of what is perceived, it is better to take a logical leap and assert the existence of the external world as well as the existence of the internal world. This is what most ordinary people do. For them, an apple is simply an apple, not Berkeley’s “bundle of ideas.” We are not supposed to deny the source of the stimuli that constantly generate our ideas.

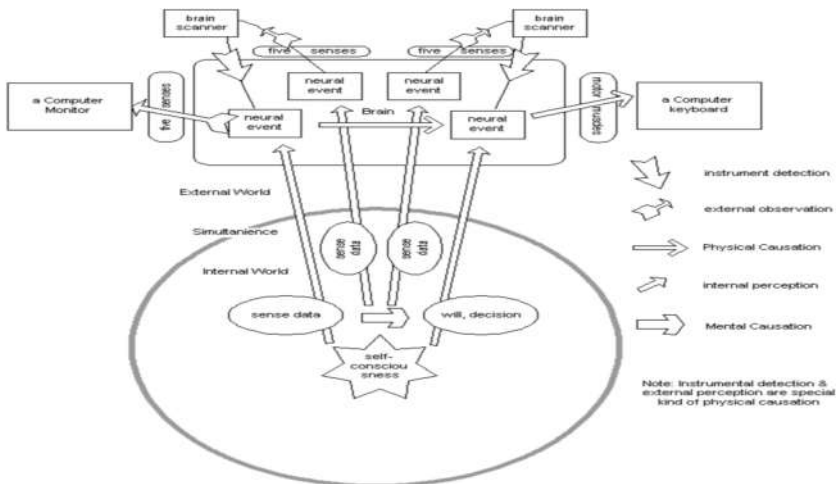


Diagram: The Mind-Body Relation

¹¹ G. Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 25.

Berkeley is the first philosopher to define existence in terms of perception. I wish to offer a revision of Berkeley's view: To be, said of self-consciousness, is to perceive; To be, said of a mental event, is what I perceive from a mind-dependent, internal point of view; To be, said of a physical event, is what is perceived from an external point of view; however, physical events are mind-independent, and can exist in their own right. Though internal perception is immediate and direct, external perception does have its own advantage: an object perceived externally is equally and constantly accessible to multiple individuals. Assuming the possibility of communication between individual minds, people can assure each other with their own perceptions. This is why public, objective, external observation forms the basis of scientific inquiry. Internal perception, while a subject sleeps, becomes interrupted or turns into a stream of intermittent being. Thanks to the faculty of memory, when I wake up, a constant internal perception can be recovered. I know immediately who I am and where I was before I went to sleep.

The external world exists for everyone to perceive; the internal world exists only for a subject in the present. Everyone has direct access to their own internal world, but has only indirect access to the external world. Where the external world is a physical and objective reality, the internal world is a mental and subjective reality. Internal perception makes us subjective by nature, while external perception helps us to be more objective. We are absolutely subjective, but relatively objective. I do not attempt to determine which point of view is superior or to determine which type of event is more fundamentally real. By nature they are incomparable.

To summarize, Descartes's contribution to the philosophy of mind is not limited to his substance dualism. His internalism plays a more significant and lasting role in epistemology and the philosophy of mind. Internalism, taken to an extreme, leads to solipsism, which is manifested in Berkeley's immaterialism. Descartes himself still chose to prove the existence of God and of objects in the external world. Berkeley's immaterialism, though disparaged in the history of philosophy, is nevertheless a strong philosophical position. It defines reality in terms of perceptions. The development of modern science in the past four hundred years has popularized externalism. People value objective, third-person, public, duplicable, external observations. However, when our object of inquiry is no longer the external physical world, but the human mind and its subjective world, internalism is required. As we have shown, the internal point of view is more fundamental than the external point of view; internal perception makes external perception possible.

Supervenience or Simultaneity

What is the relationship between a mental event and a physical event? By physical event I do not mean the whole external world; the external world is vast and multifarious, and I have access only to a small portion of

it. Rather, by “physical events,” I mean neural events in the human brain, which become accessible to us via external perception due to the recent progress in neuroscience. Neural events can be the neural realization of sense data about external objects; they can also be the neural realization of the pure mental events which are not about the external world. Neural events can be perceived both from an external point of view and an internal point of view. Other physical events can only be perceived from an external point of view.

I would like to introduce a new term, “simultaniency,” to designate this relationship between mental and physical events, just as “supervenience” has been employed for relations like the one between a chair and its wooden slats. It has proved to be rather difficult to describe and define this relationship. Though we have made a lot of progress in neuroscience, the internal mental world remains obscure. Our knowledge about the external world is richer than our knowledge about the internal world. Each one of us has direct and immediate access to our own mental world, but we have few concepts, notions or vocabularies about it. To make even a very simple description of the mental world, concepts must be borrowed from the vocabulary of the physical world. We must stretch our language if we want to adequately describe the internal world. This kind of attempt, no matter how tentative, risky, and fragile, is still worthwhile if we want to explore the dark, subjective, internal world.

Do mental events exist in “space” and “time,” as physical events do? I believe my internal being has a feature of duration. If that is the case, naturally we get the following question: how can we measure a physical time and a mental duration? Suppose, in a photo lab, we need to do a five-second exposure to duplicate a picture. How do we measure the time? The simplest way is to count one through five. This is not a reliable method since people count at different speeds. There is a better method: we can use some instrument, a watch or a pendulum, to do the timing. The second method is substantially more reliable than the first method. This is so because the first method is a pure internal measurement without recourse to any external means; the second method relies on an external instrument, which operates in physical space and time.

How can we measure the duration of a mental event, e.g., my pain? Again, there are two methods: the first, to count during my pain, and the second, to use a watch. But how can we measure the time of the corresponding neural event of my pain? Still, there are two methods, which can be conducted by another person at the same time while I measure my pain: in the first, he pays close attention to the changing neural pattern on the screen of a brain scanner while counting, and, in the second, he pays close attention to the neural pattern on the screen with a stopwatch. What might we infer from these experiments? We can use the same set of methods (with or without a watch) to measure the duration of my mental event and the length of the corresponding neural event, such as those used in a photo lab. If we

conduct the experiment in the correct way, we will find that the mental event and the neural event happen simultaneously.

Benjamin Libet of the University of California, San Francisco, reported a temporal gap between neural events and mental events. "The brain initiates the voluntary process first. The subject later becomes consciously aware of the urge or wish (W) to act, some 350 to 400 msec after the onset of the recorded RP (Readiness Potential) produced by the brain."¹² His conclusion was that "the process leading to a voluntary act is initiated by the brain unconsciously, well before the conscious will to act appears. That implies that free will, if it exists, would not initiate a voluntary act."¹³

Libet's discussion is based on a version of substance dualism. From perception dualism, we can provide an analysis and explanation for Libet's experimental findings. What is that wish (W) to act? As a mental event, it must be realized by neural firing. Before the neural firing, there is always a process of chemical build-up. From Libet's text, it seems that his readiness potential (RP) is not even the chemical build-up process, but rather a process immediately before the process of chemical build-up. When we talk about the simultaneity between the mental event and the neural event, we mean, by "neural event," neither the process of chemical build-up, nor the RP, but the moment of neural firing. For perception dualism, it is normal that the whole neural event, which includes both the chemical build-up process and the neural firing, is initiated well before the initiation of the corresponding mental event. As for Libet's denial of free will, we will come back to the issue in the final section of the paper.

Do mental events occur in "space"? According to Descartes, the essence of the physical is extension in space. Minds are unextended substances and, thus, are distinct from any physical substance. If Descartes is correct, then my internal being will have no space but only duration in time. Imagine a tiny bug living down a tube without a thickness; what a passive being it would be! It cannot "move" around, it has no freedom at all. But this does not sound right. At least, our mental events, e.g., pain or desire, should have a magnitude, like an AM (Aptitude Modulation) signal. Here we have two dimensions, one in "space," one in "time."

Does my mind operate on one thread? From my past experience, even when I am in pain, I can still manage to drive, I can still figure out which hotel to stay at for the night. The operation of my mind is multi-threaded by nature. Another feature of human minds is that we have memory. Memory plays a substantial role in the operation of the human brain. Without memory, I doubt if we could build any conception about physical time or mental duration. Memory might be another extension in the internal world. How many dimensions in space do we need in order to accommodate all these features? Can we assume that mental events actually exist in three-

¹² Benjamin Libet, *Mind Time: The Temporal Factor in Consciousness* (Harvard University Press, 2004), 134.

¹³ Libet, *Mind Time*, 136.

dimensional physical space? Can we identify a mental object that moves up and down, from left to right, forward and backward? Does one mental event occur to the right or on the top of another mental event? That sounds awkward. My mental events may be able to “move,” but not in the way that something moves in three-dimensional physical space. Perhaps you can know that there is an itch on your left hand and a pain in your right leg. I am afraid the locations as you perceive them are locations in the physical world, just as you feel the keyboard on your fingertips and the chair under your buttocks. We are walking on a marshland. It is not wise to build a high-rise building before we find more solid ground. I’d better stop here, harvest the ideas that we already have, and move forward.

What is mental duration? Does my mental event happen in a distinct mental time or in the same physical time? According to Einstein,¹⁴ physical time is just one integral part of four-dimensional spacetime. If we cannot prove that the mental event happens in the same three-dimensional physical space, we have to assume that my mental event happens in a distinct mental “space” and a distinct mental “time,” and that that mental “space” and mental “time” might be totally different from the physical space and time in conception.

Let’s try a *reductio ad absurdum*. Suppose that, in future, we could show that mental events exist in the same four-dimensional physical spacetime – What conclusion would follow? It follows that the mental event should be equally observable from an external point of view side by side the neural event and other external objects. This is definitely not the case right now. We cannot feel another’s joy or pain. We cannot perceive another’s mental events. There are physical events unobservable in the remote Universe and deep inside the Earth. However, there is a possibility that they will become observable some day in the future, when we get better telescopes and particle detectors. The history of science has shown this repeatedly. But we cannot imagine such a possibility for mental events. If we cannot observe mental events in the same way as we do neural events and all other physical events, we have to say that mental events do not exist in the same world with all physical events, otherwise, why cannot we see them? The common feature with all physical events is that they are perceived from an external point of view; the common feature with all mental events is that they are perceived from an internal point of view.

If mental space and mental time are distinct from physical space and physical time, what is the difference between mental space and time on the one hand, and physical space and time on the other? The only thing I know by now is that our measurement of mental space and time are subjective. Different people at different moments count at different paces. Another well-known example is: put your two hands separately into two buckets of

¹⁴ P. Schilpp, *Albert Einstein: Philosopher-Scientist* (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1957), 586-598.

water of different temperatures, and then put them together into the same bucket of water. One hand feels the water warmer than the other hand.

Is there any common place between mental space and time on the one hand, and physical space and time on the other? The only thing I know by now, from the three sets of experiments, is that mental events and physical events happen simultaneously. That is why I coined the term “simultani-ence,” to designate the relation between the mental event and the physical event. For supervenience between a chair and wooden slats, both relata are physical, both exist in physical space and time. For simultani-ence, one relatum is mental, the other is physical, and they exist in different spaces and different times. You may say that a mental event ‘simultan- es’ a physical event. You may also say that a physical event simultan- es a mental event. They are simultani-ent for each other, for every mental event has a corresponding physical event, but not every physical event has a corresponding mental event.

Simultani-ence is Not a Causal Relation

What other features can we find for simultani-ence? Is it a causal relation? As I have argued in another paper, supervenience is not a causal relation, since a chair and its wood slats exist in the same space in same spot at the same time. Combine the macro and the micro points of view together; they can be regarded as one and the same thing. A chair and a table can enter into a causal interaction because they are in the same space, but in different spots, at the same time. They are two distinct things in any sense. The situation for simultani-ence is different. A mental event and its corresponding neural event do not exist in the same spacetime. They exist in different worlds, so they cannot enter a causal relation.

Like the situation in supervenience, here we can get a coherent causal account of mental events in the internal world, and, at the same time, another coherent causal account of neural events in the external world. The two chains of causation can run parallel on the two sides of simultani-ence. The parallel was observed by Leibniz 300 years ago. However, his “pre-established harmony”¹⁵ is regarded as an unsatisfactory answer by most philosophers of our time. The situation in supervenience might help us to understand the issue. From an internal point of view we see a mental event; from an external point of view we see a neural event. Combine the two points of view together, though a combination much more difficult and imaginary than the combination across supervenience, roughly speaking, and they can be regarded as one and the same thing. This is how the parallel happens and why simultani-ence is possible. The relation between the mental and the physical is like the two rails of a railroad track: the two parallel rails never intersect. Similarly, the relation between a mental event and a physi-

¹⁵ G. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics, Correspondence with Arnauld, Monadology* (Chicago, IL: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1993), 269.

cal event is not causal; in this sense we can say that the two domains are separated. However, the two rails never run in different directions; similarly, every move in the mental is always synchronized by a change in the physical. In this sense we can say that the two domains are not completely separated; they are closely coupled.

We are now ready to explain one of our observations, that is, the psycho-physical interaction. This is the major difficulty for ontological dualism and the major reason for it to be out of fashion in the 20th century. The psycho-physical interaction is an observation from each one of us, that is, a situation in the physical world can cause changes in my mental states, and my mental “decision” can change the course of events in the external world. This is a phenomenon we get from common sense. We get a different picture strictly from an external point of view – physical changes in the external world, via the sensory organs, can cause a new neural event in my brain which corresponds to certain mental states; via motor muscle, a neural event which corresponds to my mental “decision” will change the course of physical events in the external world. Yet we get a different picture strictly from an internal point of view: sensory data as mental events representing objects in external world can trigger another mental event, such as a happy emotion in my mind; my decision in my mind, once implemented, will bring about certain sensory data I expect. Psycho-physical interaction is a kind of phenomenon that we get from our common-sense confusion between internal and external points of view. After a clarification of the two points of view and a justification of the parallel between the mental and the physical, we achieve a new understanding, and we can explain the psycho-physical interaction without violating the causal closure of the physical – a metaphysical principle well-established in the sciences.

The human brain has a causal interaction with the external world through the five senses and motor muscles. The human mind is isolated by simultaniency from the external world that includes the brain. Simultaniency is a “wall” without a door, but with windows; a “river” without a bridge, but you can see the other side. (I cannot find a better word other than “wall” and “river” to describe the relation or the separation.) Wall and river are physical. Simultaniency is not physical, indeed, it is neither within the physical nor within the mental. It is between the physical and the mental.

Simultaniency as a “wall” is thinner than a condom and thicker than a mountain. On the one hand, when your mind’s eye sees something before you, it is so transparent. You feel no membrane in between. If you have a good command of your five senses and motor muscles, you will never feel this ‘wall.’ On the other hand, you can easily go across the Rocky Mountains with all your personal belongings and furniture by loading them in a U-Haul truck. You can travel across the Atlantic Ocean by Concorde in three hours. You can even fly to the moon by a Saturn V rocket. But you can never escape the isolation of simultaniency. You can never avoid the limitations of your internal point of view. Simultaniency is the ultimate human bondage; the internal point of view is the ultimate human predicament.

Mou Zongsan's Interpretation of Kant and the Transformation of Traditional Chinese Philosophy

Pong Wen-Berng

The Problem of the Distinction between Appearances and Things-in-Themselves

The transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is an important and controversial theme in the interpretation of Kant's system. The contemporary discussion of this problem among Kant's scholars focuses on the distinction between the two-world view and the two-aspect view.¹ In his *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*,² Mou Zongsan has already taken account of the two-aspect view in his interpretation of Kant. Initiated by §5 of Heidegger's *Kant and Problem of Metaphysics*,³ Mou regards the two-aspect view highly: "In the *Opus Postumum*, Kant says that the thing in itself is not a being different from appearance, i.e., the difference between the concept of a thing in itself and the appearance is not objective but merely subjective. The thing in itself is not another Object, but is rather another aspect (*respectus*) of the representation of the same Object."⁴ In *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, Mou seems fully persuaded by the two-aspect view, and he writes the following: "I often say that the distinction of things-in-themselves and appearances is an idea in the critical method, which can be used everywhere; anything (so long it is real, not vain) can be viewed in two aspects, e.g., God, Will, Soul, etc, and, thus, Kant distinguishes everything into appearances and things-in-themselves. We will come back to this theme afterwards. This is the fundamental concept of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which should be always kept in mind in order to discuss the other."⁵

¹ Karl Ameriks, "Kantian Idealism Today," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 (1992): 329-342; Henry E. Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2004).

² Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy* 智的直覺與中國哲學 (臺北: 商務印書館, 1971).

³ Martin Heidegger, *Kant and Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. R. Taft (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990).

⁴ Heidegger, *Kant and Problem of Metaphysics*, 23; cf. Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, 37, 39.

⁵ Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, 39.

In his succeeding book, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*,⁶ however, Mou seems to be unsatisfied with Kant's version of the two-aspect view:

The distinction between things-in-themselves is not objective, but only subjective. Things-in-themselves are not another Object, but, so far as the representation of the same Object is concerned, it is another aspect of it. That's right. But in his [Kant's] system, of another aspect of the same Object, that is the aspect of things-in-themselves, we do not have any representation; it is vain. Thus, the thesis that the 'transcendental distinction is only subjective' cannot be fully evolved.⁷

Due to the unsatisfactoriness of Kant's version of the two-aspect view, Mou proposes, in *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, his own version of the two-aspect view, which he calls a two-level ontology.

Kant intentionally uses the "transcendental distinction" in order to distinguish it from the empirical distinction of Locke and the logical distinction of Leibniz. But what is the "transcendental distinction"? By "transcendental" Kant means: "all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible a priori" (A12/B26). According to this explication, the transcendental distinction of appearances and things-in-themselves should relate to different kinds of knowledge of possible objects, instead of to ontologically different objects. In other words, this distinction is epistemological rather than ontological. It is knowledge of knowledge, or, according to Henry Allison, metaepistemological,⁸ i.e., if I make a judgment about "some given empirical knowledge" as "knowledge of appearance," then this judgment implies that the same knowledge is not "knowledge of things-in-themselves" without appealing to any presupposition of existence of "things-in-themselves."

Some scholars (such as Jacobi and Strawson) contend that Kant cannot use the transcendental distinction without the premise of realism. Kant's own text suggests such an interpretation: "The capacity (receptivity) for receiving representations through the mode in which we are affected by objects, is entitled sensibility" (A19). In order to receive sense-data, we cannot but presuppose the kind of objects as things-in-themselves which affect our senses. But this seems to lead to a contradiction, since knowing the existence of things-in-themselves as independent entities requires that we are not permitted to use any faculty of knowledge. It comes out that either we do not have any knowledge of it at all or, if we have, then we should also have knowledge of appearances, not of things-in-themselves.

⁶ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself* 現象與物自身 (臺北: 學生書局, 1975).

⁷ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 15, 17, 113.

⁸ Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, 4.

I hold, however, that the “objects” in the above quotation should be related to physical objects, rather than to things-in-themselves, for non-spatio-temporal things-in-themselves can in no way affect our spatio-temporal sensibility. Accordingly, the issue of things-in-themselves should turn to the two-aspect view instead of the two-world view. This paper will proceed along the following three steps: (a) to summarize the difficulties of Kant’s version of the two-aspect view as raised by Mou (section II); (b) to summarize the new version given by Mou himself in *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself* (section III); and (c) to evaluate Mou’s version.

How Is the Transcendental Distinction between Appearances and Things-in-Themselves Possible?

Negative Content of Things-in-themselves

In Kant’s epistemology, three different theses are proposed: (1) our knowledge is about the objects of appearance; (2) this knowledge is not about things-in-themselves; (3) we could never have knowledge of things-in-themselves. Logically, it seems that thesis (1) implies thesis (2), for if I make a judgment that the knowledge that I have is a knowledge of appearances, this implies that it is not a knowledge of things-in-themselves. But thesis (1) does not imply thesis (3) because, from the knowledge of appearance that I have now, I cannot logically infer that I could never have knowledge other than that of appearances. We have, then, to clarify Kant’s famous thesis (4): things-in-themselves can be thought, but not known.

Kant makes a difference between thinking and knowing as follows: “To think an object and to know an object are thus by no means the same thing. Knowledge involves two factors: first, the concept, through which an object in general is thought (the category); and secondly, the intuition, through which it is given” (B146). Now, first, according to this definition, things-in-themselves are something thinkable; at least insofar as sensible objects are determined as objects of appearance, they can be thought as non-sensible objects. This logical implication of thinkable objects as things-in-themselves does not require any premise of the real existence of things-in-themselves. Second, according to the above definition, in order to “know” thinkable objects as things-in-themselves, some kind of intuition is required through which some objects (here, things-in-themselves) are given. Since things-in-themselves are non-sensible objects, the knowledge of them requires non-sensible intuition as well. But human beings do not have such non-sensible intuition. Therefore, Kant can make a final judgment concerning thesis (3): we could never have knowledge of things-in-themselves. Mou’s thesis against Kant’s is: Without intellectual intuition, the appearances and the things-in-themselves can never be transcendently “distinct” in the Cartesian sense.

Mou Zongsan rightly indicates that the Kantian distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves can neither be explained through the

distinction between subjectivity and objectivity, the perspective and perspectiveless in the Leibnizian sense, nor through the distinction between primary and secondary qualities in the Lockean sense, because those distinctions are empirical. But, according to Kant, the distinction of appearances and things-in-themselves is a transcendental one. Kant did not actually give, in the first *Critique*, any positive meaning of things-in-themselves, only a negative meaning of it, for example, that it is a limiting concept (A255) or some non-sensible object (B307). According to Mou, if the concept of things-in-themselves can only be understood purely in a negative sense, then the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves cannot be firmly established. For, in such a way, 'things-in-themselves' would become a logically empty concept without any positive content. With such negative content, for Mou even the inference from thesis (1) to thesis (2) is problematic.

In respect of things-in-themselves, they seem to lie beyond the (empirical) world. So far as human knowledge is concerned, a concept lying beyond the world is only a limiting concept, that is, what Kant describes is only the negative meaning of the concept of things-in-themselves, namely only as an object of non-sensible intuition. Therefore, the content and meaning of things-in-themselves are empty, and one doubts even whether there is any concrete content or truthful meaning of it. Since all concrete content and truthful meaning is revealed only in intuition, if we now describe it as an object of non-sensible intuition without specifying to what kind of object of intuition it refers, then it would not have any concrete content or truthful meaning. If one uses such an empty and untruthful meaning of things-in-themselves as a limiting concept, as, for example, appearance and "non-appearance," and it only closes but not discloses, then we cannot avoid misidentifying our knowledge of appearance with that of things-in-themselves. As a result, we fall into the same problem of distinction as Locke and Leibniz. Neither things-in-themselves nor appearance can be distinct. The transcendental distinction is, apparently, not convincing, and is not fully justified.⁹

When I want to describe a certain object X and try to use a negative term, say, "it is not Y" or "it is not Z," we could never determine what the object is in this way. I say that this computer is not a desk, not a chair, not a book, etc. By means of all these latter negative terms, one can never obtain the positive content of this computer. But the relation between appearances and things-in-themselves is the same as the logical relation between p and \sim p. An object can be either sensible or non-sensible. There is no third possibility. In such a situation, even if I could only have knowledge of p, it seems that I would not misidentify p with \sim p. According to Spinoza's "omnes determinatio est negatio," we can infer from the sensible knowledge of p (thesis 1) the non-sensible knowledge of \sim p (thesis 2), without presupposing an intuition of \sim p. Nevertheless, according to Kant's own text, it seems that

⁹ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 9.

this transcendental distinction requires not just a negative concept of things-in-themselves. “Now no one can think a negation determinately, save by basing it upon the opposed affirmation. Those born blind cannot have the least notion of darkness, since they have none of light. The savage knows nothing of poverty, since he has no acquaintance with wealth. The ignorant have no concept of their ignorance, because they have none of knowledge etc.” (A575-B603). A man who has only the positive content of knowledge of appearances would never know that what he has is knowledge of appearances, but not knowledge of things-in-themselves, unless he has, at the same time, the positive content of the latter knowledge. A person born blind can never have an idea about darkness unless he has an experience of light.

Kant should agree with Mou’s objection on this point. But then we have to reconsider Kant’s thesis (4): things-in-themselves can be thought, but never be known. It is possible for us to *think* things-in-themselves positively, without *knowing* them positively. We could use some concepts from reason to determine things-in-themselves positively; for example God, freedom, and soul are such concepts. They contain no logical contradictions, but, nevertheless, they are positive. Kant’s thesis (4) could be interpreted in the following way: While my knowledge about the desk in front of me under spatio-temporal conditions is positive, my thought about the same desk without spatio-temporal conditions is also positive. The latter is my thought, but not my knowledge. However about the thought of things-in-themselves or other concepts of reason, we have only negative predicates, for example, non-sensible, im-mortal, in-finite, time-less, and so on. One can read such considerations in the B-deduction, namely, that we can have only negative predicates to determine things-in-themselves (B149). But a negative term cannot have any corresponding reality in experience. We can conclude, therefore, that in the first *Critique*, Kant seems to have a thesis (4) that is more than he can afford. Mou’s requirement of the positive content of things-in-themselves – at least of their thought – is not objectless.

The First Version of the Two-Aspect View of Kant

Kant seems to concede that there is such a positive content, but that it is not for the finite cognition of human beings, but for infinite cognition of God.

Kant’s concept of things-in-themselves is not merely a logical concept; he ascribes it certain content and meaning. He considers it to be an object of intellectual intuition, but only God has this intellectual intuition, human beings cannot have it. So understood, things-in-themselves can be cognized by the intellectual intuition of infinite being. Thus the concept of things-in-themselves has certain content and meaning.¹⁰

¹⁰ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 9-10.

Here, we have a first version of the two-aspect view, namely that appearances and things-in-themselves are two aspects of one and the same object, but belong to two different cognitive subjects, one to human beings, and the other to God.

Mou holds that this version will have the following difficulties:

(1) "Such a positive sense is purely formal, a conjecture beyond the world, its concrete and real meaning remains in darkness. Not only in darkness, but consequently the formal meaning itself can not be fixed" (Mou Zongsan 1975: 10). For such a formal positive sense means nothing more than following: I know for sure that there is an X, which cannot come into existence by means of a negation of appearance, and it has a determinate content, A. I know further that I cannot know A forever. The things-in-themselves (X), in such a formal positive sense, if referring to the finite created thing, could be appearances again – and that means that the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves cannot be fixed by means of such a formal positive sense. "If the finite is a determinate limited being, then we can never be sure whether such finite created beings were things-in-themselves or appearances."¹¹

(2) In one and the same object there are two contradictory predicates: from the aspect of human being, the things-in-themselves have the property of space and time, but, from the aspect of God, they do not have the property of space and time. The same object has alteration and does not have alteration at the same time. There are two possibilities one might use to avoid this contradiction: either we abandon the two-aspect view, so that the property of time and space is ascribed to objects as appearances, which is not a different entity from things-in-themselves, or, instead of ascribing these contradictory predicates to things-in-themselves, we ascribe them to different subjects. According to Mou, Kant would not give up the two-aspect view, and the second possibility would incur a further difficulty – things-in-themselves are only subjective from God's eyes, but are not objective in themselves.

(3) At the end of the Analytic in the *Critique*, Kant argues against the thesis of Moses Mendelssohn: space and time as necessary properties belong to finite created being, but such properties do not belong to the supreme being, God. Kant holds such a view to be contradictory, because the cause of created beings must be already in God as Creator; it would be a contradiction for the Creator to be without spatio-temporal properties and for His creation to have these properties. Kant suggests that, in order not to diminish the perfection of God, we have to exclude these properties from finite created beings as things-in-themselves, and ascribe them to other created beings, namely human beings. Mou Zongsan writes:

¹¹ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 10.

It is doubtful whether real finite being can be without conditions of time and space. It seems that finite being contains necessarily temporal and spatial properties. In such a way, we consequently negate the transcendental ideality of time and space, and tend to the opposite position of suggesting the transcendental reality of time and space. God created accordingly the things-in-themselves as temporal-spatial finite things. Is it not possible for things-in-themselves to be temporal-spatial and finite at the same time? If it is necessary to deny its temporal-spatial property, then its finite character would be denied together. But it is contradictory for the finite being to be infinite.¹²

On the one hand, if things-in-themselves are finite created beings, they would appear in space and time, because, according to Mou, finite being necessarily contains temporal and spatial properties so that finite beings could not be things-in-themselves; on the other hand, if things-in-themselves are infinite beings, they would not be created things-in-themselves, but God himself. The demarcation of things-in-themselves produce a dilemma that threatens the transcendental distinction of appearances and things-in-themselves.

*The Second Version of the Two-Aspect View of Kant:
Sensibility and Understanding*

From the critique of the first version of the two-aspect view, Mou concludes that we cannot ascribe these two aspects to different subjects (human beings and God), but altogether to the same subject, namely, to a human being as a subject. Here we come to a second version of the two-aspect view, that of Henry Allison, which is in contrast with Mou's own version. According to Allison:

Accordingly, in considering things as they appear, we are considering them in the way in which they are presented to discursive knowers with our forms of sensibility. Conversely, to consider them as they are in themselves is to consider them apart from their epistemic relation to these forms or epistemic conditions, which, if it is to have any content, must be equivalent to considering them qua objects for some pure intelligence or "mere understanding."¹³

According to this version, we do not have to worry whether things-in-themselves have positive content, because, by using the category (understanding) alone, we could think about objects positively without knowing them. But Mou has reasons to oppose this version:

¹² Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 106.

¹³ Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, 16-17.

According to Kant, we have only this kind of sensibility and understanding, but to ask why there is such a kind of sensibility and understanding, and why it must use such forms of space and time and why there must be such kinds and number of concepts, there are no further reasons. Thus, why there is such sensibility and understanding is a problem of fact....If they are only problems of fact, we cannot have a clear criterion to judge whether our knowledge is merely that of appearances, but not that of things-in-themselves.¹⁴

Mou's argument here is quite short and implausible, because, even if we take sensibility and understanding as unrefuted fact, we do not have to seek a criterion outside both of the faculties. On the contrary, we can find the criterion between these two cognitive faculties. First of all, we can maintain that the object of understanding is namely things-in-themselves and the object of sensibility is appearance (although Kant does not permit such arrangement). Second, understanding is a capacity of active thinking, and sensibility is a passive receiving capacity. We could therefore make the following statement: the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves can be derived from the relation of the active and passive characters of understanding and sensibility. In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant emphasizes this kind of distinction:

[E]ven with the most strenuous attentiveness and distinctness that the understanding can ever bring to them we can achieve only cognition of appearances, never of things in themselves. As soon as this distinction has been made (perhaps merely by means of the *difference between representations given us from somewhere else and in which we are passive, and those that we produce simply from ourselves and in which we show our activity*), then it follows of itself that we must admit and assume behind appearances something else that is not appearances, namely things in themselves.¹⁵

Here, Kant separates our representations in their origins into two different groups. The one is, by means of sensibility, passively received, whose origin is "from somewhere else"; the other, by means of understanding, actively produced, whose origin is from the cognitive mind itself. For example, sensible intuition belongs to the former group and categories to the latter group. The cognitive mind has to presuppose "something behind appearances" in order for it to be passively received. So long as we do not confound the representation of sensibility and the representation of understanding, this is enough for the establishment of the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves. But, according to Mou, so

¹⁴ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 11.

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H.J. Paton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 451, emphasis mine.

long as we have no positive content of things-in-themselves, it is possible for us to misidentify appearances with things-in-themselves.

Mou Zongsan's Version of the Two-Aspect View

As the above arguments suggest, things-in-themselves can neither be understood as finite created things nor infinite creating being. Mou proposes his own solution of this problem: The problem cannot be seen in a logically disjunctive way – that things-in-themselves are either finite or infinite – but it seems that we have an alternative, namely, to understand things-in-themselves as something “possible to become infinite in spite of its finitude.” This means that things-in-themselves contain two parts: one is it as actually finite being, the other is its potentiality to become infinite. But it is not possible for us to ascribe to a thing in a real sense, for example, the stone before me, the character of “possibility to become infinite in spite of its finitude.” Only a thing in the sense of a value could possess such a character. Neither could we ascribe things-in-themselves with such a character to God, because, first, we could not know whether God or his created being possesses such a character, so that things-in-themselves would become unstable as before. Second, Mou argues further, “I must indicate that the possibility ‘to become infinite in spite of its finitude’ could not be justified in the doctrine of creation, unless we recognize such an absurdity as some kind of religious mystery.”¹⁶ Things-in-themselves cannot be cognized by our understanding, so that we come back to the same point where we started. Thirdly, Mou criticizes such a kind of two-aspect theory, too. For him it makes sense to say: “The distinction between things-in-themselves and appearances is not objective, but only subjective; it is a representation of one and the same object from another aspect.”¹⁷ He argues that this two-aspect theory cannot be justified under the doctrine of creation, because the two aspects are viewed by different subjects – the one is a finite knowing subject like a human being, the other is an infinite intellect like God. He suggests that the two aspects must be viewed by one and the same subject, the human being. If two aspects, the finite aspect of appearances and the infinite aspect of things-in-themselves, should belong to one and the same subject, and the second aspect could be ascribed neither to things-in-themselves in a real sense nor to God, then it seems that the only logical possibility is to ascribe both aspects to human beings. And, according to Mou, the infinite aspect of things-in-themselves can be ascribed to human beings only if they are in possession of intellectual intuition.

If we take the doctrine of the second *Critique* into consideration instead of the empty concept of things-in-themselves of the first *Critique*, namely in a weaker practical reading, it seems that Kant could stabilize this transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves

¹⁶ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 111.

¹⁷ Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, 37.

without introducing the concept of intellectual intuition. The central tenets of the second *Critique* are the doctrine of the fact of pure reason and a somehow thinner concept of freedom grounded upon this fact, both of which offer a positive sense of the things-in-themselves under the two-aspect view. Could Kant thereby overcome the difficulty of the instability of the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves that arose in the first *Critique*?

For Mou, new difficulties would arise with the introduction of the doctrine of the fact of reason and a thinner concept of freedom, because both are incompatible. His argument is as follows:

(1) Mou argues firstly that, from the famous statement “freedom indeed is indeed the *ratio essendi* of the moral law, and the moral law the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom,” it follows that freedom and the moral law imply each other, or, in other words, they are logically biconditional. This is exactly what Allison calls the “reciprocity thesis.”¹⁸ Mou criticizes this, saying that Kant’s explanation of the reciprocity thesis tends to lead to the incompatibility of freedom and moral law. Because on the one hand, “[O]bjectively considered, if the moral law implies freedom and, conversely, freedom implies moral law, then they have the same logical value.”¹⁹

(2) But, on the other hand, Kant insists that, in the subjective cognitive order, one can only begin with the fact of moral law, not with freedom, because the latter presupposes the presence of intellectual intuition, which is, according to Kant, untenable for a human being.

(3) Mou argues that the objective consideration of (1) and the subjective cognitive order of (2) are not compatible. He maintains that, if Kant intends to keep the first, then he must revise the second.

If we take the recent literature on Kant’s philosophy into consideration, there are four different readings of the two-aspect theory of appearances and things-in-themselves:

(1) the traditional reading: appearances and things-in-themselves are two different aspects of one and the same object, but belong to different cognitive subjects – the finite understanding of human beings and the infinite intellect of God.

(2) the epistemic reading (Allison): appearances and things-in-themselves are different aspects of one and the same object, and the latter belongs also to the same subject; the one is the aspect of finite understanding constrained by sensibility, and the other is the aspect of finite understanding without the constraint of sensibility.

(3) the weaker practical reading: appearances and things-in-themselves are different aspects of one and the same object, and the latter belong also to

¹⁸ Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, 210-213.

¹⁹ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 72.

the same subject; the one is an aspect of the finite understanding constrained by sensibility, the other is an aspect of practical reason without the presupposition of intellectual intuition.

(4) the stronger practical reading (Mou Zongsan): appearances and things-in-themselves are different aspects of one and the same object, and they belong also to the same subject; the one is the aspect of finite understanding constrained by sensibility, and the other is the aspect of infinite intellectual intuition without the constraint of sensibility.

Mou claims that the first three positions are unacceptable, and tries to argue against them in both *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy* and *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*. Afterwards, we see that he defends his own, fourth position. Mou is an outstanding Eastern interpreter of Kant. His reading is, for me, insightful and instructive. But I would argue that Mou's argument against the third position is not conclusive. My argument is that there is no incompatibility between the objective and subjective relations of freedom and the moral law, because, for Kant, the first relation refers to rational being as such and the second to the human being as a special kind of rational being.

The Transformation of Traditional Chinese Philosophy after Mou's Account

In order to make appearances and things-in-themselves *transcendentally distinct*, two conditions, as the above arguments suggest, should be fulfilled: (1) both should have positive content, and (2) both contents should belong to one and the same subject. Mou's interpretation of traditional Confucianism begins with the following argument:

The moral approach cannot proceed "by means of the negation of immoral activity in order to reveal what is moral." When we make a judgement of "this activity in front of me" as immoral, this depends on an inner criterion. And this inner criterion cannot be revealed directly by means of negating the immoral activity in front of me.²⁰

According to Mou, the inner criterion of morality must precede our moral and epistemic judgements, that is, we do not have it by the negation of anything or mediated by anything. Since the criterion of morality is absolutely unmediated, its status as a thing-in-itself is transcendental or, according to Mou, metaphysical, but nevertheless positive in relation to the states of affair it judges. Here we have a transcendental aspect of an inner moral criterion and an empirical aspect of a moral state of affairs. The first aspect belongs to things as they are in themselves, and the second as that as which

²⁰ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 435.

they appear. Both have concrete positive content, so the first condition is fulfilled.

So far as the second condition is concerned, we have to ask if these two aspects belong to the same subject. In *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, Mou proposes a theory of 'three I' instead of a theory of three aspects of the same I:

Because Kant has in mind only one I, and because different aspects come from different approaches to it, there are a lot of complications. If we divide it into 'three Is,' then the thinking subject is only the formal I, the logical I, the cognizing subject and, by means of it, we spring into a transcendent true I as its basis and substratum.... We can regard it as a synthetic a priori proposition only in so far as we sense this true I by means of sensible intuition, and determine it by means of categories. The I, which is determined by such a synthetic a priori proposition, is only an appearing pseudo-I. It is neither the cognizing subject (the logical I), nor the transcendent true I.²¹

The proposed theory of 'three I' leads to the curious conclusion that the aspect of things-in-themselves belongs to the transcendent I, and the aspect of appearance belongs not to the logical I, but to the pseudo appearing I.²² For Mou, there are three distinct subjects inside the mind of a human being. An object corresponding to the cognitive subject is appearance; the same object corresponding to the transcendent subject (e.g., the 'conscience' or 'moral consciousness' of Wang Yangming) is the thing-in-itself. But is it possible for us to confuse appearance and the thing-in-itself inside of the mind of a human being? Could moral consciousness, as an alleged transcendent subject, in fact be empirical, so that the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is eventually empirical? We need some arguments to support the transcendence of moral consciousness. It seems that we could imitate the following argument of the Transcendental Aesthetic: "We can never represent to ourselves the absence of space, though we can quite well think it as empty of objects. It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances" (A24-B39). In the same way we could argue: We could never cognize anything without the representation of consciousness, though we can quite well have the latter without any cognition. But such an imitation is not conclusive, if we consider the famous example of Menzi: "If one suddenly sees a child falling into a well, he will have frightened and sympathetic feelings." According to Mou's interpretation, the first half of the above sentence belongs to the cognitive subject – the aspect of appearance, and the second half to the transcendent I – the aspect of things-in-themselves.²³ But the situation here is quite contrary to the situation of the Transcendental Aesthetic, be-

²¹ Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, 174.

²² Mou Zongsan, *Intellectual Intuition and Chinese Philosophy*, 172.

²³ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 101.

cause we can, on the one hand, imagine a cognition of a moral state of affairs without the accompaniment of moral consciousness, for example, if someone has the cognition of “a child falling into a well” without knowing at the same time that this would cause the death of the child, then his moral consciousness would not occur; on the other hand, we cannot imagine the presence of moral consciousness alone without the accompaniment of some cognitive state. According to the argument of the Transcendental Aesthetic, the conclusion here, though contrainuitive, is not that “the transcendent I is the necessary condition of the cognitive I,” but, on the contrary, “the cognitive I is the necessary condition of the transcendent I,” that is, the cognitive I turns out to be a priori and the transcendent I to be a posteriori. This argument for the transcendence of conscience or moral consciousness would therefore totally fail following the model of the Transcendental Aesthetic. We have to find another argument.

In order to avoid the difficulties of the above argument, we have to review two points again. First of all, we have to reconsider the relation of cognitive faculties (understanding) and moral consciousness in the ontological order rather than the cognitive order; second, as mentioned above, Mou maintains that the inner criterion, namely moral consciousness, is unmediated, but, in the preceding example from Menzi, conscience or moral consciousness seems to be mediated by the cognitive state, and we have to prove the immediacy of conscience or moral consciousness (without any mediation).

Regarding the first point, Mou proposes his notorious theory of the self-denying of conscience or moral consciousness (良知自我坎陷理論). Mou’s main thesis is following: the cognitive I comes from the self-denying of conscience. If this thesis is right, there will be no cognitive states without presupposing conscience. This thesis implies another thesis as its premise, namely that conscience must exist prior to the existence of the cognitive I, because before conscience denies itself, it should exist first. This relates to the second point above. Logically, a proof of the latter thesis is enough to prove the transcendence of conscience. How can conscience be apodictically certain?

The first way to prove such certainty is to reveal directly the transcendence of conscience through the analysis of the “ought” in moral consciousness. For Mou, “the decision of ‘existential ought’ is derived directly from moral consciousness. If we peel off this ought and clear up the chaotic situation, it comes directly from the decision of ‘conscience,’ and not from anywhere at all.”²⁴ Here we have to explicate two different options: (1) In order to prove the transcendence of conscience or moral consciousness, we have first to prove the transcendence of the “ought”; (2) we have to explain how the “ought” can be derived from conscience. The first option will lead to a circular argument, because Mou uses the transcendence of the “ought” to prove the transcendence of conscience, which is, in turn, the ground of

²⁴ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 63.

the transcendence of the “ought.” The second option is not quite clear; for example, for Kant, the “ought” does not come from conscience, but from reason (A548-B576). From the necessity of reason one can also derive the necessity of the “ought.” If one could prove that the necessity of reason comes from conscience, then Mou’s explication would not be the only alternative.

The second way to prove this certainty is to turn the postulate of freedom (Kant) into a manifestation of freedom (Mou). According to Mou’s interpretation, Kant’s concept of freedom is a postulate, which, in comparison with the apodictic certainty of mathematical postulates, has only subjective necessity. The reason is that the latter connects with *a priori* intuition, whereas the former does not. The main issue for Mou is whether there is intellectual intuition.

Following the tradition of Chinese philosophy, we admit that there could be intellectual intuition. Thus, freedom is not a postulate, but a manifestation. Since it is a manifestation, we could maintain that it has objectively necessary certainty. But this certainty is not about theoretical knowledge, because it is not supported by sensible intuition, nor is it about mathematical knowledge, which is supported by pure intuition such as temporal-spatial units.²⁵

The objective necessity of freedom is supported by the manifestation of an intellectual intuition, which, for Mou, is a synonym for conscience. We have an argument for the objective necessity of freedom, but not an argument for the objective necessity of conscience. The only explanation is that conscience reveals its objective necessity itself, because this necessity cannot be mediated by the necessity of any other thing. It appears to me that this last argument is a better one to support the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves.

I suggest we can carry out a thought experiment such as Descartes did in the *Meditations*: “Often in my dreams I am convinced of just such familiar events – that I am sitting by the fire in my dressing-gown – when in fact I am lying undressed in bed.” So, let’s imagine that I have a dream in which I see a child falling into a well, and I have frightened and sympathetic feelings – when, in fact, I am lying in bed. The problem is: Is it certain that my conscience here and now is not a dream, if in some dreams the frightened and sympathetic feelings that I have are more intense than what I might have while awake? Can the moral conscience in a dream reveal by itself its objective necessity? Mou will argue that, even if such a conscience or awareness occurs in a dream, its cognition is still as objectively necessary as mathematical knowledge, for example, that $2+2=4$. Whether one is awake or asleep, the seeing of a child falling into a well will be followed by frightened and sympathetic feelings.

²⁵ Mou Zongsan, *Appearance and the Thing-in-itself*, 60-61.

Following the procedure of Descartes – that “suppose that some malicious, powerful, cunning demon has done all he can to deceive me” – is it possible for a demon to deceive me that “seeing a child falling into a well will be followed by frightened and sympathetic feelings,” but, in fact, seeing a child falling into a well will lead to pleasant feelings? Without introducing such a powerful demon to disapprove the certainty of moral conscience, the theory of Freud or Lacan already suggests such an uncertainty of conscience.

The main concern of Mou can be formulated in the following question: How is the transcendental distinction of appearances and things-in-themselves possible? The preliminary result of my research is the following: (1) Mou’s effort to establish this transcendental distinction is successful. No one will misidentify the latter with the former under his proposal of a two-level ontology. But (2) the aspect of things-in-themselves cannot be totally immune from illusions, even if it will not be misidentified.

Mou’s two-level ontology is a general theoretical model for the interpretation not only of Confucianism, but also of Buddhism and Taoism. Based on this model, each of these three traditions can have both its own aspect of things-in-themselves and an aspect of appearances. My tentative estimation is: the conditions of this two-level ontology are the same for Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, but that its application is too complicated and needs more elaboration.

Part III
Cultures and Philosophies as Ways of Life

Wittgenstein's Conception of Philosophy as a Way of Life

Chrysoula Gitsoulis

The Practice of Philosophy as a Way of Life

The professional discipline of philosophy, now studied at colleges and universities, has been shaped by an intellectual tradition that began approximately 2500 years ago in the Greek culture of the eastern Mediterranean region. For the Greeks, philosophy was a way of life, that is, it was meant to be applied to the most important issues of life, rather than merely studied for its own sake. It is only in the last century or so that philosophy has been consigned to the ivory tower, with practitioners placing far too much emphasis on theory and far too little emphasis on practice.

In the language of the ancient Greeks, 'philosophy' literally meant 'love of wisdom' (derived from 'philos' – lover of; 'sophia' – wisdom). The earliest Greek philosophers – the Pre-Socratics – expressed their 'love of wisdom' by rejecting inherited mythological stories of how the cosmos came into being, which posited super-natural beings (the deities) as the *causes* of earthly events. According to these mythological stories (as portrayed, for example, in the works of Hesiod and Homer), the gods intervened in all aspects of the world, from the weather to the mundane particulars of human life. They reached into the ordinary world order from outside of it, in a way that humans had to accept but could not ultimately understand.¹ The pre-Socratics rejected these stories and searched instead for *rational explanations* of the workings of nature, which appealed to both reason and sensory observation, to make sense of nature and man's place in it. Pre-Socratic philosophy was the starting point of reflective activity in the Western philosophical tradition. That activity was turned not only to explaining man's outer world, but also to the core values and beliefs of his inner world.

All of us have had the experience of accepting beliefs without worrying about their *justification*. As we grow older, we continue to acquire new beliefs. Some beliefs we acquire without investigating their soundness. We hold some beliefs *blindly*, but others we begin to question. We might, for example, wonder about our own understanding of what we believe, our sources of authority, whether what we believe is 'objectively' true, or mere-

¹ Patricia Curd, "Pre-Socratic Philosophy," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/presocratics/>.

ly the outcome of our upbringing. All of this is part of reflective activity. *Reflective activity*, as I will define it here, consists in asking two questions:

- (1) *Why* do I believe P for some proposition P? What are my *reasons* for believing P?
- (2) Are my reasons *good* reasons?

Offering reasons for holding a belief does not, of course, entail that the reasons are *good* reasons and, therefore, that the belief is worth holding. We must examine these reasons to see if they are good reasons, and this is what step (2) involves. Of course, we can't get by in life without taking many beliefs for granted. For example, I believe that I won't fall into an abyss when I exit the door, and that my next meal won't be poisoned. The aim of philosophy is not to get us to question *all* our beliefs, just those that concern *fundamental concepts of our language*. I will refer to the beliefs we hold about the nature of fundamental concepts as *fundamental beliefs*.

We all hold fundamental beliefs that deserve reflection. For instance, the belief that *education* is only good for employment; that the best measure of *happiness* is your annual financial statement; that *God* created the universe; that *justice* is an 'eye for an eye'; that *freedom* is an illusion. By reflecting (as defined above) on these and other fundamental beliefs that we hold, i.e., by asking what *reasons* we have for holding them, and whether our reasons are *good* reasons – we are engaging in *philosophical activity*. Reflective activity that is directed toward examining fundamental beliefs is what philosophical activity consists in; in other words, philosophical activity consists in *producing and evaluating arguments for fundamental beliefs*.

It is the love of reflective activity that draws a person to philosophy. Others wonder: why bother with all this reflection? What's the point? Reflection doesn't pay my bills. Reflection hurts my head. And it takes up a lot of my precious time. So why not just toss the reflective questions aside, and get on with life?

This activity is important because, so long as we are not aware of *why* we hold the fundamental beliefs we do, and whether our reasons are *good* reasons, we are not free beings: we become enslaved by our beliefs because we hold them *blindly*. The world always competes with us in the control of our minds, and even does our thinking for us: to decide (for us) how to dress, what to eat, what music to listen to, what movies to watch, who to vote for, etc. Reflection helps us *win control of our minds and our lives*, by helping us eradicate beliefs that we hold without good reason. As Carl Sagan, the great popular scientist, observed:

Finding the occasional straw of truth awash in a great ocean of confusion and bamboozle requires vigilance, dedication, and courage. But if we don't practice these tough habits of thought, we cannot hope to solve the truly serious problems that face us and we risk be-

coming a nation of suckers, a world of suckers, up for grabs by the next charlatan who saunters along.²

Through critical reflection we come to better understand ourselves and the choices we make. To be a stranger to oneself is one of the worst places to be – this is why Socrates famously said that ‘The unexamined life is not worth living.’ Socrates meant that it is not just living that matters, but living well, and that living a good life is accomplished through critical inquiry. He meant that you should aspire to *know yourself* – know *why* you hold the fundamental beliefs you do, and examine them with a critical eye. This work will require engagement in discourse with the *self*. By doing so, we bring forth *consciousness* or *awareness*, where we move beyond the thoughtless, routine modes of living that most people get stuck in – and quite happily at that – and take steps towards *transforming ourselves* into people that live wisely.

Of course, we can never scrutinize our *selves* in a manner completely free of bias. How we evaluate our selves will be necessarily influenced by our context and the circumstances of our upbringing, among other things. But we can learn to examine and challenge beliefs that seem *natural* to us by looking at them *from a different point of view*. This does not mean that we will necessarily dismiss the beliefs we examine critically. We undoubtedly will continue to hold many of them. But the *manner* in which we hold them will be different: we won't hold them *blindly*. Those of our beliefs that survive critical scrutiny will be more truly *our own*.

Wittgenstein's Philosophical Method as a Way of Life

Throughout his life, Wittgenstein was preoccupied with investigating the limits of language. For Wittgenstein, “The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language.”³ A. Janik and S. Toulmin remark that the ancient dictum ‘know yourself; know your limits’ was, for Wittgenstein, to ‘know the limits of *language*.’⁴ For Wittgenstein, the Socratic injunction ‘know yourself’ could only be followed if one came to understand the scope and limits of his own understanding, and this meant, first and foremost, recognizing the precise scope and limits of language, which is the prime instrument of human understanding.⁵

But what is meant by the ‘limits of language,’ knowledge of which is integral to self-understanding and, for Wittgenstein, to the practice of phi-

² Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), 38-39.

³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe and eds. G. E. M. Anscombe and R. Rhees (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), §119.

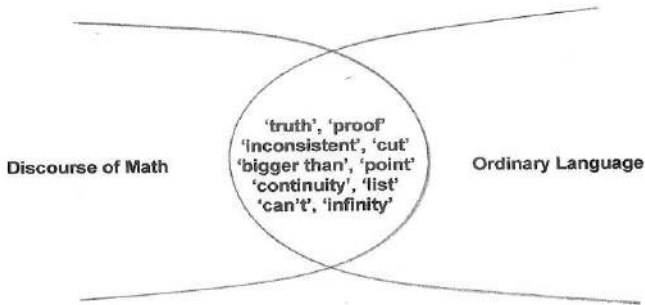
⁴ Allan Janik and Stephen Toulman, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 224.

⁵ Janik and Toulman, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 224.

osophy? By the ‘limits of language’ Wittgenstein meant, first and foremost, the limits of *our* language; that is, the language we use to communicate. Though our language is ‘in order’ as it is (i.e., connected to our ways of acting in the real contexts of our lives), it is also, for Wittgenstein, the *source* of pseudo-philosophical problems. These problems arise in a number of ways, but I take the following to be central:

- (1) Conflating *senses of words* in different ‘regions of language.’
- (2) Conflating *grammatical functions of sentences* in different ‘regions of language.’

(1) involves conflating the senses of words as they are used in different ‘practices,’ or ‘language-games,’ for example, the conflation of the sense of a word as it is used *within* the discourse/conceptual framework of science, mathematics, religion, art, psychology, politics, etc. with how it is used *outside* the discourse (i.e., primarily, with how it is used in ordinary language). It’s quite natural to do this, since much of the terminology in these various fields is borrowed from ordinary language. For example, both within the discourse of mathematics and that of ordinary language we find the words:

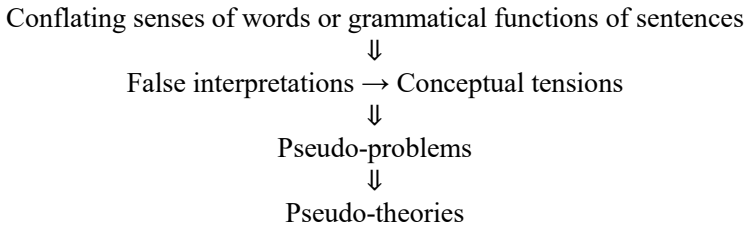


Each of these words has a technical definition (specific to the discourse of mathematics) which differs in important respects from its ordinary language meaning (though resembling it in some ways). For example, in ordinary language, the word ‘infinite’ is sometimes used to denote a quantity greater than every finite quantity (as it is in mathematics), but it is also treated as if it were the designation of a *huge* number. We say, e.g., ‘I have an *infinite* amount of work to do!’ meaning a *huge* amount.

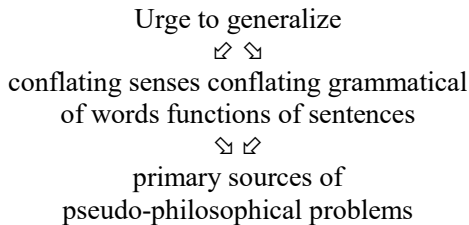
The fact that many expressions in a given discourse (‘language-game’) have a use both *within* and *outside* the discourse in ordinary language, makes it tempting for someone who has not mastered the discourse – and, in some cases, even for someone who has – to *conflate* the meaning of words within that discourse with their meaning in ordinary language. This can lead them to *falsely interpret* statements in the discourse that embeds those words. False interpretations give rise to *conceptual tensions* (‘*This* isn’t how it is!...Yet *this* is how it has to be!’): these are the *symptoms/signs* that

something has been falsely interpreted. The unwary philosopher, seduced by the false interpretation ('*This* is how it has to be!'), is then led 'willy nilly' (to borrow Wittgenstein's phrase) to erect what Wittgenstein took to be pseudo-problems (since they are based on false interpretations): "When we do philosophy we are like savages, primitive people, who hear the expressions of civilized men, put a false interpretation on them, and then draw the queerest conclusions from it."⁶ Philosophers then attempt to resolve these pseudo-problems in the wrong sorts of ways, and in the process construct what Wittgenstein took to be pseudo-theories (thereby erecting a *new* home for the false interpretation).

(2), which can give rise to (1), and vice versa, involves conflating *grammatical functions* of sentences in different 'practices' or 'language-games' – functions as diverse as describing facts, commending, commanding, expressing feelings and emotions, influencing attitudes, etc. *Superficial similarities* in the syntactic form of sentences (e.g., the subject/predicate form) *conceal differences* in the role and function of those sentences. This can seduce the philosopher, once again, into raising pseudo-problems, which he seeks to resolve in the wrong sorts of ways (constructing pseudo-theories). We can summarize the errors involved in (1) and (2) as follows:



This tendency to the misunderstanding of how language works, which Wittgenstein saw as the root cause of philosophical 'sin,' can be traced in turn to the same fundamental urge: the urge to generalize. Pictorially, we have:



Wittgenstein emphasized that the puzzling questions that lead philosophers to construct pseudo-theories are not in need of solution, but of *dissolution*: philosophers need to *draw their attention to the false interpretations*

⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §194.

that have led them to posit pseudo-questions in the first place, and to recognize that the words embedded in the sentence(s) they have falsely interpreted do not mean what they take them to mean, and/or that the sentences do not function the way they take them to function. To see this, philosophers need to examine how the (falsely interpreted) sentences function *within* the discourse/‘language-game’ that embeds them – their natural surrounding/original home⁷ – *where they do their work*, not *outside* the discourse that embeds them, *where they remain idle* (‘*on holiday*’). By doing so, philosophers can untie the knots in the understandings that give rise to the pseudo-problems; once philosophers do this, the problems disappear. Here are some examples to illustrate:

Conflating Senses of Words

Consider the meaning we attach to the notion of ‘existence’ in ordinary language. We think of an object of which we predicate existence (e.g., a chair or table) as *spatio-temporally bounded*. The ordinary use of this term can tempt one to *falsely interpret* statements *within* the discourse of mathematics involving the term, such as ‘The set of natural numbers *exists*,’ ‘The set of real numbers *exists*,’ as claims about *a completed totality, a finished product*. This interpretation of the infinite can then lead to paradoxes, such as those found in set theory, which philosophers and logicians have attempted to resolve by constructing what Wittgenstein took to be *pseudo-theories*, for example, *revising* the language of mathematics so as to remove all references to the infinite, and attempting to prove the consistency of the resulting theory. Wittgenstein noticed that there was not a need for such theories, for once it is recognized that the notion of a ‘completed infinite totality’ makes no sense, the paradoxes that prompted their construction would disappear. This is why he writes:

It is the business of philosophy, not to resolve a contradiction by means of a mathematical or logico-mathematical discovery, but to make it possible for us to get a clear view of the state of mathematics that troubles us: the state of affairs *before* the contradiction is resolved (and this does not mean that one is sidestepping a difficulty).⁸

⁷ The idea of bringing words home suggests mental economy, but also ‘being at home with oneself,’ as Richard Gilmore (*Philosophical Health: Wittgenstein’s Method in Philosophical Investigations*, [Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999], 146, puts it; of restoring a self that has been fractured by language.

⁸ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §125.

*Conflating Grammatical Functions of Sentences*⁹

We say, *within* the discourse of mathematics, that 'Numbers exist.' This sentence bears a resemblance to sentences in ordinary language, like 'Tables exist.' *Conflating* the functions of these sentences can lead the philosopher to *falsely interpret* the sentence 'Numbers exist' to function as a *descriptive statement*, and the term 'number' to refer to an *object*, as 'table' refers to an object. This in turn can lead him to raise puzzling 'problems' – what Wittgenstein took to be *pseudo-problems* (indeed, 'problems' that he thought lacked sense¹⁰) – like: what is the nature of these objects? Where are they located? How can we know anything about them? etc. He then attempts to solve these 'problems' by constructing what Wittgenstein took to be *pseudo-theories*, since they address pseudo-problems.

One such mythological theory, for Wittgenstein, is *Platonism*. According to this theory, numerals are names of numbers, which are *abstract objects*. These objects are immaterial, not located, and causally impotent. A 'third world,' eternal, neither spatial nor temporal, is said to house them. Platonism accounts for our *knowledge* of abstract objects by positing a faculty of *intuition*, which puts us in contact with them. This faculty is supposed to be like sense perception, but also in some mysterious way different from it.

Wittgenstein emphasized that the puzzling questions that led philosophers to create this pseudo-theory are not in need of solution, but of *dissolution*: the philosopher needs to *draw his attention to the false interpretation* that led him to posit pseudo-questions in the first place, and to recognize that numerals do not pick out objects in the world in the way that names of physical objects do. To recognize this, philosophers need to examine the *role and function* of the sentence 'Numbers exist' *within* the discourse of mathematics, *where it does its work*, and not *outside* the discourse, *where it remains idle*. By doing so, philosophers can untie the knots in their understanding that give rise to pseudo-problems. If they do, the problems *disappear*.

Wittgenstein felt that many of the 'problems' of philosophy, like those above, arise from a natural impulse or tendency to misconstrue the way language works, and thus are only pseudo-problems, conceptual muddles, that would fall like a 'house of cards'¹¹ once their real nature is disclosed. It is only by 'clarifying the use of our language,'¹² Wittgenstein felt, that can the

⁹ This example is due to Paul Horwich, *A Deflationary Point of View* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ This is why he says a philosophical problem has the form: "I don't know my way about." (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §123) See also G.E. Moore, "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33, Part III," *Mind* 64 (1955): 1-27, at 27: "[According to Wittgenstein, we are led] by instinct to ask certain questions, though we don't even understand what these questions mean."

¹¹ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §118.

¹² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §115.

philosopher remove particular misunderstandings that generate the pseudo-problems that ‘hold him captive,’¹³ like the fly in the bottle.¹⁴ What we have overlooked and forgotten, for Wittgenstein, is what is often right before us: how language actually functions. It is to this world (for Wittgenstein, both the source of and final court of appeal for philosophical disputes) that Wittgenstein was constantly drawing our attention (either directly or indirectly), by making the insignificant significant, the ordinary extraordinary. It is perhaps in this respect more than any other – in recognizing the elementary sources of confusion that lie at the root of many of our seemingly most ‘profound’ philosophical problems – that his work was revolutionary. Therein, I think, lies his most valuable contribution to philosophy.

¹³ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §115.

¹⁴ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §115.

Philosophy and the Limits of Language: Living Myth as a Way of Life

Troy R. Mack

Introduction

In the search for and to better articulate human freedom, various philosophers have found that language itself must become the object of scholarly focus. A problem immediately arises: how can language, a phenomenon which inherently *binds*, relate to and express that which is inherently *liberation*? At the very least, freedom seems to implicate the ever-forward horizons of possibility, the perpetual varieties of “not yet.” Language seems bound to the immediate and perhaps, more precisely, to that which came before, already has been, and is now once was.

This temporality is not just intrinsic to the phenomena themselves; it also provokes a methodological problem, one which philosophy can and should engage: how can freedom *as a concept*, which in and of itself *means* “open-endedness,” be rendered into finite language that makes sense? Such speculation demands further inquiry:

What is it that leads or constrains language to collect just *these* ideas into a single whole and denote them by a word? What causes it to select, from the ever-flowing, ever-uniform stream of impressions which strike our senses or arise from the autonomous processes of the mind, certain pre-eminent forms, to dwell on them and endow them with a particular “significance”?¹

The philosophical question of human freedom, whether approached as an issue of ontology, politics, or aesthetics, can lead to philosophy’s methodological problem of language. Fortunately, this methodological obstacle is not insurmountable, but requires a reexamination of entrenched philosophical commitments within the Western tradition. Confronted by the initial limitations of language as a modality of world disclosure and self-disclosure, the pursuit of human freedom in the concrete necessarily leads philosophy to push beyond “mere” language, reengaging its theoretical relationships to another mode of world disclosure and self-disclosure: myth. The consideration of myth as a category ripe for philosophical reclamation is richly justified through observation of the relationships, similarities, and differences shared between language and myth, both constitutive elements of whatever might be rightly considered essentially human:

¹ Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1953), 25.

The “making” of mythology by creative bards is only a metamorphosis of world-old and universal ideas. In the finished works of Homer and Hesiod we may see only what looks like free invention for the sake of the story, but in the poetry of ruder tribes the popular, religious origin of myth is still clearly apparent despite the formative influence of a poetic structure.²

This paper presents a portion of a larger argument, which advances the claim that a thorough reengagement of the category of myth would greatly increase the ability of philosophy to more comprehensively analyze and compellingly articulate the social phenomena present within human conflict and violence. For now, this paper will first explore Cassirer’s framing of the interconnectedness and interpenetration of language and myth, and then move on to address the relationship shared between language and myth as noted by Schelling, Marx, and Nietzsche in their diverse and respective ontological, political, and aesthetic projects.

Language and Myth as Modes of Communication

Language and myth seem to share a variety of subtle, yet extraordinarily significant traits. In some ways, one seems to be a “kind” of the other (the subordination dependent on the moment of analysis), yet it might be more precise to consider language and myth as radically different modes of the same communicative, human impulse:

Descartes said that theoretical science remains the same in its essence no matter what object it deals with – just as the sun’s light is the same no matter what wealth and variety of things it may illuminate. The same may be said of any symbolic form, of language, art, or myth, in that each of these is a particular way of seeing, and carries within itself its particular and proper source of light.³

This fluid category of “symbolic form” seems to frame the otherwise evasive problem of apprehending the relationship(s) between language and myth. Both do seem to disclose information; yet how? Is “information” also “knowledge”? Is either concept robust enough to aid in identifying and codifying phenomena that potentially serve as their medium?

These questions inevitably turn language and myth towards a consideration of thought itself. Here, thought is understood to be both the recipient and processor of symbols, through which symbolic forms are discovered, comprehended, and created:

² Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1993), 198.

³ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 11.

Every mode of thought is bestowed on us, like a gift, with some new principle of symbolic expression. It has a logical development, which is simply the exploitation of all the uses to which that symbolism lends itself; and when these uses are exhausted, the mental activity in question has found its limit. Either it serves its purpose and becomes truistic, like our orientation in "Euclidean space" or our appreciation of objects and their accidents (on the pattern of language-structure, significantly called "logic"); or it is superseded by some more powerful symbolic mode which opens new avenues of thought.⁴

Considered as "modes of thought," language and myth share a common utility in the human disclosure and self-disclosure with the world, yet are not reducible to each other. From this perspective, neither is a "kind" of the other, nor an extension of one phenomenon into areas otherwise impenetrable to its kind. Myth and language have their own conceptual integrity; they "are" to themselves, no matter the commonality of their communicative tasks: "For now we see in language, art, and mythology so many archetypal phenomena of human mentality which can be indicated as such, but are not capable of any further 'explanation' in terms of something else."⁵

Both these "modes of thought" can therefore be put to use within philosophical investigation. In fact, mythology itself might be necessary to further such inquiry when language itself cannot further facilitate disclosure. Conversely, language and myth might be the only means of apprehending even the broadest features of phenomena so ephemeral that philosophy itself cannot engage:

This insight into the determining and discriminating function, which myth as well as language performs in the mental constructions of our world of "things," seems to be all that a "philosophy of symbolic forms" can teach us. Philosophy as such can go no further; it cannot presume to present to us, *in concreto*, the great process of emergence, and to distinguish its phases for us. But if pure philosophy is necessarily restricted to a general, theoretical picture of such an evolution, it may be that philology and comparative mythology can fill in the outline and draw with firm, clear strokes what philosophical speculation could only suggestively sketch.⁶

Both language and myth are therefore vehicles for philosophical inquiry (which creates and/or discovers knowledge), as well as purveyors of a knowledge inaccessible directly, yet vitally rich, for philosophy itself. As such, language and myth do not and need not be understood to comport themselves to philosophical categories: neither are language, nor myth, themselves "logical," "true," or "truths" (in their categorical generality).

⁴ Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 201.

⁵ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 12.

⁶ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 15.

Both do, however, retain an internal integrity, that is, the human capacity of and towards language and myth is not reducible to human imagination or acts of mere human creativity:

Such ideas, no matter how manifold, how varied, how heterogeneous they may appear at first sight, have their own inner lawfulness; they do not arise from a boundless caprice of the imagination, but move in definite avenues of feeling and creative thought. This intrinsic law is what mythology seeks to establish.⁷

If structures exist for and within language and myth, ensuring the conceptual integrity of these distinct phenomena, what is the nature of the difference that delineates the communications of language from those of myth? The answer seems to arise via consideration of discursive and non-discursive phenomena. The “inner lawfulness” of language structures its encounter with information in a particular way, somehow relating information to knowledge via a discursive format. If such a linear discursive avenue is not available, language seemingly cannot facilitate its communicative task. Alternatively, myth operates in the very realms which seem inaccessible to language; myth seems to “take in,” towards thought, those non-discursive encounters that elude its linguistic counterpart:

The origin of myth is dynamic, but its purpose is philosophical. It is the primitive phase of metaphysical thought, the first embodiment of *general ideas*. It can do no more than initiate and present them; for it is a non-discursive symbolism, it does not lend itself to analytic and genuinely abstractive techniques. The highest development of which myth is capable is the exhibition of human life and cosmic order that epic poetry reveals. We cannot abstract and manipulate its concepts any further *within the mythic mode*. When this mode is exhausted, natural religion is superseded by a discursive and more literal form of thought, namely philosophy.⁸

It is that mythology provides for language the content of its future conversations. Myth seems to encounter information in its immediacy and totality, leaving for language further elucidation of detail and, most importantly, significance. For myth, the encounter itself *is* significant; the moment *signifies itself and its witnesses*:

For in this mode, thought does not dispose freely over the data of intuition, in order to relate and compare them to each other, but is captivated and enthralled by the intuition that suddenly confronts it. It

⁷ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 15.

⁸ Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 201.

comes to rest in the immediate experience; the sensible present is so great that everything else dwindles before it.⁹

There is a depth of intimacy communicated herein. In taking in the totality, not only is the entirety of the phenomena experienced by the observer, but *the observer is totally disclosed to the phenomena, as well:*

Here thought does not confront its data in an attitude of free contemplation, seeking to understand their structure and their systematic connections, analyzing them according to their parts and functions, but is simply captivated by a total impression. Such thinking does not develop the given content of experience; it does not reach backward or forward from the vantage point to find “causes” or “effects,” but rests content with taking in the sheer existent.¹⁰

In all forms of communication, there is interplay of giving-and-taking that is semiotic exchange. Language regulates, regiments, and segments such exchange, serving as a mediator in the disclosure of participants one to the other. Language provides, and is itself, the delineation of boundaries, facilitating encounter without the immersion of one into another. Yet, it appears myth is no such mediator; in myth, the semiotic exchange is total and for all parties. As a true totality, myth’s communication is also immersive:

This focusing of all forces on a single point is the prerequisite for all mythical thinking and mythical formulation. When, on the one hand, the entire self is given up to a single impression, is “possessed” by it and, on the other hand, there is the utmost tension between the subject and its object, the outer world; when external reality is not merely viewed and contemplated, but overcomes a man in sheer immediacy, with emotions of fear and hope, terror or wish fulfillment: then the spark jumps somehow across, the tension finds release, as the subjective excitement becomes objectified, and confronts the mind as a god or a daemon.¹¹

The interplay and interdependency shared by these two modes of communication is extraordinary. In the totality of myth, there is no detailed specificity; such is the discursive task of language. The totality of myth’s disclosure could therefore be simultaneously *cosmically significant* and nonetheless *utterly nonsensical*, if it were not for language’s capacity for further analysis and elucidation: “the spiritual depth and power of language is strikingly evinced in the fact that it is speech itself which prepares the way for that last step whereby it is itself transcended.”¹² Myth might be able

⁹ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 32.

¹⁰ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 57.

¹¹ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 33.

¹² Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 74.

to communicate meaning, but the discursive property of language seems to enable sense, or at least to “make sense” of the possibilities inherent in relating one mythological communication and/or experience to another:

Ideas first adumbrated in the fantastic form become real intellectual property only when discursive language rises to their expression...

The first inquiry into the literal truth of a myth marks the change from poetic to discursive thinking. As soon as interest in factual values awakes, the mythic mode of world-envisagement is on the wane.¹³

The power of language is therefore vast, yet it is ultimately understood to be paradoxically contingent with, and a precursor to, mythological communication which “already was” and is still “not yet.” Language’s interdependent relationship with myth is found at this point, wherein the grand expanse that myth communicates, and communicates with, is understood to necessarily be *without language*; it is a deafening quiet:

Thus all mysticism is directed to a world beyond language, a world of silence. As Meister Eckhardt has written, God is “the simple ground, the still desert, the simple silence” (“der einveltige grunt, die stille wueste, die einveltic stille”); for “that is his nature, that he is one nature.”¹⁴

Nonetheless, it is only through this mythic encounter with raw, unmediated reality (perhaps, realities) that language has anything at all to “talk about”; from silence flows sound and thought:

That is why myth is the indispensable forerunner of metaphysics; and metaphysics is the literal formulation of basic abstractions, on which our comprehension of sober facts is based....Only language has the power to effect such an analysis of experience, such a rationalization of knowledge. But it is only where experience is already presented – through some other formative medium, some vehicle of apprehension and memory – that the canons of literal thought have any application. We must have ideas before we can make literal analyses of them; and really new ideas have their own modes of appearance in the unpredictable creative mind.¹⁵

The creations of the mind, expressed through and with language (even if only in thought), perpetuate this cycle, preparing once again to seek new material with and within which to better actualize, encounter, and ultimately understand themselves “some day when the vision is totally rationalized, the

¹³ Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 202.

¹⁴ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 74.

¹⁵ Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 202.

ideas exploited and exhausted, there will be another vision, a new mythology.”¹⁶ This mythical move again pushes beyond the discursive into the non-discursive, re-entering the realm of the gods and expanding the mythological world:

Here, again, the mythmaking mind exhibits a sort of consciousness of the relationship between its product and the phenomenon of language, though characteristically it can express this relationship not in abstract logical terms, but only in images. It transforms the spiritual dawn which takes place with the advent of language into objective fact, and presents it as a cosmogonic process.¹⁷

Such a “cosmogonic process” is itself the origin of and resource for language; it is from this event that language arises. It is also the very possibility of philosophical inquiry, whether as formally instituted or broadly incarnated within human life. As language arises from myth’s “cosmogonic process,” language immediately reflects back on itself in order to differentiate the immense totality of mythic communication into component structures that can be understood. The totality is potentially preserved, but only in and through its fracture into interrelated parts. Thus, the birth of language through the fracturing of myth’s disclosure promised both the reward of comprehension and the risk of occlusion; the very processes by which the myth is rendered into sense also creates the possibility of missing or misunderstanding the relationality of its constituent parts:

The logical form of conception, from the standpoint of theoretical knowledge, is nothing but a preparation for the logical form of judgment; all judgment, however, aims at overcoming the illusion of singularity which adheres to every particular content of consciousness....The will to this totality is the vivifying principle of our theoretical and empirical conception. This principle, therefore is necessarily “discursive”; that is to say, it starts with a particular case, but instead of dwelling upon it, and resting content in sheer contemplation of the particular, it lets the mind merely start from this instance to run the whole gamut of Being in the special directions determined by the empirical concept. By this process of running through a realm of experience, i.e., of discursive thinking, the particular receives its fixed intellectual “meaning” and definite character.¹⁸

From observing the interpenetration of language and myth, a concept of human freedom is made available, one that grounds itself in overcoming the parsing inherent in language’s pursuit of “sense,” in favor of the broader vistas implicated in myth’s postulated “truth.” This paper now moves to

¹⁶ Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 202.

¹⁷ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 81.

¹⁸ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 26.

explore how that concept of freedom informed at least one philosophical context within the Western traditions. The 19th century German experience(s) of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars, all of which informed the works of Schelling, Marx, and Nietzsche, provide examples of how freedom might be explored through categories of myth.

Myth as a Philosophical Category within 19th Century German Philosophy

Philosophers within the German states (and eventual State) in the 19th century, observing aspects of human existence throughout the period which they felt were left unconvincingly addressed or further problematized by Enlightenment philosophy (in either its empirical or Kantian modes), re-evaluated their inherited philosophical traditions in light of the crises of their times. According to Raymond Geuss, “one of the most important political issues in central Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century is what attitude to take toward the ideals of the French Revolution and toward the fact of Napoleon.”¹⁹ Though at first seemingly political, the discussion as it relates to philosophy rapidly moves beyond the particularities of law and policy to fundamental questions of those aforementioned “ideals” in and of themselves, as well as the methodologies employed to arrive at, justify, and sustain them: the conversation necessitated by politics necessarily implicates a reconsideration of those philosophical traditions enabling the articulation of such a reality at all. The political problem was seen as symptomatic of a greater malady within the body of philosophic knowledge: the specific issue in question therefore arguably required (at least for these philosophers) a systematic and totalizing response.

More specifically, the Platonic bifurcation of knowledge into Logos and Mythos (and the subsequent privileging of the former, at the expense of the latter) became a point of contention for several German philosophers, who challenged the Platonic understanding as a false dichotomy exclusive of vast aspects of whatever it is that humanity experiences in its existence:

But when we reduce it to its philosophical lowest terms, this attitude turns out to be simply the logical result of that naïve realism which regards the reality of objects as something directly and unequivocally given, literally something tangible – as Plato says. If reality is conceived in this manner, then of course everything which has not this solid sort of reality dissolves into mere fraud and illusion.²⁰

¹⁹ Raymond Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 35.

²⁰ Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 6.

More than a point of departure for potential *philosophical content*, the pursuit of myth by German philosophers in the 19th century constituted a revolution in *philosophical methodology*, in that it both sought in and attributed to mythological resources *explicit ontological, political, and aesthetic categories*. This was a break from the traditional grounding of philosophy within the Platonic trajectory of Logos, as especially understood from the *Protagoras* and the *Republic*. The Platonic approach seemed to exclude mythic *modalities* that these German philosophers suspected could otherwise inform new approaches for various philosophical subfields:

Since our view is so independent of philosophy it also cannot be contradicted because it does not accord with some sort of philosophical view (even if it were the almost universally valid one), and if no present and available philosophy is able to deal with this phenomenon, then it is not the once present and unmistakably known phenomenon that would have to let itself be brought back to the measure of some given philosophy, but rather conversely the factually grounded and substantiated view, whose unfailing effect on individual philosophical sciences we have shown, can claim to possess the power also to expand *philosophy* and *the philosophical consciousness itself* or to determine them to an expansion beyond their current limits.²¹

The move towards myth received its motivating force, at least in one way, from the desire of German philosophers to move onward from the Enlightenment's pursuit of the general "human" towards the particularly "German." In their context of the development of whatever each respective philosopher attributed to the "German," all their various projects shared an understanding that "German-ness" and its ideals must necessarily be *over and against* other possibilities and/or particularities, precisely because of the claim to objective and universally valid ideals espoused by the French Revolution and its Napoleonic vanguard:

Pluralistic arguments like those one finds in Herder come to be deployed as forms of resistance to the French: local German legal codes are not inferior to the Code Napoleon, although by Enlightenment standards they may seem less "rational"...

Eventually the claims that German institutions and ways of doing things are as good as French, just different, get turned into claims of national superiority. One important step in this long process is a series of lectures the philosopher Fichte gave in French-occupied Berlin in 1807, the *Reden an die deutsche Nation*. Given the political situation Fichte had to express himself with some circumspection, but the basic point is unmistakable: the German "nation" is superior to the French on the grounds of its greater "primordiality" (Ur-

²¹ F. W. J. Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, trans. Mason Richey and Markus Zisselsberger (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), 175.

sprunglichkeit) and this “primordially” is a more or less fixed trait of the national character which finds its various expressions in customs, ways of feeling and thinking, attitudes, and so on.²²

This notion of “primordially” would resonate with claims by Fichte’s contemporaries and future colleagues in philosophy throughout the 19th century. Their claims included (1) that there existed within a quantifiable population qualities that are properly identified as “German,” (2) that those qualities were properly defined and were indivisible from the “German” population, and (3) that those qualities were rooted in a past that existed and yet was thoroughly knowable only to those who shared in its antiquity, present situation, and future expansion. In this way, the German philosophers’ individuated and collective experience via notions of *Kultur*, *Bildung*, and *Geist*²³ (specific usage dependent on the philosopher in question) denotes and connotes an understanding of time and its encounter by and with the German people that extrapolates beyond the constraints of historical fact, into the purview of mythological truth:

The whole society becomes visible to itself as an imperishable living unit....Social duties continue the lesson of the festival into normal, everyday existence, and the individual is validated still. Conversely, indifference, revolt – or exile – break the vitalizing connectives. From the standpoint of the social unit, the broken-off individual is simply nothing – waste. Whereas the man or woman who can honestly say that he or she has lived the role – whether that of priest, harlot, queen, or slave – *is* something in the full sense of the verb *to be*.²⁴

While claims to universal truth were not abandoned, they were fundamentally complicated by the Germans’ insistence on context and subjectivity, as a complement to and problem for universality. The mythological world was real, in a profound way, to its particular inhabitants; it also *belonged to them*, in ways related to, yet distinct from, language:

We have admitted that it could be treated poetically and even expanded, but it thereby acts like language, which can be used and expanded with the greatest freedom, and, within certain limits, constantly enriched anew with new inventions, but the basis is something into which human invention will have not reached, which is not made by *humans*.²⁵

²² Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History*, 35.

²³ Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History*, 31.

²⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1949), 384.

²⁵ Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 154.

Myth permitted the continuation of philosophic conversation into general categories of human existence, while still allowing, even empowering, exploration into those particularities critical to its interlocutors' interests. In an attempt to overcome the crushing egalitarianism of Enlightenment (and especially French) thinking, German philosophers found that myth provided both *content* and *method* for a discourse that could simultaneously affirm universal relevance, while asserting definite and dramatic difference:

I still hate Rousseau in the French Revolution: it is the world-historical expression of this duality of idealist and rabble. The bloody farce which became an aspect of the Revolution, its "immorality," are of little concern to me: what I hate is its Rousseauan *morality* – the so-called "truths" of the Revolution through which it still works and attracts everything shallow and mediocre.²⁶

It was the failure of Enlightenment thinking (especially in the French mode) that inhibited the emancipatory potential of its various Revolutions: here, the transformation of the world cannot be legislated, but must be made manifest through the experience of a radical new *kind* of freedom, with philosophy informing and being informed by this mythic emergence.

This insistence on freedom, simultaneously (1) the freedom for actualization and recognition of potential beyond all rivals and (2) the freedom from exploitation and subordination by all competitors, was both discovered in and expressed by the philosophical systems of the period, deploying myth to challenge, justify, and expand the validity of such claims. It is in discussions of freedom that the diversities informed by mythology reconcile into universal Ideas, where "only that which is the object of freedom is called [an] idea."²⁷ This movement via mythological language and categories, from the universal, to the particular, and returning again to the universal in the reality of an Idea, characterized the period and its participants: philosophy was recast as a dynamic process of knowing, in which the very process itself was the substance and subject of knowledge: "Hegelianism acknowledges the superficial plurality of historically specific folkways, forms of art, sociability, religion, and so on, but sees them all as having an underlying unity, as being mere forms of a historically developing structure, *Geist*, whose internal structure Hegel's philosophy articulates."²⁸

The characterization of philosophy not as a specific apprehension of distinct categories of knowledge, but rather as the very *possibility*, *process*, and (most provocatively) *purpose* of apprehending knowledge at all cleared new potential ground for philosophy, while necessitating new methodological approaches to classic questions, of which the interplay of philosophy

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (London: Penguin Books, 1982), 553.

²⁷ Fragment, author unknown (often attributed to Schelling, less frequently to Hegel or Holderlin), "The Oldest System-Program of German Idealism."

²⁸ Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History*, 37.

and mythology was one. While Hegel's approach was perhaps the most influential of these new philosophies (both in his own time and since), questions regarding the nature and role of myth are taken up by Schelling, Marx, and Nietzsche. Brief consideration of these figures seems appropriate at this point, to address how they might concur with the relationship between language and myth claimed above, or how their own works problematize such conceptualization.

Language and Myth in Schelling, Marx, and Nietzsche

For Schelling, the relationship between language and mythology is clear: "One is almost tempted to say: language itself is only faded mythology; what mythology still preserves in living and concrete differences is preserved in language only in abstract and formal differences."²⁹ Elsewhere, Schelling affirms the reverse: "The same would hold true if one maintained that mythology is merely a *higher* language."³⁰

Schelling insists that neither language nor mythology can be "inventions"; they are conditions of human existence, irreducible aspects of humanity, and a way into the necessary question, How did people emerge into being?³¹

Because not only no philosophical consciousness, but rather also no human consciousness at all, is thinkable without language, the ground of language could not be laid consciously; and yet, the deeper we inquire into language, the more definitely it becomes known that its depths exceed by far that of the most conscious product.³²

In this way, language and mythology are not only intrinsic to humanity, but also natural and organic. Though similar to mythology, "language is not that accidental. There is a higher necessity in the fact that sound and voice must be the organ that expresses the inner thoughts and movements of the soul."³³

Schelling finds that even the diversification of peoples only further supports his relation of language and mythology, at which point he expands into a discussion on human consciousness, "for a confusion of language cannot be conceived of without an *internal* process, without a tremoring of *consciousness itself*."³⁴ From his exposition of the Tower of Babel story in *Genesis*, Schelling argues that both language and mythology serve as identifiers of particular peoples and, perhaps most importantly, both serve as the

²⁹ Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 40.

³⁰ F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, ed. and trans. Douglas W. Stott (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 47.

³¹ Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 69.

³² *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 40.

³³ Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, 102.

³⁴ Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 75.

very mediums through which philosophical investigation can be known and conducted. If mythology is the more profound of the two, the difference does not undo their mutual relationship. Nor does the potential illogic of mythology overly distress Schelling: logical narrative is not necessary within Schelling (or, more precisely, the later Schelling) in order to effect the communication of truth.

Like language, "...mythology is a true totality, something complete, something held in certain limits, a world for itself."³⁵ For of language:

Each language is a universe if taken by itself, and is absolutely separate from the others – which nonetheless are *essentially* one, not merely according to the expression of reason, but also as regards the elements that, except for a few nuances, are similar in all languages. That is, this external body is itself soul and body. The vowels are, we might say, the immediate breath of the spirit, the forming form (the affirmative). The consonants are the body of language or the formed form (that which is affirmed).³⁶

Schelling's final conclusion affirms the relationship of language and mythology through their necessity to humanity's philosophical capacity:

Ultimately, what is dead, stagnant, is opposed to philosophy. But mythology is something essentially mobile and indeed is something essentially mobile of itself according to an immanent law, and it is the *highest* human consciousness that lives in it and that, by overcoming the contradiction itself, in which it is entangled, proves itself to be true, as *real* [*reell*], as necessary.

You see, the expression Philosophy of Mythology is entirely proper and understood just like the ones similar: Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Nature.³⁷

The interplay between language and mythology receives much less explicit treatment in Marx. The origin of human communication, whether in its linguistic or mythic modes, is simply not as much an issue as the purposes towards which human communication is set. That humanity can communicate, and be communicated with, establishes its ultimate social reality; the utter absence of any potency beyond human artifice and freedom seemingly reduces the cosmogonic possibilities found in other philosophers. The mythological might yet exist, but it is subordinated to Marx's absolute anthropocentrism and materialism: "Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract*

³⁵ *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 154.

³⁶ Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, 101.

³⁷ Schelling, *Historical-critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, 155.

thinking, wants [*sensuous*] *contemplation*; but he does not conceive sensuousness as *practical*, human-sensuous activity.”³⁸

However, if the totality of Marx’s analysis itself and his ultimate conclusions are considered, the potential for juxtaposing language and myth is vast. The mythological is encountered here, in intensely *meaningful*, *significant*, and *transformative ways*, through the non-discursive communications of revolutionary violence. The turn to the mythic mode of communication is necessitated by Marx’s foundational analytic of alienation. The very notion of Marx’s philosophical anthropology, which rests on the complete alienation of the proletariat, understands the linguistic resources of the working class to be utterly annihilated by the silencing exploitation of capital. In their alienation, the working class cannot even articulate their own desperate state, neither to others nor even to themselves. Through this lack of language, the proletarian worker is alienated from his labor, his fellow proletarian, and even himself. The revolution comes in many ways as an eschatological revelation, a cataclysmic rupture of history, and any communication from or of the revolution must thereby take place in the mythic mode:

The only *practically* possible emancipation of Germany is the emancipation based on the unique theory which holds that man is the supreme being for man. In Germany emancipation from the Middle Ages is possible only as the simultaneous emancipation from the partial victories over the Middle Ages. In Germany no form of bondage can be broken unless every form of bondage is broken. Germany, enamored of fundamentals, can have nothing less than a fundamental revolution. The emancipation of Germany is the emancipation of man. The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart is the proletariat. Philosophy cannot be actualized without the abolition [Aufhebung] of the proletariat; the proletariat cannot be abolished without the actualization of philosophy.³⁹

Consequently, this mythic communication is also a transformation. The revolution for Marx is not and cannot be about the formulation or restoration of just systems out of contemporary human society. That resource is found to be irredeemably broken. The revolution is not a transformation of systems, but a transfiguration of humanity itself, by itself and for itself. The performative violence that is the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism is itself mythic discourse, written and read in the flesh:

It is readily understandable in this light why Marx dismissed the slogan of “fair distribution” as “obsolete verbal rubbish,” and violently

³⁸ Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach, The German Ideology, including Theses on Feuerbach and the Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998), 570.

³⁹ Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel’s “Philosophy of Right”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 142.

rejected all suggestion that the struggle raging in the world had something to do with distributive justice....The issue for Marx was not justice by man's loss of himself under enslavement to an *un-menschliche Macht*, and his recovery of himself by the total vanquishment of this force. The ending of the worker's material impoverishment was incidental to the real goal – the ending of his dehumanization.⁴⁰

The mythic communication of societal revolution is concurrently and necessarily the long-awaited restoration of the individual back into a now seamless society of equals, and “consequently, a new analogy has been discovered between religion and the revolutionary Socialism, which aims at apprenticeship, preparation, and even reconstruction of the individual, – a gigantic task.”⁴¹ The appropriate response as understood by Marx to this non-discursive language was as singular as it was visceral:

This is the special logic (or “psycho-logic”) of mythic thinking as it relates to practical action. The answer to the question as to what should be done is given in the mythic vision itself, and can be summed up in a single word: “Participate!” In so far as the mythic thinker gives any recognition at all to the problem of conduct, he answers immediately, emphatically and categorically in this vein.⁴²

The problematic limits of language, which give way to mythological encounter, are therefore found in Marx to be no less or more present than in other philosophical and religious systems: “But Bergson has taught us that it is not only religion which occupies the profounder region of our mental life; revolutionary myths have their place there equally with religion.”⁴³

Nietzsche's balance of language and myth is perhaps the most complicated. There are points where Nietzsche seems to despise grammar and finds the Apollonian risks inherent in discursive propositionalism to unhelpfully threaten the communication of any substantial truth. The aesthetic nature of the will to power's call for the revaluation of values is inherently non-discursive; it is anything *except discursive*. The turn to myth is not a choice, but a necessity for the Overman, in order to actualize its will and enact the process of mythification that is the revaluation of values. This is the aesthetic act of creating the world in, and for, the Overman's own image, in response to and in defiance of the death of God. Myth is not merely a superior means of disclosure and self-disclosure; for the Overman access-

⁴⁰ Robert Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 223.

⁴¹ Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1925), 35.

⁴² Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, 229.

⁴³ Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, 35.

ing, operating in, and seeking the Dionysian, it is the only means of real communication:

The *tragic myth* is to be understood only as a symbolization of Dionysian wisdom through Apollonian artifices. The myth leads the world of phenomena to its limits where it denies itself and seeks to flee back again into the womb of the true and only reality, where it then seems to commence its metaphysical swansong, like Isolde...⁴⁴

The discursive trajectories characterized by and inherent in the Apollonian simply cannot vitalize the world which the human, as creator-artist, must populate. It is not in the nature of the Apollonian impulse, which calcifies, to then *push beyond*; the Apollonian may be the *actual*, but it is never the *authentic*:

Music and tragic myth are equally expressions of the Dionysian capacity of a people, and they are inseparable. Both derive from a sphere of art that lies beyond the Apollonian.... Thus the Dionysian is seen to be, compared to the Apollonian, the eternal and original artistic power that first calls the whole world of phenomena into existence – and it is only in the midst of this world that a new transfiguring illusion becomes necessary in order to keep the animated world of individuation alive.⁴⁵

Nietzsche's complicated relationship with Wagner informed his stance on language and myth. Nietzsche claimed it was in Wagner's art, "to restore to myth its manliness, and to take the spell from music and bring it back to speech."⁴⁶ The move towards a greater clarification of his analytic of the will to power, along with the removal of anthropocentric elements from his understanding of myth, all influenced Nietzsche's extended experience of Wagner's work: It is commonly believed that some particular thought lies at the bottom of a myth, but according to Nietzsche this is an error. A myth "is itself a mode of thinking; it communicates an idea [*Vorstellung*] of the world, but as a succession of events, actions, and sufferings." The *Ring of the Nibelungen*, for example, constitutes "a tremendous system of thought without the conceptual form of thought" – a system whose appeal is not to the "theoretical man" but to "the folk."⁴⁷

That Wagner had succeeded in facilitating thought among the Volk was precisely Nietzsche's hope for his own work: through the mythological, the aesthetic might be able to force calcified philosophy to get out of its

⁴⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 131.

⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, 143.

⁴⁶ Allan Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press, 1987), 80.

⁴⁷ Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 80.

own way and permit a greater encounter with world, an encounter that could provoke a response to the death of God through the will to power: Wagner had “forced language back into a primordial state in which it hardly yet thinks in concepts and in which it is itself still poetry, image, and feeling.” In doing so, he had transported us into a realm that Nietzsche views as far more vivid and immediate, and in consequence far more authentic, than the “non-mythical sphere” – the sphere of concepts and theories – that we customarily inhabit.⁴⁸

Language consistently entraps for Nietzsche; it is both the eternal recurrence that threatens the ongoing work of revaluing values, as well as the necessary medium through which the work must be conducted. Language is less than the mythological and therefore a remnant of dead gods, “‘Reason’ in language – oh, what an old deceptive female she is! I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar.”⁴⁹ That language is, by definition, commonly accessible, is a root of its inferiority. The noble human ought to strive to define the world on his or her own terms, creating and expanding their own mythology by incorporating all into their own aesthetic, rather than condescending to the values and vernacular of others: “The values of a human being betray something of the *structure* of his soul and where it finds its conditions of life, its true need.”⁵⁰ As a structure of value, even language must be revalued and transformed in the Overman’s image, and therefore subjected to the process of mythification:

In this vein, the truth of language is *in* language, not outside it. Language is a prison from which escape is utterly impossible....For a language is nothing other than a system of interpretation or (what amounts to the same thing) a set of illusions; and just as Nietzsche sees interpretation and illusion as aesthetically self-justified, so also does he see language itself.⁵¹

This is why Nietzsche finds the mythological mode of communication superior to the common language: it is superior because it proceeds from and further reinforces the mythological superiority of the speaker. Recourse to common parlance would be just that: common, “with language the speaker immediately vulgarizes himself.”⁵²

Nietzsche’s observation now provides this paper an incentive to conclude its discussion. In all the above figures, language and myth are (1) intimately related and yet properly identified as distinct phenomena, and are (2) differentiated by at least their respective and mutually exclusive discursive and non-discursive trajectories, which both enrich and express thought.

⁴⁸ McGill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 80.

⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 483.

⁵⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 407.

⁵¹ McGill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 95.

⁵² Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 531.

As seen in Schelling, Marx, and Nietzsche, the sheer variety of trajectories through which the category of myth might yet be deployed warrants greater scholarly attention and discourse.

Philosophy as a Faith and a Way of Life

S. R. Bhatt

The respective roles of reason and faith in the sphere of religion are age-old issues and much debated in the theology and philosophy of religion of both the East and West. The problems involved are vexed and sensitive. Many varying approaches have been observed in the history of thought, and no definite or final conclusions have been reached. Both extreme and moderate views are available, and cogent arguments have been proffered to substantiate each viewpoint. Some thinkers, taking exclusivist and extremist positions, reject the role of either reason or faith in the sphere of religion, resulting in dogmatism or skepticism, respectively.

The main argument of the faith protagonists, who oust reason from the sphere of religion, is that reason can operate only in the empirical realm; since religion is trans-empirical, religious truths and deliverances are not available to reason and are beyond its capacities. Not only is reason limited to the empirical sphere, but it also admits of no finality and conclusiveness. It results in antinomies and contradictions. Therefore, they insist on casting out reason from the arena of religion. They not only argue for the inability of reason to apprehend religious truths, but also fear that any operation of reason may result in sacrilege and therefore cause damage to religiosity. For them, faith alone has an exclusive claim in religion. Religious truths are to be directly experienced as revelations, or known through scriptures, or learned from reliable people. Their veracity is just to be believed and not to be questioned. Faith does not rest on reason, and reason is antagonistic to faith.

On the other hand, those who uphold the supremacy of reason argue that the human being is essentially rational, and that only what is in conformity with reason should be acceptable. Anything that is irrational or contrary to reason cannot be accepted by a human mind. Reason cannot be made into a handmaiden to faith, or to anything other than itself. All knowledge comes from reason with or without the support of experience. Such a position results either in skepticism or negativism. The skeptics contend that since reason admits of no finality and is the sole guide to human mind, there cannot be any final or conclusive stand about religious truths. As it cannot take any definite position, it is advisable to take a non-committal stand on matters of religion. The skeptical position more often results in negativism and a denial of the truth of religious experience.

The history of humankind shows that exclusivist positions have not been accepted by the common people in general. The human mind has been both rational and religious, by and large and side by side. It seems that both rationality and religiosity are not unnatural to the human constitution. In

spite of respecting reason, the human mind has always been religious and has adhered to a religious mode of living, in some form or other. There have been multiple manifestations of religiosity in variant forms, and one is sometimes baffled as to which is genuinely religious and which one is not. The votaries and adherents of each form try to rationalize and justify their own form by putting forth all sorts of arguments, rational as well as irrational. In this game there is free play of mythology and superstitions, magic and miracles. Whatever be the situation, it seems that 'inclusivistic' positions are more prevalent. The human being wants to resort to both reason and faith and see their symbiotic roles continue.

It will be more significant to briefly delineate further upon the inclusivistic view, as it has generally found favour with the Indian mind. There seem to be three strands in the syncretic understanding of the Indian inclusivistic view. One strand is that of intuitive apprehension or inner realization variously named as *darshana*, *aparokshanubhuti*, *pratibodha*, *saksatkara*, *bodhi*, *prajna*, etc. A cognate phraseology is that of *pratibha*, *codana*, etc. The records of the deliverances coming from this source are called *shruti* or *shastra* or *shabda*. The second strand is that of reason, the human cognitive faculty based on discursive ratiocination and argumentation, variously called *tarka*, *megha*, *buddhi*, *yukti*, etc. The third strand is supra-human or divine consisting in divine revelations known as *shakipata*, *anugraha*, *akashavani*, *mauna vyakhyana*, etc. Here, the role of each is recognized and synchronized with the rest. Reason is brought to support the other two and is described as *anukula tarka*. Its role is to remove doubt and to confirm faith. The revelations are supra-reason but not anti-reason. Both reason and revelation are corroborated in experience. Thus all three are in harmony.

Compared to reason, faith plays a more vital and dominant role in religion. In ancient India, philosophy and religion were not separate. *Darshana* resorted to both reason and faith. Though based on reason, philosophy was always a faith by which adhering people lived. *Darshana* was a systematic and critical reflection on lived existence with a view to project and pursue an ideal existence. In this process, faith played a central role. Even when *darshana* was a critique of faith and questioned old faith, it always created a new faith. Buddhism is an instance of this tendency. Faith alone leads to certainty and unwavering conduct. Faith anticipates that we will acquire proper knowledge and that we shall reach the truth embodied and presupposed in the act of faith. But it is not blind or irrational faith – it is a faith which is compatible with reason and which is grounded on spiritual experience and which seeks its culmination in that experience. In the primacy of experience, reason, faith, scriptures, etc., all become mutually corroborative and supportive. But this experience is not like sense experience, which is incurably subjective, fallible, probable, and finite. It is a unitive or integral experience which transforms the entire being, and changes one's whole life and attitude. It is immediate intuition of the unity of beings. In participating in this experience, we become real beings and acquire our authentic exist-

ence. In the bosom of this experience every difference is accommodated and every distinction of *sva* and *para* is transcended. Such a *universalization* of the individual is not a rational conclusion and ordinary worldly living. It is not experience in the normal sense of the term. It is supra-normal.

In conclusion, it must be clarified that this view is not acquired by bookish knowledge. It not a result of armchair brooding. It is cultivated and developed in real life situations by understanding the true nature of *samsara* and of reality (*tattva*). It is not an abstract intellectual play with isolated and brute facts, but an illumination of them in their interrelatedness and interdependence. It is a way of life based on an integral view of life. It is a theory of action based on practical wisdom and acquired reflection on concrete experience. It is a *darshana*, a way of life wherein one finds unity, peace, perfection and plenitude.

Translation as a Bridge Between Cultures

A. T. Kulsaryieva and Zh. A. Zhumashova

Introduction

“Culture is a national concept, and civilization is an international category. If culture is connected with one specific nation’s religion, morals, rights, way of thinking, aesthetics, language, economy, and way of life, civilization is the level of development peculiar to several nations’ social way of life.”¹ Hence, the level of development of a society is equal to the level of that society which requires translation. This means that, at the cultural level of an isolated society, translation activities are very rare, and it cannot be transformed into a systematic requirement of society. In a civilizational society which is based on a stable relation of cultural dialogue, however, there needs to be translation activity as a required condition of its prosperity.

Translation is a necessity of civilization and it is a civilizational fruit. The reason for this is in the intersection of absolutely different societies and cultures at the level of civilization. “Societies with different national culture and religion can co-operate in civilization.”² For instance, the Japanese are very different from Europeans in language, religion, race, and so on. Yet they are also partners in civilization with Europeans. Perhaps this is the reason why the Japanese pay great attention to translation. Any kind of new idea created in any language can be found in Japanese translation within a year. This fact shows the real civilizational level of Japanese culture.

Complicacy of Communicative Means and Direction of Civilization

The process of the transition of translation from colloquial translation to the computer-based translation of today’s movies, radio, TV programmes, and so on, is a major step in the history of the means of human communication. What, then, is the sense of the term ‘civilization’? The term ‘civilization’ was introduced in science in the 18th century by French philosophers. They proposed that ‘civilization’ refers to a society based on wisdom and justice. The American anthropologist Lewis Morgan related the concept of civilization to the stage of human society, which moved from the barbarian level to the stage of government and the formation of rights.

As we see, the concepts ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ have different historical ranges. ‘Culture’ can be used to describe the various periods of humanity since its origins. Civilization, however, is related to the recent one to two millennia of cultural history.

¹ Z. Kokalyp, *Turikshildiktin negizderi* (Almaty: Merey, 2000), 21.

² Kokalyp, *Turikshildiktin negizderi*, 36.

The number of definitions given to the term ‘civilization’ and the schools concerned with the phenomenon of civilization are huge. This fact shows the complexity of the phenomenon of civilization. Initially, definitions of the concept of civilization were incompatible with primitive societies. According to V. Gordon Childe, there are ten principal criteria that distinguish civilization from primitive society. They are following:

- the occurrence of wide habitat places, such as cities;
- the development of a manufacturing sector;
- the formation of a tax system;
- the development of an economy, with trade and the circulation of commodities;
- the creation of skillful professionals;
- the formation of a written language;
- the development of several types of science (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, philosophy);
- the appearance of developed art types;
- the occurrence of social differences;
- the formation of state institutions.

In our opinion, these criteria are already old ones, and they cannot be extrapolated into studies of contemporary cultural society. The main reason for this is that Childe used these criteria for the comparison of civilization with archaic societies. Second, today there is no country that has not achieved all of these stages.

It is worth mentioning that none of the theories offered for the term ‘civilization’ can describe society before civilization, because that period is more than a hundred times longer than the period that we call civilization. It is impossible to cover such a vast period of time, and there is not enough written data or material evidence for this. Hence, there is little interest among scholars to investigate that period. Even if one were to attempt such research, it would be based purely on hypothesis.

The word ‘civilization’ derives from word ‘civil,’ which means ‘polite, well brought-up, good-mannered.’ In Arabic-Muslim cultures, the word for civilization is ‘tamaddun,’ from the Arabic. ‘Tamaddun’ derives from the word ‘madina’ – city. Hence, it means townsman. In Arabic-Muslim discourse, then, the words ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ have the same root, and refer to city life. For this reason, most scientists connect the term ‘civilization’ with material values. These values can involve such material achievements as towns, the means of communication, extensive architecture, large buildings, etc.

The American anthropologist Leslie A. White proved that the concept of ‘civilization’ was introduced because of the revolutionary concept of the ‘city’ The city became a center for the type of culture called ‘civilization.’ These cities were initially a place to live for specialized craftspersons. They were the initial builders and first inhabitants of today’s cities.

In comparison to cattle-raising and agriculture, needle-work was an innovative type of economics in those times. Both cattle-breeding and agriculture were established because of the necessity to survive, and they go back to archaic times. Needle-work, however, was a more creative kind of work. Needle-workers had to create new things on their own, and to produce genuinely cultural items. As a result, a new type of people with a new consciousness was created. This type of consciousness recognized that human beings can be independent from nature, and thus we have the formulation given by Protagoras: 'The human is the measure of all things.'

Thus, after the formation of needle-workers guilds, after the transfer of needle-work into professional work, after the production of goods for consumers, and after the creation of middle-men who can exchange commodities, there began to appear processes of civilization. As a result, mathematical science was improved. Means of transfer of collected information to the next generation through writing were created. Later, social institutions were formed that could teach writing and counting skills. Science began to feel its independence from religion. Thus, in places where 'fancy-work' was developed, trades, mathematics, writing, etc., were developed. Cities were built. Processes of formation of professionals were established and grew. Educational and governmental services were improved. All of these factors show the direct relation of the concept of 'civilization' with the 'city.'

Some contemporary scholars of civilization hold a kind of cultural relativism. According to the American scholars Alvin Toffler and D. Bell, human history is divided into pre-industrial, industrial, and post-industrial stages. But recent researchers take into consideration the peculiarity of each country, such as the cultural, historical, ethical, religious, economic, and geographical, etc., in the investigation of civilization. Contemporary scientists use the term 'civilization' to apply to countries with the particular economies, cultures, languages, and currency which could establish stable relationships with other countries, based on general human values. Hence, civilization can be considered as a necessary way to achieve unity.

In spite of the fact that most theories oppose culture to civilization, we propose that civilization is a part of culture. Some scholars offer the idea that civilization is the cover of culture. According to Spengler, culture is considered as the soul and civilization is the flesh. Hence, culture is eternal, like the soul, and civilization is changeable, like a material object. Kazakh Academician Garifolla ESYM states that the level of development reflects such changes.

Civilization is an open system. An open system always requires new information. A significant function of civilization is communication. Civilizations are always in contact with other civilizations. Communication is source of civilization; it is one of the main conditions for civilization. According to one of the founders of civilization theory, Arnold Toynbee, civilization has to cope with numerous difficulties. Humanity will never get tired of knowing new things. It is the essence of humankind. Civilization, as a reflection of this innovative peculiarity, arises from such innovation.

The genesis of civilization as seeking a superiority over nature is reflected in two features. One feature is that humanity establishes control over nature and becomes free from its influence in social development. A second feature is that it requires the domination of man over his inner nature, as he perceives himself to be a part of society. These two features constitute a condition for the development of humanity and society and, together, they lead to manufacturing and the production of social wealth. Civilization is both a natural process and the result of innovative actions. Signs of civilization in human life are shown through the collection of social wealth. The values of civilization are universal values, which support the development of international relations.

The 21st century is an age of techniques and innovative technology. The most significant achievement of technology is the evolution in the saving and delivering of information. All kinds of information, beginning from pictographs etched in stones, hand-written books, polygraph productions, movies, radio programs, TV, the internet, mobile phone connections, and so on, can be transferred, saved, and delivered.

An essential part of today's society is the internet, which was initially created in 1969 in order to unify computer centres and academic organizations that were part of the US defence ministry. A key particularity of that system was in its unique and profitable capability to transfer information in large amounts. There is no doubt that, in the future, the transfer of information by 'papers' will be totally replaced by digital means. Books, but also elements of cultural heritage, such as movie scripts and musical scores, will be only in electronic format. Hence, in the future, the internet can become the sole means of communication. This will be a result of world progress. In fact, even today, the internet has raised people's informational potential, and made it possible for billions of people to contact one another easily. To conclude the consideration of the term 'civilization,' we may say that civilization is the fruit of the long-term historical development of culture. The principal concept related to civilization is found in its relation to humanity who became independent from tribal consciousness. This is the view of the Canadian thinker, Marshall McLuhan.

Herbert Marshall McLuhan was one of the first researchers who began to investigate the impact of the means of mass media on society, beginning in the 1950s. After this, he became known as 'the prophet from Toronto,' who prophesized the electronic age in detail. Words from his books became popular expressions. For example, the term 'global village' has become a term well-known today for internet-users. The term "Gutenberg Galaxy" has also become a frequently-used term for many of those alive today. Another prophesy of McLuhan about human history reflects some of the leading communication means in society. The phrase 'The Medium is the Message' (and not just 'the medium is the message') became a trope of contemporary civilizational consciousness.

It is interesting to look at McLuhan's list of means of communication, since he considered as 'means of communication' ways of clothing, auto-

mobiles, money, advertisements, the electric light, houses, watches, photos, games, guns, means of transport, and other things. He considered all things which surround a human being as a means of communication. A means of communication, by changing its form, changes the way a person perceives the world, and changes his way of life. The 'communication means' is the 'enlargement' of the person to the outer world. For instance, the telephone and telegraph are his ears, airplanes and space rockets are his feet, TV and computers are his eyes and brain, etc.

Any kind of sense, when stimulated as intensely as possible, leads to other senses becoming less powerful or feeble. Powerful senses act as an anesthetic. For example, dentists use music or other sound in order to reduce the feeling of tooth pain. Focusing on or extending one sense tends to make other senses numb or dependent on it. This effect was called by McLuhan the 'amputation' of the senses. The development of technological infrastructure "amputated" a human being's senses. For example, a person who uses a calculator is now often not capable of solving easy arithmetical tasks. A person who spends a lot of time in the 'virtual world' is frequently less capable of communicating with 'real' people. The main danger with technology lies in the 'amputation' of part of a person's consciousness.

McLuhan related the main periods of human existence to changes in the means of communication. He related language, printing, science, computers, television, etc., to the means of communication. Concretely stated, the means of communication are the tools of social unification of the time. This means that content, the ways of transfer, and its form have great importance. In 1967, most people believed that the title of McLuhan's work, *The Medium is the Massage*, was a typographic mistake. They believed that it had to be 'message' instead of 'massage.' However, McLuhan had noted this mistake, but allowed the publishing of the book to go ahead. A first reason for this was the meaning of 'massage.' Mass media influenced people like a massage, and made them relax; mass media acted as a tool for controlling people's consciousness. A second reason was related to the term 'Mass-age,' which meant the era of information technologies.

McLuhan directly related the social cultural process with changes of communication and the interchange of means. He opposed discrete ideas to a continual idea of cultural development. One of the main theses in his work is 'all issues are in the means of mass media.' All issues are identified by scientists in terms of the dominating type of communication. A person's perceptual, cognitive level is identified with the speed of transfer of the means of information. The type of communication identifies the social structure. The history of humankind is the history of gaining the means of communication from each other.

McLuhan claimed that there were three stages in the history of human development based on changes in the means of communication. They are following:

- the transfer from oral speech culture into written speech culture;

- the transfer from oral speech culture into book culture;
- the transfer from the 'Gutenberg print galaxy' into the means of electronic communications.

Each historical/cultural stage has its own peculiarities. The first stage is the barbarian period. The main means of communication at that time was colloquial speech. People used to live in acoustic space, based on sounds. At that period, humankind was not able to realize its independence and individuality from society. Hence, his consciousness formed on the tribal, group form.³ As the main means of communication was colloquial speech, there were wide-spread traditions and customs, myths, rituals, and folklore in oral form. These were the basis for each generation to inherit from the preceding. Language was main means of communication. Therefore, this was the principle of social unity.

Human senses change based on changes in technology, and they accord with cultural changes. J. C. Carothers, in his article "Culture, Psychiatry and the Written Word,"⁴ stated: "In my opinion, the word had lost its power and sense after being printed on paper." He concluded that the word loses its individual peculiarity when it becomes visible. "From this moment on, words became a sign of transcendence. Sacredness and holiness become peculiar to the book."⁵ The creation of writing made humanity shift from acoustic space to visual space. Wisdom, the experience of long periods of time, began to be printed as texts. "The pen made from a duck's feather was a barrier for language domination; it neglected the sacred secrets of life; it caused to come into being architecture and cities, roads and armies, and bureaucracy. It brought consciousness from darkness into light. And it became an absolute metaphor which led to civilization."⁶

The main organ of communication before the creation of the alphabet in tribal society was the ear. Hearing was equal to believing. The phonetic alphabet shifted humanity from the 'ear world' into the 'eye world.' From that time, the main sense of communication became the eye. But complications in the means of communication meant that the system of thinking, perception of the world, actions, and the thinking of humans had changed. As a result, people came to be more and more separate from one another. The process of isolation which began with the creation of writing became vaster after the creation of the printing press in Europe. In the 15th century, Johann Gutenberg developed a printing press with movable type. As stated by McLuhan, the 'Gutenberg galaxy' made a real information revolution. With

³ Kh. Beisenov, *Kazakh topiragindagi kalitaskan gakliatti oi keshu urdisteri* (Almaty: Gylym, 1994), 4.

⁴ J. C. Carothers, "Culture, Psychiatry and the Written Word," *Psychiatry* 22, no. 4 (November 1959): 307-320. See Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, translated into Russian (Moscow: Akademicheskii proekt: Fund 'Mir,' 2005), 50.

⁵ Julia Kristeva, *Izbrannie trudi: razrushenie poetiki* [*Selected Works: The Destruction of Poetics*] (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004), 530.

⁶ A. Kukarkin, *Burzhuznoe obshestvo i kultura* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1970), 363.

the help of this ‘Gutenberg galaxy,’ the first ‘conveyer good’ – the book – was created. It opened doors to enormous opportunities.

If, in the first stage of communication development, the experience of previous generations was passed on by tribal leaders, now it could be delivered by book to individuals. Each person began to understand that he was an individual. Now he felt himself as an individual, with his own distinctive features. The idea of nationalism then arose as collective identification. From this stage of the development of human communication, people felt it necessary to spread information more broadly than ever before. Books, as holders of wisdom, became the common property of humankind. Every significant book was evaluated as to its real value, and other nations tried to get it. This condition was a good base for the formation of professional translators. All countries that saw themselves as civilized tried to keep pace with contemporary human achievements. This was surely achieved in part through the input of translators.

Closing Remarks

The preceding analysis of civilization shows that civilization was directly connected with the appearance of the alphabet. The visual space of people offered a wider opportunity to acquire more knowledge. Knowledge is information. However, in order to obtain this information, it was necessary to acquire the written texts of ‘others.’ Hence, it was necessary that there be translation. Consequently, translation always accompanied innovation. Through translations, people could access many kinds of information from many different cultures. If we consider innovation as the main key of civilization, civilization cannot be regarded as complete without the existence of processes of translation. As mentioned above, the main function of civilization is the unification of cultures and keeping conditions stable for this unification. Therefore, translation as a means to allow cross-cultural communication had a great impact on the formation of civilization. There is no doubt that translation can be regarded as a phenomenon of civilization.

Recent Philosophizing as Re-engaging Culture as a Way of Life

Marietta Stepanyants

Who would grasp Russia with the mind?
For her no yardstick was created:
Her soul is of a special kind,
By faith alone appreciated.
(trans. John Dewey)

This quatrain, written on November 28, 1866 by the Russian poet Fyodor Tyutchev, has come to express a widely popular opinion about Russia and its culture – so much so that even former French President Jacques Chirac, while receiving the State Prize of the Russian Federation, recited this verse from Tyutchev. Vladimir Putin, at a meeting in the Kremlin with President Nicolas Sarkozy, recited the same quatrain. Fyodor Tyutchev looks at culture as a manifestation of the soul of the people. Hence, he defines Russian culture in tune with his philosophical views. In *Silentium*, an archetypal poem by Tyutchev written in 1830, it is written:

How can a heart expression find?
How should another know your mind?
Will he discern what quickens you?
A thought, once uttered, is untrue.
.....
Live in your inner self alone
within your soul a world has grown,
the magic of veiled thoughts that might
be blinded by the outer light,
drowned in the noise of day, unheard...
take in their song and speak no word.
(trans. Vladimir Nabokov)

What is that which is not comprehensible rationally and requires only faith? The first response that comes to mind are the sacraments, like those of Christianity (e.g., baptism, anointing of the sick, the Eucharist, Confession, and Ordination). Should Tyutchev's poetic image of Russia then mean that its culture contains the Sacraments – or, using everyday language, its own Mystery not conceivable by reason? Many are inclined to respond positively. I would dare to disagree and say, rather, that Russia – its culture – holds its own metaphysics – one that is a temporary substitute of the unknown or the unknowable.

There is no better way to comprehend the so-called metaphysics of Russian culture than by a hermeneutical reading of literature, which is the mirror reflecting the Russian identity. National identity is like human character: it is not given once and for all from God, but it is rather made up of layers of unique biographical circumstances of every person, every nation. One can say it is not monolithic and multilayered, shaped by history. These layers are not just different; they might be antinomies of one another.

These antinomies are reflected in what Nikolay Berdyaev called “the mystery of the Russian soul.” In his words, “To get at the riddle of the mystery hidden within the soul of Russia is possibly at the same time to admit the antinomic aspect of Russia, its keen contradictions. The enigma is why a most unstatelike people have created such an immense and mighty state; why so anarchistic a people are so submissive to bureaucracy; why a people free in spirit as it were do not desire a free life.”¹ Antinomy in any culture manifests itself in different forms: in elite and popular culture, in ‘heritage’ and the ‘avant-garde’, etc. But, for Russia, there are overly specific antinomies. Russian history clearly demonstrates that, in the long course of its existence, Russia failed in discovering its place in the world: Russia cannot define itself either as the East or as the West, nor as an East-West, a ‘unifier of the two worlds.’

At the certain stages of its history, Russia made choices expressing the wish to belong entirely to the West. One should remember that it made a choice in favor of westernization a number of times. But, each time, Russia failed to bring the process through to its end. Two examples are particularly relevant. In the 10th century under the rule of Prince Vladimir (980-1015), the adoption of Christianity as the state religion allowed Kiev Rus to join the Western community. But this opportunity was not fully utilized for a variety of reasons, both concerning external and internal order. In the end, the chance was lost: the Mongol invasion and the Mongol Golden Horde ruled for nearly three centuries and virtually isolated Russia from the West.

The second example is “the opening of a window to Europe” by Peter the Great (1689-1725). Despite the significant achievements of Peter the Great, Catherine the Great (1726-96), and Alexander II (1855-81) in reforming the social, economic, and political systems, Russia did not become completely westernized. Further development was blocked by the October Revolution. A preference was given to the soviet socialist model of development. As a result, for almost seven decades, Russia was virtually isolated from the West by the Iron Curtain. Thus, for centuries, Russia remained in perpetual oscillation between two poles, expressed in the Russian culture as *zapadnichestvo* and *aziatchina*, that is between West and East.

What were the basic causes of that uncertainty? Geographical position: the immense territory, the extensive borders, the openness for invasion, etc.

¹ Nicolay A. Berdyaev, “The Psychology of the Russian People. The Soul of Russia,” trans. S. Janos, 2008, accessed June 1, 2020, http://www.berdyaev.com/berdiaev/berd_lib/1915_007.html.

Choices were made by the authority, that is, from above, while the people stayed passive, unable to express its aspirations and preferences due to the crucial impact of three centuries of the Mongol yoke and of three centuries of serfdom. Uncertainty about the choice and permanent fluctuation affected the culture of the nation. It stayed in constant search of the truth and of recourse to a higher power (God or the Ruler); constant guilt feelings and self-criticism; glorification of the patriarchal way of life, community (*obshchinnost*, *sobornost*) or, on the contrary, the idealization of Western institutions and ways of life. Russian literature has always been the mirror of Russian life and its mindset. It has also demonstrated its genuine internal 'agreement' with philosophy. In the words of the outstanding Russian philosopher S. Frank, the most profound and significant ideas expressed in Russia were not in systematic academic writings but in a completely different form – in literature, and especially, in poetry.²

The novelist, poet, and philosopher Dmitri Merezhkovsky once said that the power of Russian intellectuals was not in intellect, but rather in the heart and conscience. It might be that the most stunning demonstration of this is Feodor Dostoyevsky who is widely acknowledged, not only as a great writer but no less than as a 'Russian national thinker.' The Russian poet-metaphysician of the Silver Age, Vyacheslav Ivanov, wrote about Dostoyevsky: "He is a great initiator and pre-determinator of our cultural complexity. He made complicated our soul, our faith, our art."³

Berdyayev defined the line that led from Dostoyevsky as central to the Russian thought of the beginning of the 20th century. The new idealistic and religious trends which had severed their ties with the positivism and materialism of the Russian radical intellectuals were under the sign of Dostoevsky. Rozanov, Merezhkovsky, Bulgakov, Shestov, Andrey Beli, V. Ivanov – all were connected with Dostoevsky, all had been conceived in his spirit. A huge new world that was closed to previous generations had been opened. The era of "dostoevchiny" takes its start in Russian thought and Russian literature."⁴

Dostoyevsky managed to see and understand that, in the new era of mass disasters, Evil declared itself as Good, thus, substituting as Divine purpose for mankind. Dostoevsky showed the level of evil of which man is capable. This level was boundless, putting philosophical thought to a new test, demanding from it an explanation of the reasons and limits of evil in human nature. In the words of Dostoevsky, there are "two folk types of the entire Russian people in their entirety." He claimed that the most striking

² Семен Л. Франк, «Русское мировоззрение» (СПб., 1996), с. 163 (Semen L. Frank, "Russian Worldview" [St. Petersburg, 1996], 163.)

³ Вячеслав, Иванов, Достоевский и роман-трагедия. ("Русская Мысль" апрель 1914 г.). (Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Dostoevsky and Roman-tragedy," *Russian Thought* [April 1914].)

⁴ Николай, Бердяев, Миросозерцание Достоевского (Nikolay Berdyayev, *Dostoevsky's World Outlook* [Prague: YMCA-Press, 1923].)

Russian national feature is, first and foremost, “the oblivion of all measurements throughout, the need to run out over the edge.”⁵

By claiming this, Dostoevsky has in mind not only the political radicals, whom he calls *Бесы* (Demons), but the intellectuals like Leo Tolstoy who, with his views on religion and his religious philosophizing, comes up with a unique and unprecedented, unthinkable audacity and “rushes into the abyss with full consciousness of self-righteousness, with the hope that this is worthy of every thinking man.” Tolstoy’s ‘radicalism,’ in fact, manifests this widespread worldview. This unprecedented audacity is also part of the Russian mindset. But if “below” (in the case of demons – revolutionists, radicals) this audacity acts like a wild naughtiness and intentional temptation, threatening eternal death, as a blasphemy from the “top” (as in case of Tolstoy), it is a conscious religious thinking, a kind of manifestation of freedom of conscience.

The names of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy are well known all over the world, while Nicolay Leskov – whom Leo Tolstoy called “the most Russian of all the Russian writers” and whom Anton Chekhov, along with Ivan Turgenev, considered as their teacher – has not received widespread recognition. Leskov did not try to “measure the abyss.” Like Dostoevsky, he was not trying to revise the foundations of faith; like Tolstoy, he did not set himself the task of myth-making or prophecy. He was “writing all sorts of things” which, in the long run, “made a self portrait of a Russian man, a unique self portrait of the nation.” It has taken almost a century after the death of Leskov for him to have his proper place in Russian culture, something that came neither to his critics nor to his apologists. In our days, Leskov is seen as one who was not only able to represent the general character of his contemporaries, but to discover far-reaching, underlying, fundamental features of the Russian national consciousness. It is in this respect that he is perceived nowadays as the national genius.

Short stories and novellas written by Leskov, in spite of being quite dissimilar and about different themes, are united by ‘Thought’ (Duma) about the fate of Russia. The Motherland is presented in a complex mix of contradictions, as squalid and prosperous, powerful and powerless at the same time. In all aspects of national life, Leskov looks at the heart of the whole and finds it more often in unusual, strange men who in Russian are called *chudaks*, those who behave mysteriously or strangely. Here, Leskov is in line with Dostoyevsky who, in his *Brothers Karamazov* said that the *chudak* is not necessarily particular or exclusive. On the contrary, sometimes it is precisely the *chudak* who holds in himself the core of the whole.

The short novel, *The Enchanted Wanderer* (*Ocharovannyi strannik*) is the most ‘emblematic’ product of Leskov. By the number of printings, it is

⁵ М. Федор Достоевский, *Полное собрание сочинений*. В 30 тт. (Л.: Наука, 1972-1990. Том 21), с. 37. (Fedor Dostoevsky, *Works* in 30 vols. [Leningrad: Nauka, 1972-1990], vol. 21, 37.)

far ahead of the other masterpieces of Leskov, both in our country and abroad. This is the epitome of *bogatyrstva*, a hero of the epic in the best and highest sense of the word. This is a work with a vivid symbolic assignment, with a monumental character in its center who impersonates a new historical stage in the development of national character. It is a wide meditation by the writer on the fate of Russia and the origin and force of its people.

In the sense of the wealth of the plot, it is perhaps the most remarkable work of Leskov. It is particularly conspicuous by the absence of any centre. There is no plot, strictly speaking, but there are a number of fabulas, strung like beads on a thread. Each bead exists in itself and can be very easily handled, replaced by another – but then you can have as many beads on the same thread as you wish. What is the meaning, the purpose of these bizarre, scattered wanderings? Some will see in that a sign of decay and aimlessness. Others will perceive a variety of options of destiny.

The elements of *bogatyrstva* and of folk epic are introduced by Leskov so that there is a differentiation, if not an opposition, between ‘us’ (the Russians) and ‘them’ (the foreigners). Thus, in *Iron Will* there is a stunned German; in *The Enchanted Wanderer*, the Russian Vityaz competes with an English professional to control a horse. Nothing helps Mr. Rareu – neither his expertise nor his special armor. He falls from the horse and is confounded, while our hero tames a savage animal. In *Left Handed (Levsha)*, another Englishman will be confounded by another Russian folk master, by his capability in repairing a steel clockwork ‘flea’ – though in the long run, the flea, as a result of that repair, will ‘forget’ how to dance.

The above-mentioned ‘opposition’ is used, not for the purpose of separating Russia from the West; it is not aimed at making Westerners enemies of the Russians. In every story, there is a recognition that the standard of living in the West is much higher than in Russia, that the people there have better social conditions for their existence due to the different social and political order they have, due to ‘labor ethics’ – fully unknown to the Russians, in their attitude to the work which is to be done. Yet Leskov’s narratives do not lead readers to the conclusion that Russia should make its final choice in favor of the Western way of life. On the contrary, the heroes of his writings (who always represent the common people and not the Russian elite) demonstrate features of excellence, either in morals or in professional skills, which they came to have, not from learning and training but by being self-taught. What, then, does the writer wish to say by that? It looks like his intention is to remind his compatriots that they have their own ‘treasures’ which are to be saved, and not to be substituted by blind borrowing from others. Our guess is fully justified by the very title of one of his short stories, called “Foreign ways of life could be used only reasonably.”

This forewarning sustains its validity up to today. But what are the most important elements of its meaning for contemporary Russia? It is quite evident that the future of the global world order is unclear; there are different scenarios. Many Russians cherish and hope for a return to the status of a superpower, which the Soviet Union, along with the United States, had in

the past century. Others are alarmed that globalization poses a real threat to what they call “Russian civilization.” There are also those who expect Russia to become one of the poles in a multi-polar world.

Which of the above scenarios is real and desirable? Let’s start with the first one. Among the superpowers in the past, there were Ancient Egypt, the Empire of Alexander the Great, and the Roman Empire. History proves that, once one loses the role of a superpower, one can never get it back. However, Russians are often inclined to believe that their country is predestined to a particular mission. This conviction is deeply rooted in their historic memory. After the fall of Constantinople, the Russian church strongly promoted the idea of being the God-chosen guardian of Christian teaching in its purity. The Russian monarchy called Moscow the “Third Rome,” and stated that it would never be replaced by a Fourth Rome, since the Russian Kingdom would stand until the end of the world. Later, after the revolution of 1917, Soviet authorities actively promoted the messianic role of the USSR in the liberation of humanity from exploitation and inequality: the old world will be destroyed and levelled and, then, we shall build a new world. Nowadays, some of those who are well aware that Russia having a leading role as a military and economically strong power in the near future is unreal, are still hoping that it could play the role of a spiritual guide.

The Russian Orthodox Church supposes that, just as the United States formulated its mission as a community of freedom, the “overriding mission of Russia could be defined as upholding the Truth in the world.” It provides an enhanced understanding of the word “Truth,” which includes the notions of truth, justice, and righteousness. The above-mentioned values are unquestionable. There are, however, at least two questions. First, are not these very values universal? And, secondly, to what extent are we following the declared values? Let us take concrete values like “strong family,” “equity,” and “caring about the environment,” which are understandable to everyone. Compare them with publicly available statistics and daily news events; none of these values is, in fact, characteristic of modern Russian life. On the contrary, the move away from them is accelerating on a large scale. In order to carry out a mission in relation to others, one must first follow these ideals oneself, and demonstrate progress in their implementation.

It should be remembered that the real status of superpower that the Soviet Union and the United States obtained during the Cold War, was due to splitting up the world into two camps in which those two countries held military supremacy. Consequently, the USSR stayed as a superpower from 1945 until 1990. Forty-five years, in comparison with a thousand-year period of Russian history, is such a small period that it would be justified to admit: “There has not been any long tradition of being a superpower. There is only a habit to think like that, and it is just a memory shared by two gen-

erations, which was passed to their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.”⁶

The return to the status of a superpower would not mean a return to tradition, but, rather, a restoration of “the Cold War.” To go back in history is impossible, and the efforts to implement that would be disastrous. The second scenario, which involves the loss by Russia of its identity, is equally dubious. We are sheltered from it by the vastness of the territory, the geopolitical location between the East and the West, virtually inexhaustible natural resources, a large number of high educated people, and a truly rich cultural heritage. Indeed, more realistic and more desirable is the third scenario: to become a country focused on the welfare of its citizens – a state which would be taken into consideration by others in determining world politics. The preference for selecting this scenario is manifested by recent sociological research. In response to a question posed in 2010 by Russian sociologists – “What do you prefer: a good life in a normal country or life in a military super-power?” – Russians chose the first. To become a state committed to the wellbeing of its citizens and, at the same, a state which would be considered in determining the course of world affairs is not an easily achievable task.

To change its economics radically, to raise the standard of living of its citizens, is possible only with a high level of modernization. The question, however, is what model should be chosen? This question is not new for Russia. In the 19th century, Russian society was divided so that some, like Peter Chaadaev, were convinced that “you cannot be civilized without following the European model,”⁷ while others insisted that the main task for Russia was not to become dependent on the West, and to safeguard its particularity (Konstantin Leontiev). One cannot expect successful economic development and prosperity in an atmosphere of a “moral wilderness,” which is manifested in cynicism, in the crisis of collectivism, in loss of family values (e.g., an increase in the divorce rate, abandoned children, etc), in large scale violence and crime, in distrust of the State and its institutions, and so on. In addition, rapid and effective modernization requires a collective motivation.

In 2005, Russian researchers were requested to construct a culture-specific methodology for the study and interpretation of the structural values of Russian culture, as well as to identify the dynamics of the structure of the underlying values of Russians, and its influence on the economic and social behavior of Russian citizens. The values shared by two generations of Russians – students and their parents – in various regions of Russia were measured. The results showed that the value structure shared by Russians

⁶ Николай Спасский, «Остров Россия», Россия в глобальной политике (М., Том 9, №3, 2011), с. 29. (Nikolay Spassky, “Island Russia,” *Russia in Global Politics* 9, no. 3 [Moscow, 2011]: 29.)

⁷ Петр Я. Чаадаев, «Философические письма. Письмо первое», П.Я.Чаадаев, Сочинения (Москва, 1989), с. 28. (Petr Chaadaev, “Philosophical Letters. The First Letter,” in his *Works* [Moscow, 1989], 28.)

during the period from 1999 to 2005 was stable in maintaining the seven most important factors that determine the value of motivation: security; self-realization; simplicity (modesty, satisfaction with one's own place in life, commitment, the ability to forgive, moderation, mutual assistance, honesty); spirituality (unity with nature, love of beauty, spiritual life, environmental protection, courage, creativity, loyalty); hedonism; domination (willingness to move forward using all means, even over the heads of others); and harmony (internal harmony with oneself, self-respect, right to privacy, along with a sense of social identity).

There is no doubt that the above values are important for successful economic development. However, it is equally obvious that they are less noteworthy than those values from which they derive. They are derivative, belonging to what is called "thin culture," which has its roots in the past. But this does not preclude its dynamic, constructive nature. The values of "thin culture" are empirical; they occur in response to socio-economic changes.⁸ "Thick" is the fundamental nature of culture: cultural meanings are rooted in history, deeply embedded in social institutions and practices.⁹ "Thick culture" is given. It precedes and produces both institutions and practices.

Efforts to identify the core of Russian culture – and, hence, of the national character – were made many times. One could make a long list of examples that confirm the difficulty of determining what constitutes the nucleus of the Russian nature and its culture. In a report entitled "Russian national character," which was produced at a philosophy conference in Rome, in 1923, by B. Visheslavtsev (1877-1954), it was said: "We [the Russians] are interesting, but incomprehensible for the West and perhaps, therefore, are especially interesting. Even we do not fully understand ourselves, and perhaps incomprehensibility, the irrationality of actions represents some feature of our nature."¹⁰

It is much easier to understand the values related to peripheral sectors, i.e., to "thin culture." Though these values are often constructed from above by those who hold power, they have a huge (if not critical) impact on the development of society as a whole. Such a "construct" was the triad: "Autocracy, Orthodoxy, *Narodnost* (Patriotism)," which under Nicholas I (1825-1855) became the ideological doctrine of the Russian Empire. Paradoxically, the October revolution of 1917, which radically changed all sides

⁸ See William Mishler and Detlef Pollack, "On Culture, Thick and Thin: Toward a Neo-Cultural Synthesis," in *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe: Attitudes in New Democracies*, eds. William Mishler and Detlef Pollack (London: Ashgate, 2003), chap. 13, 237-256.

⁹ See Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in *Old Societies and New Societies*, ed. C. Geertz (New York: Free Press, 1963).

¹⁰ Борис П. Вышеславцев, «Русский национальный характер», Вопросы философии (Москва, 1995, № 6), с.113. (Boris Visheslavtsev, "Russian National Character," *Voprosy Filosofii*, no. 6 [Moscow, 1995]: 113.)

of social life and destroyed its ideological pillars, failed to “uproot” them completely. Hence the previous “pillars” were replaced by “new” ones that grew up from the rhizome of the old roots. Christian orthodoxy was replaced by the dogmas of Marxist-Leninist ideology; Autocracy – by Communist dictatorship; *Narodnost* – by Soviet patriotism.

At the beginning of *Perestroika*, its proponents tried to advance, as a national idea, the building of “socialism with a human face.” A few years later, at the official level, it was stated that the ideology (and thus a common national idea) was redundant, in fact, harmful. Soon, however, the “search for the national idea” started once again. From time to time, claims are made that the national idea has been found. Thus, former Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov optimistically declared that “Russia has completed the arduous – ongoing since the early 1990’s – formation of a new system of values that define the intellectual prop-based society for the coming millennium. For the first time since the proclamation of the new Russia, we have been able to articulate a clear answer, for all of the people and the State, to the questions: Who are we? Where should we go? In what society do we want to live?.”¹¹ The response to the above questions – the triad of national values – is the triad: “Sovereign democracy, strong economy, and military power.”

Of course, the word “value” is polysemous. It can, for example, mean ‘market value’ – the price of goods, or ‘pragmatic value’ – the practical relevance of one or another political action. But it is not these kinds of value which are taken into consideration when it comes to the “national idea.” It is true that Russians are concerned about the political status of their state; they wish to live in an economically prosperous country without fear for their safety. But, as evidenced by the results of opinion polls, Russians are most concerned about the “loss of moral values, immorality.”¹² Pragmatic calculation, whether material or political, is able to bring together groups of people interested in practical benefits. Yet it is unable to serve the cause of national reunification with inspirational ideas, principles, and ideals. That requires ethical motivation, which may be formulated only on the basis of the national cultural heritage, taking into account the requirements of the new era. Equally striking is the claim that this triad makes a “special ideological project, competing for the right to determine the global agenda and further

¹¹ Сергей Иванов, «Триада национальных ценностей», Известия (Москва, № 124, 13.07.2006), с. 4.

¹² The survey was conducted before the G8 summit by the international agency “Eurasian Monitor” and by the company “Global Market Insight” (GMI). The question was: With what menaces are you concerned most of all? Here are the answers from Russian citizens:

1. The spread of terrorism – 54%
2. The loss of national specificity and traditions – 39%
3. Mass unemployment and impoverishment – 44%
4. The loss of moral values, immorality – 59%

prospects of all of humanity.” Actually, that is a claim of the Russian “Imperial project” of globalization, which affirms the hegemony of the strong.

The ability to determine the prospects of the development of mankind depends only partly on economic and military power. Russia is in a position to engage positively in the processes that shape the world if it only can maintain its own “face.” Is it possible at all? If so, what could be the ways of achieving that aim? Should Russia at last put an end to staying at the crossroad between West and East? My answer to this question might sound to many as a wrong one or paradoxical. It may also look quite like the views of Nicolay Berdyaev, expressed first in a pamphlet called *Dusha Rossii* (*The Soul of Russia*). I very much agree with the first part of Berdyaev’s assertion that “Russia cannot define itself, as East, and thus oppose itself to the West. Russia ought to conceive of itself as also West...” Yet I disagree with what he says at the end of the same sentence: Russia ought to conceive of itself “as an East-West, a uniter of the two worlds, and not a divider.” To me, that statement sounds like a concealed claim for a special hegemonic mission of Russia. Nobody is in a position to “unite” the two worlds, which are actually different civilizations. To me, even to assert that Russia should be “a bridge between East and West” sounds quite pretentious. I would rather be in line with another great Russian, Peotr Chaadaev, who wrote in his *First Philosophic Letter* that, being placed between two poles – the East and the West – Russia should take advantage of that geographic position by bending to one side towards China and, to the other side, to Germany, and thus learn the wisdom from the two civilizations – Eastern and Western.

“Staying at the crossroad” gives us something even more valuable. It is precisely that position that brings uncertainty with the choice, the permanent fluctuation that affects Russian culture. The “enigmatic contradiction with Russia” is rooted, not in the disunity of the masculine and the feminine within the Russian soul and the Russian character, as Nicolay Berdyaev believed. It is determined by the everlasting work of its soul and consciousness. Once the final choice is made, that uniqueness will be lost, Russia will cease to hold its own face, its identity. It is true that metaphysical questions are “doomed to defeat” (see the examples of Buddha and Kant), and yet we ought to continue asking them.

While efforts to find a common national idea should be continued, still we must realize that a society is able to break through to a higher level of development, not just through collective efforts. Consolidation and solidarity are particularly needed for responding to aggression, for protection against threats from the outside. This was the case during the war. But, in the context of globalization, the external “enemy” is more of an ideological trick than reality. We have to admit that our society should abandon the paranoia of existing in an alleged ring of enemies.

“The enemy” is within us. We have to adapt ourselves in such a way that, without losing our soul, we can become capable of effective, successful participation in contemporary social processes. In addition, it cannot be forgotten that “cohesion” around common ideas brings a risk of averaging.

Using the metaphor of the modern Russian writer Vladimir Makanin, “averaging” can lead both to “the sunny and to the shadow sides of the mountains.”

Our recent tragic past should serve as a warning to everyone, and to remind us all of the importance of individual choice and of personal efforts to achieve perfection. Salvation from the “moral wilderness,” described above, depends only on us. A huge role in this case belongs to literature, art, and philosophy, i.e., all humanitarian spheres of public life. The principal resources of the future will be creativity, education, and culture. But they are undervalued and economically disadvantaged today. There will be devastating consequences if policies in education focus on the marginalization of the humanities that form the human creative and morally responsible person, rather than merely on creating a competitive individual.

The humanitarian components of social life are to be understood in the broad sense of culture. Culture brings individuals together in society and, at the same time, makes them individuals. By maintaining and developing culture, we promote a diversity of opportunities, and that, precisely, means progress.

Social Solidarity as the Foundation for Democracy in Vietnam

Pham Van Duc

A precious tradition of the Vietnamese, social solidarity has been tempered through its thousand-year history of building and safeguarding the country, challenged by the struggles against natural calamities as well as foreign invaders. Thanks to this tradition, when faced with foreign aggression, the Vietnamese have risen up, united, with a firm determination that they “would rather sacrifice all than lose the country and become enslaved.” Thus, solidarity has become a *precious traditional value of the Vietnamese*. However, this does not mean that solidarity has become a tradition only in Vietnam. On the contrary, solidarity can be a fine tradition in many other nations and in a majority of the nations worldwide simply because it is difficult for any nation to exist and flourish without the spirit of national solidarity. In the present context, solidarity has become an indispensable factor for maintaining sustainable development and social harmonization. Still, the solidarity tradition of the Vietnamese is not the same as that of other nations and, in order to articulate clearly the distinctive features of Vietnam, more specialized research on its traditional values, on its people, and on the country is needed. Generally speaking, the Vietnamese tradition of solidarity has been established within the specific living conditions of the Vietnamese, who have been constantly engaging in the struggle against natural calamities as well as foreign invaders. *These very arduous conditions* made the Vietnamese become more consolidated and reliant on each other in order to endure and prosper. The practice of the struggles of the Vietnamese against foreign aggressors has affirmed that, thanks to its great solidarity, the nation has gained independence and national unification. Thus, special attention has always been paid to the issue of solidarity and national solidarity.

The View of Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam on Social Solidarity

First of all, some basic points of the view of Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam on the issue of national solidarity should be stated briefly. While inheriting traditional thought on national solidarity as well as relying on lessons drawn from his own experience of seeking the way to national liberation, Ho Chi Minh pointed out many important views on solidarity and “national great solidarity.” Ho Chi Minh had realized the important role that solidarity had played during the arduous years of the resistance war as well as at the beginning period of national construction. He wrote “During the resistance war, we encountered many difficulties and

hardships, and the enemy significantly outnumbered us, but we eventually won the war thanks to solidarity. Thus in the present period of peaceful reconstruction, we will certainly be successful if we know how to promote solidarity.”¹ Ho Chi Minh generalized his views on solidarity in a famous slogan, which serves as an acting precept for the nation of Vietnam: “Solidarity, solidarity, great solidarity; Success, success, great success.”²

As Ho Chi Minh perceived, “solidarity is a national policy but not a political intrigue. We must be united to fight for national unification and independence; we also should stand united to construct our country. We reconcile with people who have talent, virtue, strength and willingness to serve the country and the people.”³ He also stressed that “Solidarity should be widespread, firm, as well as constantly reinforced at the same time: a house will be solid if the foundation is firm, a plan will flourish if the root is well-grounded. We should avoid two erroneous tendencies in the policy on solidarity: narrow isolation and unprincipled solidarity.”⁴ Ho Chi Minh claimed that the most important and immutable principle in realizing great solidarity is the principle of protecting national interests and the basic interests of the people of Vietnam.

In his view of solidarity, solidarity of the people plays a crucial role. While holding the belief that, without the support from the people, even simple things cannot be done, whereas more complicated and difficult things can be overcome successfully with the support from the people in mind, Ho Chi Minh pointed out clearly that the greatest strength lay in the people and this strength will increase enormously when the people stay united. He wrote “there is nothing more precious under heaven than people. There is nothing greater than the strength of united people.”⁵ However, it should be noted that Ho Chi Minh’s view on solidarity has served as the foundation for gathering people from all social strata, different parties and religions, and even people who used to be misguided but eventually became repentant of their mistakes. Thus, he wrote “we should unite closely people from various strata, different parties, organizations, personalities, friendly ethnic groups, and non-believers as well as religious followers.”⁶

Ho Chi Minh paid particular attention to the solidarity between non-believers and believers, between lowlanders and highlanders. For example, in regard to the solidarity between non-believers and believers, he wrote “all people, regardless of their faith, should stand closely united...in order to safeguard our homeland and, at the same time, the right of religious freedom”;⁷ “we should unite non-believers and believers closely together to

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works* (Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House, 1996), vol. 8, 392.

² Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 607.

³ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 7, 438.

⁴ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 7, 438.

⁵ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 8, 276.

⁶ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 605-606.

⁷ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 4, 490.

build a harmonious, prosperous life and construct the Homeland. Respectful policies and guidelines towards religious freedom of all religions must be implemented and obeyed properly.”⁸ He also emphasized that the saying of “following the Party while being alive, following God after death” rightly reflects the attitude of religious followers with a sense of patriotism: they follow the Party while keeping their own religious faith and belief in God. We must convert that saying into a motto to educate and mobilize religious compatriots to engage actively in production activities and on the battlefield,”⁹ and “the yearning of religious followers is to achieve bodily and spiritually welfare. To that aim, people should strive for developing production and increasing income. Simultaneously, religious freedom should be protected, providing that religious activities do not hinder people’s production activities or go against the Government’s laws and policies.”¹⁰

Similarly, Ho Chi Minh also paid due attention to the solidarity among different nationalities and ethnic groups living in Vietnam. He always advised that the Party and the Government should take care of the solidarity of all nationalities, without any discrimination; “all nationalities should stand closely united like siblings to build the common Homeland, to make every nationality prosper and flourish. All highlanders should stand closely united, ethnic minorities should unite with ethnic majorities, the more advanced and developed nationalities must support the less developed ones, so that all nationalities could flourish together and stand united like siblings from the same family.”¹¹ He also affirmed that “The Viet or the Yao, the Muong or Rhade, the Rajlai or Sedang or Bahna...and other ethnic minorities are all the descendants of the Vietnamese, all are brothers and sisters. We should be wholeheartedly faithful to each other in every situation.”¹² He especially stressed that, “for those people who are misguided, we should convert them with compassion and generosity. In doing so, a great solidarity will be established and, once the latter is established, our future will surely be glorious.”¹³ There are, in Ho Chi Minh’s thought, many other important arguments on solidarity and national great solidarity, which are deeply imbued with humanistic significance. Until his passing away, Ho Chi Minh was concerned about solidarity, first of all, the unity within the Party, which was the apple of his eye. In his Testament, which he left for the Party and all the people, he wrote “Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cell, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party like the apple of their eye.”

While inheriting Ho Chi Minh’s thought on solidarity and national great solidarity, from the time of its Fourth National Congress, the Com-

⁸ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 606.

⁹ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 11, 575.

¹⁰ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 11, 575.

¹¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 282, 418, 460-461.

¹² Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 4, 217.

¹³ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 4, 246-247.

munist Party of Vietnam has been paying more and more attention to the development of “national great solidarity.” The Party has initiated the country’s comprehensive renovation. The Party realized that there exist many pressing issues relating to the legitimate interests of the people. In order to find solutions to these issues, the Party must work out appropriate policies and guidelines for different social strata including the working class, peasants, intellectuals, the young, women, people from ethnic minorities, religious followers, as well of the Vietnamese residing and working abroad. The Party’s views on national great solidarity have been constantly supplemented and improved during the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth National Congresses of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

Inheriting Ho Chi Minh’s thought on solidarity and national great solidarity, the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam affirmed that national great solidarity is “the strategic policy and the main driving force for constructing and safeguarding the Homeland.” This strategic guideline aims at “realizing the unity among all nationalities, religions, classes, social strata, genders, ages, regions, Party and non-Party members, working people and pensioners – all members belonging to the great family of Vietnamese nationalities regardless of their place of residence in Vietnam or abroad.”¹⁴ The Party pointed out clearly the principle of building national great solidarity, which consists of “promoting the strength of the whole national community, the patriotic tradition, self-reliance, will and, national pride – making the goals of a firm maintenance of national independence, unification, a strong country, and a civilized, just and democratic society the common point; respecting the diversity of views and opinions which do not go against national common interests; eradicating preconceptions and discrimination based on class and background differences; building the spirit of openness and mutual trust; and having a future-oriented attitude.”¹⁵

The idea of “national great solidarity” has been clearly articulated and concisely stated in Section 10 of the Report of the Tenth Party Central Committee, under the title “To bring into full play the strength of national great solidarity, renovate the mode of action of the Vietnamese National Fatherland Front and other people associations.” The fundamental thought on national great solidarity, which was presented in the documents of the Tenth Party Congress, can be stated briefly as follows:

First, national great solidarity, which is based on the alliance between the working class, the peasant class, and the intellectuals, under the leadership of the Party, is the strategic policy of the cause of revolution in Vietnam.

¹⁴ The Communist Party of Vietnam, *The Documents of the Party’s Tenth National Congress* (Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House, 2001), 123.

¹⁵ Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the Tenth National Congress*, 124.

Second, national great solidarity is the source of the strength, the driving force, and the decisive factor guaranteeing the sustainable victory of the cause of constructing and safeguarding the Homeland.

Third, the goal of national independence and unification is to serve as the common point to adhere and unite compatriots from all nationalities, religions, social strata – and all people living within Vietnam, as well as residing abroad.

Fourth, all preconceptions, prejudgments, and discrimination, based on class and background differences, are to be eliminated. Different views, given that they do not go against national interests, should be treated with respect. The tradition of benevolence and righteousness as well as the spirit of openness, mutual trust, and a future-oriented attitude, should be promoted in order to achieve political stability and social consensus.¹⁶

In its documents, the Party also affirms that “national great solidarity” is the national cause. Therefore, every class, social stratum, and community, the Party, the Government, and people’s associations and organizations should work out concrete measures to build the national solidarity block. For example, regarding solidarity with religious followers, the Party affirms that “Religious people are an important part of the national great solidarity block. We should realize consistently the policy of respecting and guaranteeing religious freedom, the people’s right to pursue or not pursue faith, as well as the right to conduct legitimate religious activities. We should unite people from different religious backgrounds, religious followers, and non-followers, and promote the fine ethical and cultural values of different religions.”¹⁷

Thus, as stated above, the Party’s view is an inheritance and development of Ho Chi Minh’s views on solidarity and national great solidarity. Based on the practice of the resistance wars against colonialism and imperialism, especially the practice of the renovation years, the Communist Party of Vietnam has come to some important conclusions: national great solidarity is the source of the strength, the main driving force, and the decisive factor guaranteeing the sustainable victory of the cause of constructing and safeguarding the Homeland.

Social Solidarity and Social Consensus

Social solidarity is the *unity, reconciliation, and cooperation* among social strata and classes in society. To affirm that social solidarity is the main driving force for the cause of constructing and safeguarding the Homeland means that unity and consensus, rather than contradiction, are the driving forces. The scope of the category of social solidarity is narrower than that of unity. While the latter, which is understood as unity in diversity,

¹⁶ Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the Tenth National Congress*, 116.

¹⁷ Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the Tenth National Congress*, 122.

can be used to characterize both natural and social phenomena, the former, which is understood as social unity, is applicable in a limited way to the range of social phenomena. Thus, unity implies solidarity. Social solidarity is social unity, or social consensus, or social unity in diversity. Therefore, in order to interpret solidarity as the driving force for social development, Vietnam ought to resolve a more general problem: the problem of contradiction or the unity of opposites playing the role of the driving force of motion and development.

The problem of contradiction or the resolution of contradiction as the driving force of development was posed a long time ago by Vietnamese scholars engaging in teaching and researching Marxist philosophy in Vietnam. There are different views on this problem. Some suggest that contradiction is an objective and self-resolving process, and that, therefore, it is the source and at the same time the driving force of development. On the contrary, others think that contradiction is the source of development, and the only solution to contradiction is the driving force for development. It is more plausible to support the view that contradiction is the source, originating motion and development, and that the only *solution to contradiction* is the driving force of development.

According to Hegel's and Marx's views, contradiction is a process, starting from opposites (struggling against each other) to the solution of contradiction, unity. For Marx, contradictoriness is objective and universal, and it exists in every thing and phenomenon, in nature, society, and human thought. While, in nature, contradictions are solved by themselves, independently of the subjective will of human beings, in society contradictions are solved through the conscious activities of human beings. Man's cognitive activities play a significant role in the process of resolving contradictions. In other words, once contradictions occur in society, there is a need to solve them and, *sooner or later*, they must be resolved. Here man's activities play an important role in resolving that, '*sooner or later*.' Besides, man's cognitive activity also has reverse effects on the process of the formation and development of these very contradictions. If one holds that the solution to contradiction is the very driving force of development, early identification and resolving of contradiction play a crucial role in creating social solidarity and consensus. In order to establish social consensus, social solidarity, and social unity, one should identify contradictions quickly and seek to solve them. The timely solution of contradictions is a foundation for social consensus and solidarity. Social consensus and social solidarity are important outcomes of the resolving of social contradictions.

Social Solidarity and the Realization of Democracy in Vietnam Today

Social Solidarity and the Issues of Harmonization of Diverse Interests

Essentially, the source of social contradictions is the contradiction among interests. Interests are the direct driving forces promoting man to act

in order to satisfy his own needs and demands. In every man as well in society, there exist various kinds of interests. The variety of interests is determined by the diversity of demands. In society, interests may be identical but usually they are different and even contradictory. Therefore, people with different interests pursue different activities. As a result, the development of history, as Friedrich Engels rightly affirmed, is something that belongs to the will of individuals, something *objective*. The tendency of development in history is expressed through a diagonal of a parallelogram of forces. The diagonal will be extended longer when man's activities are directed only in one direction, and, on the contrary, it will become shorter if man's activities are directed in many different directions.

The question is how to help man's will and the activity of human beings to converge in a unitary direction or, in other words, how to unite man's will and activity. If one's interest is the driving force that moves a person to act, the key way of having man's activity to converge in a unitary direction can be found in the (proper) *handling of the relationship among (different) interests*. It is known that there exist various interests. According to different criteria, interests can be classified differently. For example, based on the subjects of interests, interests can be divided into: individual, collective and social, and class and national. Even individual interests can also be further divided into: economic, political, cultural, and so on.

It is difficult to state generally which interest, among many interests, is the most important. One can only affirm that, depending on the concrete historical period, this or that interest becomes more pressing or important. For example, during the struggle for national independence, national interests rather than individual or class interests were more pressing and served as the main driving force to promote people to act. Many sacrificed not only their individual interests but even their lives for national existence. At such a time, individual and class interests united with national interests because, without the latter, individuals, let alone their interests or class interests, might have been eliminated. Therefore, in that context, national and individual interests were identical and served as the foundation for reinforcing social solidarity. However, in normal conditions, the existence of differences among interests is understandable, because every individual pursues his own interests, whereas communities and societies pursue other interests. The very diversity of interests brings about different tendencies in social development. Individual interests and social or community interests may be the same, but they also may be different and even contradictory to each other. Therefore, in planning a policy for social development, we must, first of all, give priority to social interests, and, next, the interests of communities. Finally, the promotion of individual interests is to be considered. Social or community interests themselves are common interests, answering the demands and needs of the whole society or community. On the other hand, the individual interests of the working masses are very diverse, and it is difficult to know to whose interests priority should be given.

However, individual interests of the working masses are the strongest driving force for encouraging and stimulating humans to act, because the satisfaction of individual interests directly answers the vital needs of individuals. A policy or guideline on social development, which is based on social interests and, then, community interests, will be successfully achieved when social and community interests are similar to individual interests. Therefore, the problem is how to ensure a certain planned social development simultaneously with promoting the pro-activity and enthusiasm of the relevant individuals and communities. Starting from social contradictions, which are essentially contradictions among interests, and their resolution as the driving force for social development, *a harmonious combination of interests* is the very foundation to encourage rational individual interests to work towards social development. When individual interests are harmoniously combined with community and social interests, the former are still able to become driving forces for human activities, which will bring positive results and benefits for the achievement of community and social interests. Social interests should become the common ground for community interests, which, in turn, should become the common denominator for individual interests. Thus, the principle of the *harmonious combination of various kinds of interest* becomes the *principle of mutual benefit*, which relies on the unity of interests to create matters of common concern. The harmonization of interests implies a respect and tolerance for various interests. This is very important in the context of Vietnam, in which 54 different nationalities and ethnic groups with different cultural traditions and religious beliefs have been living harmoniously together throughout our history. Thus, social solidarity means respect and tolerance of differences, and the awareness of the common care for the building of common identity.

Social Solidarity, Democracy, and Sustainable Development

The cause of renovation in Vietnam since 1986 has been of historical significance and has brought about great achievements in various spheres including the economic, political, social, cultural, and so on. The most important achievements are the establishment of social consensus, and the establishment and reinforcement of the national great solidarity block. National great solidarity has really become the main driving force for the country's development. The harmonious combination of various interests serves as the foundation for social consensus and social solidarity. Even within the sphere of foreign relations, the Party and the Government have consistently pursued the policy of befriending all nations in the world community on the basis of mutual respect for national sovereignty and mutual benefit. As a result, Vietnam has become a reliable counterpart for many countries around the world, and its national status in the international arena has been steadily enhanced.

Within the field of domestic policy, the principle of the harmonious combination of various interests has become the foundation for the national

strategy for sustainable development. The leaders of Vietnam intend to combine short-term with long-term interests, individual and collective with social interests, economic with political interests, social with cultural interests, as well as the interests among various regions in our country, and the interests of different classes and social strata. All the policies and guidelines of Vietnam are intended to aim at realizing the policy of combining all interests harmoniously in order to create social consensus and social solidarity. Only by relying on social consensus and social solidarity can the Vietnamese people bring their country towards sustainable development.

It should be remembered that, at the present stage of social development in Vietnam, the promotion of the national cause of industrialization, modernization, and quick and sustainable development, is a key view of the present socio-economic development strategy of Vietnam. The Party's 11th Congress, which was held in January 2011, stated clearly a point of view on national development for the forthcoming period. The Party affirmed that fast development in combination with sustainable development is a matter of primary importance: "sustainable development is the foundation for fast development, fast development is to create resources necessary for sustainable development. Fast development and sustainable development should be closely attached in planning and policies of socio-economic development. Attention should be particularly paid to socio-political stability, national defense and security, steadfast protection of national independence, sovereignty, national unity, and territorial integrity in order to secure the fast and sustainable development of the country."¹⁸

Vietnam's strategy for development expresses clearly a combination of the traditional and classic view with a new and distinctive view. Within the fast and sustainable development strategy of Vietnam can be seen the following points:

First, the elements of socio-political stability, the steadfast safeguard of national independence and territorial integrity, the guarantee of political security, social order and safety, active and proactive international integration, and the creation of peaceful and favourable conditions for national development, are *the prerequisite conditions* for quick and sustainable development. Political changes in a number of countries in the world today show that we cannot talk about development, not to mention sustainable development, without socio-political stability, the steadfast safeguard of national independence, the maintenance of territorial integrity, and so on.

Second, the strategy of quick and sustainable development focuses on the enhancement of the quality of development, the combination of economic growth and the comprehensive development of man, the achievement of democracy, social progress and justice, the creation of employment opportunities, the improvement of the quality of life, and the encouragement of legally acquiring wealth, with the reduction of poverty, and attention to the

¹⁸ Communist Party of Vietnam, *The Documents of the Party's Eleventh National Congress* (Hà Nội, Việt Nam : Thế Giới Publishers, 2011), 99.

protection and improvement of the environment in every step of development. In other words, the strategy of quick and sustainable development is oriented simultaneously to three aims – economic development, social development, and the protection of natural resources and the environment.

Third, the strategy of sustainable development in Vietnam addresses different aspects of development comprehensively, including noticeably harmonious solutions to the relationship between quick and sustainable development, quantitative growth and qualitative improvement, development in scope and in content, harmony between economic development, and dealing with social issues, economic growth, and environmental protection. Harmony is, therefore, one of the important characteristics of the strategy of sustainable development.

Fourth, the central issue – the key goal of the strategy of sustainable development – is the issue of people’s livelihood, which is expressed in the strategy mentioned above. The strategy of quick and sustainable development pays attention to the quality of economic development and orients itself towards the comprehensive development of man, the achievement of democracy, social progress and social justice, the creation of employment opportunities, the improvement of the quality of life, the encouragement of the legal acquisition of wealth, together with the reduction of poverty and attention to the protection and improvement of the environment in every stage of development. Clearly, this goal, after all, is to solve better and better the issue of people’s livelihood, and to guarantee a comfortable and happy life for the entire population. In the case of Vietnam, the strategy of quick and sustainable development is an effective way to guarantee the country’s socialistic-oriented development that aims at the goal of “wealthy people, strong country, just, democratic and civilized society.”

Thus, in order to implement effectively the strategy of quick and sustainable development, we need to continue to create strong and sustainable changes in awareness, to renovate strong thinking about development, and to grasp thoroughly the various policies, plans, projects, and action programs. It is necessary to implement this in a wide scope and at every level, with the participation of all branches and levels of the whole political system, with the participation and consensus of the various communities of economic actors, and with all citizens. Here, we can see the close relation between the achievement of democracy and sustainable development, because achieving and practicing democracy is a constituent of sustainable development. To practice democracy is to multiply the content of sustainable development. It stems from a very important stance which considers human beings as both the aim and the subject of development. Human resources provide a long-term competitive advantage and are a decisive factor in the development of a nation. Widely practicing democracy will promote the creativity of individuals, which contributes to the rapid and sustainable development of our country. The greater the degree of democracy, the deeper is the social consensus, and the greater is the national unity.

To bring democracy into full play and to make it a resource for development, two conditions should be satisfied: first, creating an equal opportunity for everybody to learn and building an educated society in order to raise people's knowledge; second, practicing mastership of the people in all institutional settings. These are necessary for ensuring democracy in all facets of social life and will serve to expand direct democracy. Democracy is closely linked with discipline and laws.

This standpoint on sustainable development with concrete contents was recognized and was reflected from the beginning in the practice of the Party and the Government of Vietnam. Sustainable development has become a consistent policy in the leadership and governance of the process of national development in recent decades. Both at the international and national levels, the Vietnamese government has strongly been committed to implementing sustainable development as well as linking sustainable development to the all-round development of man, and it considers human development as both the aim and the driving force of socio-economic development.¹⁹

Conclusion

Solidarity is a precious tradition of the Vietnamese, thanks to which the Vietnamese nation has overcome many historical challenges to survive and flourish. Today, solidarity is the main driving force for national development in the context of globalization and international integration. Solidarity has become the driving force because it reflects the joint aspirations and forces of the different social strata and communities of the Vietnamese people. In the multi-cultural and multi-religious context of Vietnam, social solidarity is the very foundation for sustainable development in Vietnam.

The dialectical relation between social solidarity, social consensus, and the realization and practice of democracy can be seen in the fact that as democracy in Vietnamese society has expanded, society has become more open and consensual; defense and security are stably maintained; and political and social life have remained stable. There have been many positive changes in the face of the country; the position and status of Vietnam in the international arena has improved and been heightened; and many positive elements for rapid and sustainable development have been created to improve the quality of life of the people.

¹⁹ For example, Government Decision number 153 (dated 2004) on the orientation of the strategy of sustainable development in Vietnam; the establishment of the National Council for sustainable development; the project on implementation of the 21 Agenda and the goals of the Millennium; as well as other official documents.

Human Development, Culture, and Socialism in Vietnam

Tran Tuan Phong

Human Development and Human Essence

In this essay, I would like to follow Karl Marx's view of human nature, in which we can see the specificity of human development – a development that is intimately related to human nature. For Marx, since human development is the upholding of human nature by human beings themselves, world history is the history of the process of the continuous development of the human essence or human nature through the process of labor; “the whole of what is called world history is nothing but the creation of man by human labor, and the emergence of nature for man; he therefore has the evident and irrefutable proof of his self-creation, of his own origins.”¹

The biggest difference between human beings and animals consists in the fact that, while animals are unconscious of their nature and their activity, and behave instinctively and passively, the life activity of man is active and conscious. This is because “Man is a species-being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species (his own as well as those of other things) as his object, but – and this is only another way of expressing it – also because he treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a *universal* and therefore a free being.”² When man adopts the species as his object,

Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity. It is just because of this that he is a species-being. Or it is only because he is a species-being that he is a conscious being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity.³

Thus, the universality and freedom of man is closely related to the fact that man adopts his species as his object, makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. The universality of human nature could be understood, then, as the existence of human nature as the original

¹ Erich Fromm, *The Nature of Man* (London: Macmillan Pub Co, 1961), accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/fromm/works/1961/man/ch04.htm>.

² Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>.

³ Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*.

ground, the inner source of human potentialities. The making of human nature (species essence – *Gattungswesen*) as an object confirms the proactiveness and creativity of human beings in their life activity: through a reflection on their nature or their essence, human beings can see their potentialities and the ways to realize them. Human development is the way human beings realize their nature. Here human development, as the concrete and various manifestations of human nature in different forms of cultural development, is the specific expression of the universal human essence.

For Marx, human nature has both general and particular elements; that is, he maintains that human beings are characterized not only by universal qualities (of species essence or human nature), which are immanently present within history and cultures, but also by particular qualities, reflecting historical and cultural diversity. Thus, in *Capital*, Marx talked about “human nature in general” and “human nature as modified in each epoch.”

“Human nature in general” could be understood to mean that all human beings share a common human nature, but it does not mean that human nature is something fixed or an *a priori* given or a potential to be made actual. On contrary, human nature should be understood *ontologically* as the original source and infinite potentiality for human development. As such, human nature offers both a possibility and a commonality for human development. It is a point of reference and a shared background for all kinds of human existence, and both offers a dynamic feature and is a unity of the whole process of human development. The full development of human nature, or the full realization (or unfolding) of human nature could serve as the ideal and ultimate meaning for human striving. The idea of all-round human development mentioned in Marx’s writing also means the full development of human powers and capacities: “The cultivation of all the qualities of the social human being, production of the same in a form as rich as possible in needs, because rich in qualities and relations – production of this being as the most total and universal social product for, in order to take gratification in a many-sided way, he must be capable of many pleasures, hence cultured to a high degree – is likewise a condition of production founded on capital.”⁴

As infinite potentiality, human nature is open for human beings to interpret and choose. The variety of interpretations means the expressions of human creativity in the development of human nature in different cultural contexts or traditions. Here we can see how human nature is developed and “modified in each epoch” or culture. A cultural tradition is both the manifestation of human creativity and the particularization of human nature in concrete historical contexts. Human creativity here has much to do with human self-awareness, the very awareness of the potentiality of human nature and the ability to choose a particular option and act in particular situation to unfold further (the potentiality of) human nature. Of course, self-awareness is

⁴ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 409.

not given to human beings at the moment of birth but is the result of education and socialization in the form of the social life of a certain community. As such, human creativity is the cultivation and manifestation of human nature in a given community, but it is also the driving force contributing to the further developing of human nature and the transforming of the cultural tradition in which it is formed. It is the openness of human nature as infinite potentiality that contributes to the dynamic character of human development and the diversity of cultural traditions.

Thus, through the creative process of human development, human nature is made, defined, and concretized in the various forms of culture (or cultural tradition). In other words, human nature does not exist apart from cultural traditions but is realized or embodied in them through the creative activity of concrete human agencies. The concrete realization or embodiment of human nature in a specific cultural tradition can be seen in the way the people of a community organize their collective life. As such, the embodiment of human nature is an *emerging quality* in the life of a community. It serves as a pattern of organization that gives order, co-ordination, and stability to the life of the people of that community and, consequently, to help the people of the community to develop their talents and abilities to the fullest. As the pattern or form of the organization of a given community, the manifestation of human nature offers both opportunities and limitations for the people of the community to develop their potential.

We can see, then, that human development, as the process of the unfolding of human nature, is mediated through different stages and in different historical contexts of cultural traditions. Cultural traditions, here, serve as the historical and social space within which human individuals are born; they become human persons during the process of socialization, and through the education and training that initiate and engage them into the social life of the community. Thus, the formation of human beings as social beings is conditioned by traditional cultures, but once they are (more or less) formed, they can continue to develop further the potential of human nature and transform the traditional culture in which they are born and being socialized. Human beings, therefore, are in a constant dialogue with their own traditions to be formed and educated as well as in a dialogue with human nature to transform their own traditional culture.

While being located between a given cultural tradition and human nature, human beings are both the passive receivers of that tradition and the active agencies who can change and transform the given tradition. Here we can see the dialectical relation between cultural tradition as a normative system of values, customs, and norms, and cultural tradition as a living social practice for human development. This system determines the formation of man: in order to become a member of a given cultural community, an individual has to undergo a process of learning and training (cultivation and self-cultivation) to obtain necessary social skills and faculties. But only through the course of the social practice of these very members can the system exist and be renewed or changed.

As Charles Taylor writes “Social tradition can continue to exert an influence through individuals only to the extent that it is continually renewed by them – like all structures, it continues to exist by virtue of practice.”⁵ That practice, as Taylor rightly points out, “relies on a never exhausted background which can simultaneously be the source of innovative statements and articulations.”⁶ In order to maintain and develop cultural tradition further, human beings must be properly cultivated and developed through the process of learning and training, through practical engagement in real life. The real knowledge or standards of truth on which one can strive to cultivate and improve oneself can only be given, accepted, and transmitted by the cultural tradition in which one lives. Through self-cultivation, man can learn to know how to relate meaningfully and properly to other human beings and to the things in the world around him. It is the cultural tradition that serves as the foundation for individuals to cultivate themselves and engage in the world, but it is only through the active engagement of human individuals that the cultural tradition is transformed and renewed constantly. The renovation and transformation of cultural tradition is, at the same time, the further unfolding and development of human nature, which serves as the original source and the ultimate purpose for human striving. As Jean Grondin rightly says,

What distinguishes our humanity, is not a rational capacity that would catapult us into a divine world of pure ideas. Rather it is the ability to go beyond our particularity by taking account the heritage that can help us grow above and beyond our limited selves.⁷

Thus, we can see how human development as the unfolding of human nature is mediated through different cultural traditions. While being located within that dynamic process of human development, cultural traditions are the concretizations of human nature. So here we can see the dialectical relationship between human development and cultural traditions: without cultural traditions human nature remains potential and formless; it is only through the formation of cultural traditions that human nature is given shape and form (or being determined). Still, human nature serves as the source and condition of possibility for cultural traditions to be developed. The concrete contents of cultural traditions are the manifestations of human nature in different contexts. The human character of cultural traditions is the product of the creative interpretation of human beings about human nature.

⁵ Charles Taylor, “Language and Society,” in *Communicative Action*, eds. Axel Honneth and Hans Joas (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 25.

⁶ Charles Taylor, “Language and Society,” 25.

⁷ J. Grondin, *Sources of Hermeneutics* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995).

The Cultural Context of Human Development

Human development as the development of human essence can be seen at many levels: as an individual with its animal instincts for survival, or as a member of a specific community with a distinctive form of life or culture, or as a member of the larger community of humanity. As a member of any community and culture, the formation of man as a social being is a process of socialization in which human individuals engage with the world and participate in living social practice. It is a continuous process of transformation of the self, both ethically and ontologically, the very process in which self- openness (self-discovery) and the disclosure of the things and the world around take place simultaneously. Cultural development (education or cultivation) is the “properly human way of developing one’s natural talents and capacities”⁸ and, thus, through the process of human *development*, man overcomes his own particularity and rises to the universal. So human development is the process of gaining both the sense of himself and the sense of the world around him. The sustainability of human development should be founded on cultural traditions – not only on a specific cultural tradition, but also on the very culture of humanity. In this context, human development is also the process of learning from others, the process of dialogue aiming at sustaining and further unfolding human potentiality. The Good Life or Life in Peace is the goal of human life that serves as the guiding principle for human development, understood as a kind of growing about and beyond one’s limited self. This kind of self-transcendence can be achieved through an active activity of human development understood both in moral and ontological senses. We can say that the noble goal of the good life, the life in peace, determines the formation and development of human beings, but it is only through the active self-cultivation of human beings that the concept of the good life can be realized.

So far, we can see that cultural traditions serve as the historical and social space within which human individuals are born, and that they become human persons during the process of socialization – through the education and training that initiate and engage them into the social life of the community. Thus, the formation of human beings as social beings is conditioned by traditional cultures. Here, for man to develop his human nature, some necessary conditions need to be met. Man as a social being always lives in a concrete community, a concrete society. Human development, thus, always takes place in the concrete conditions of a certain historical context (of human development); as Marx stated clearly in his materialist understanding of history:

The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in

⁸ H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 2003), 10.

the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity.⁹

The ideal or humane society is the society where conditions are provided for man to develop fully its nature. In this context, we can understand the relation between human development and socialism. Capitalism is a society when human development is alienated; man can only have a “dehumanized life,” a life that does not correspond to human nature. Capitalism is the society in which the “complete working out of the human content appears as a complete emptying-out, this universal objectification as total alienation, and the tearing-down of all limited, one-sided aims as sacrifice of the human end-in-itself to an external end.”¹⁰ Capitalism, therefore, is “condemned for its inhuman effects: for stunting human life and hindering the development of human powers and capacities (particularly but not exclusively those of the working class).”¹¹

In Marx’s socialist thought, we can see that socialism is the society that could provide an opportunity for humans to develop – for all people, including the working class, the proletarians, and not just the capitalists (and those with private property). This is the society that meets the requirement of a meaningful human life, a life in accordance with human nature. As Marx says in the *Grundrisse*,

What is wealth other than the universality of individual needs, capacities, pleasures, productive forces etc., created through universal exchange? The full development of human mastery over the forces of nature, those of so-called nature as well as of humanity’s own nature? The absolute working out of his creative potentialities, with no presupposition other than the previous historic development, which makes this totality of development, i.e., the development of all human powers as such the end in itself, not as measured on a predetermined yardstick?¹²

Thus, socialism is the place in which all human potential and essential powers are used for the satisfaction of human needs and to serve the all-round development of human nature, because socialism “is the higher form of society, a society in which the full and free development of every individual forms the ruling principle.”¹³

⁹ Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm#a2>.

¹⁰ Marx, *Grundrisse*, 488.

¹¹ S. Sayer, *Marxism and Human Nature* (London: Routledge, 1998), 165.

¹² Marx, *Grundrisse*, 488.

¹³ Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 3, ed. F. Engels (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 592.

Ho Chi Minh's Thought and Human Development in Vietnam

As the great leader of the Vietnamese Revolution, President Ho Chi Minh, understood very well, human development is manifested not only in the development of separate individuals but also in the development of all the people. As Ho Chi Minh emphasizes: "in a narrow sense, the (term) Man means family, brothers, relatives, and friends. In a wider sense, it means fellow countrymen (compatriots). In a still wider sense it means the whole of humanity."¹⁴ The authentic happiness that man is looking for is realized in the complete unfolding of human nature (*becoming human*). This is the very ideal and ultimate goal of human development. The pursuit of happiness for mankind, for society, and for the nation is the main goal of the entire revolutionary life of Ho Chi Minh; "my entire life has only one goal: To strive for the interest of the Nation and the happiness of the people.... Anywhere, any time, I pursued only one goal: To do for the sake of national interests and people's benefits,"¹⁵ or "I have only one desire, the most earnest desire, that our country be completely independent, that our people be completely free, that all our compatriots have enough food, clothing and housing, and are able to learn and make progress and enjoy a fruitful, free, and happy life."¹⁶

Ho Chi Minh had his own way of articulating human development and its relation to socialism, Ho Chi Minh thought that the goal of socialism is to bring about opportunities and conditions for all people to develop, i.e., socialism must deal with the problems of people's livelihoods, and provide welfare, freedom, and happiness to all the people of Vietnam. Among the rights that people can enjoy, Ho Chi Minh paid particular attention to the right to live and to the way to improve people's living standards. To the question "What is socialism?" Ho Chi Minh wrote "the goal of socialism is to improve constantly people's living standards."¹⁷ Therefore, the policy of the Party and the Government is to take the *utmost care of people's lives*:

If the people suffer from hunger, the Party and Government are guilty; if the people do not have enough clothes, the Party and Government are guilty, if the people cannot have access to education, the Party and Government are guilty, if the people are sick, the Party and Government are guilty;¹⁸

What does the Party struggle for? For people to have adequate food, shelter, and be free. What does every Party member struggle

¹⁴ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works* (Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House, 1995), vol. 5, 644.

¹⁵ "Works" "the most earnest desire, that our country be completely independent," vol. 4, 240.

¹⁶ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, 161-162.

¹⁷ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 31.

¹⁸ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 7, 572.

for? For people to have food, shelter, and be free too. What is socialism? Where people can have food, shelter, be happy and free.¹⁹

Thus, socialism for Ho Chi Minh is, first of all, how to deal with the necessary needs of the people. Without proper solutions to those needs, the construction of socialism is meaningless and the people will not care about socialism. As Ho Chi Minh said to his cadres: “with an empty stomach people pay no attention to what you say, regardless of how attractively you may speak.”²⁰ The goal of socialism is to bring welfare, education and happiness to the people; “Briefly and plainly speaking, socialism first of all is to liberate the working people from poverty, and bring employment, wellbeing, and happiness to the people.”²¹

Ho Chi Minh also paid special attention to the cause of education, because “an illiterate nation is a weak nation.” In his letter to students, he says that “we have to rebuild the country inherited from our ancestors and catch up with other countries in the globe.” This task can be done because the students of a new generation “are able to acquire the education of an independent country, the education that transforms you into citizens useful for the nation of Vietnam, the education that can develop comprehensively your given potential.”²² The goal to

‘develop comprehensively your given potential’ not only brings about happiness for every man, but also helps to rebuild the country left to us by the ancestors in order to catch up with other countries in the world. This is the task of the country – the common work that every descendant of the Dragon and the Fairy, regardless of being young or old, male or female, rich or poor, must take part in and strive for.²³

The cause of development for the sake of human happiness, in Ho Chi Minh’s thought, is the common cause of the whole nation. The future of the nation and the country depends on every man, and his or her constant effort and ceaseless development:

if everyone is good, the whole village will be good and the country will be strong. Man is the root of the village and the country. If everyone strives to carry out a new mode of life, the nation will certainly be strong and prosperous.... There is too much work to do in the world, learning will never be complete. Only with learning and edu-

¹⁹ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 8, 396.

²⁰ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, 411.

²¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 17.

²² Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 4, 152.

²³ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, 240.

education man advance, the more we learn, the more we will make progress.²⁴

While talking about socialism, Ho Chi Minh always stressed, first of all, the need to improve people's living standards and to provide all people with adequate food, shelter and education: "To sum up, particular attention should be paid to the works that can promote the material and spiritual life of the people."²⁵ He affirmed that

we have gained independence and freedom, but independence and freedom have no significance at all if our people still suffer from hunger and shortages. The people understand clearly the value of freedom and independence only when they are provided with adequate food and shelter.²⁶

The ultimate goal of our Revolution is the happiness that our people can enjoy in their lives, the very lives in which there is potential for real changes for development and growth. This is what Ho Chi Minh thought about the goal of building socialism in our country: "socialism first of all is to liberate the working people from poverty, and to bring employment, welfare and happiness to the people."²⁷ Here we can see the very close relationship between socialism and human development in Vietnam.

²⁴ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 5, 99.

²⁵ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 8, 396.

²⁶ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 8, 396.

²⁷ Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 17.

Multicultural India and the Politics of Recognition: Envisaging Indian Culture as a Way of Life

Sreekala M. Nair

Theorizing on multiculturalism is a task that philosophers find difficult for multiple reasons. To begin with, multiculturalism, by principle, is something that sets out to respect plurality in our conceptions and practices and, as a result, it stands against the standard form of philosophizing, i.e., reducing the particulars to a *genre*, be it an individual idea or an individual object / being. In fact, the whole task of multicultural theories is to raise the question of difference in a way that runs against the traditional forms of philosophical system building.¹ It is well known that multiculturalism, by and large, borrows tools of analysis from postmodern philosophies, and visibly shares a dislike for exclusionary hierarchical impulses of normativity. The multiculturalist, quite like postmodern theorist, distrusts universalism and foundationalism, with the difference that the former takes care to avoid negativism and anarchism prevalent in postmodernism, since it has certain practical goals to attain. Even as they attempt to unsettle the dominant systems of moral authority and linguistic practice like their postmodern counterparts, the constructive and progressive approach of the multiculturalists loom large in their theories. As Cynthia Willett observes, “While the postmodernist may argue that linguistic dissonance and moral ambiguity are unsurpassable resources in themselves for attacking hierarchical constructions of knowledge and power, transformative multiculturalists aim to establish in the margins of hegemonic systems alternative sources of meaning and moral authority.”² How this transformative multiculturalism is realized may vary in different cultures and traditions. This paper is an attempt to draw attention to one of the ancient models of multiculturalist living that survives even today, the Indian variety. This attempt is to depict some of the unique features of Indian multicultural living that, in a way, challenge the established norms in theorizing multiculturalism. If listening to the voices of dissent and embracing a foundationless foundation for a concrete ethics are marked as prime features of a multiculturalist community, Indian culture can well be studied under this. But, at the same time, note that it rises to question some of the accepted norms for theorizing on multiculturalism. The paper

¹ Bill Martin, “Multiculturalism: Consumerist or Transformational?” in *Theorizing on Multiculturalism: A Guide to the Current Debate*, ed. Cynthia Willett (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 121.

² Cynthia Willett, Introduction to *Theorizing on Multiculturalism: A Guide to the Current Debate*, ed. Cynthia Willett (Oxford: Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 3.

also argues that the variety of cultures that evolved in India deserves serious scholarly attention and a larger share in cultural studies, since it has deeply affected the cultural life of most of Asia. Finally, the paper shall address the politics of recognizing the *other* in multicultural living as a philosophical tool to assert self-identity.

Conceiving Multicultural India: The Bouquet Analogy

Briefly, culture may be defined as the values and ethos of a community, which is kept alive and dynamic, and is expected to function as a guardian of the collective interest of the people. It is often pointed out that every culture carries within its innate potencies to protect or safeguard it whenever an external force poses a threat to it. A marvelous example available in Indian history is that of the Renaissance movement. Despite the fact that each one of us participates in our culture, culture *per se* is something we cannot be fully conscious of; in other words, there is always something more to it than we are aware of.³ There seems to be something like a meaning scheme in our cultural arena by which we live. We are quite unconscious of it most of the time, and recognise these unformulated axioms only when they get presented to us in a sudden splash of revealed conscience. An elite intervention, therefore, seems necessary to bring about culture as a whole before us, to theorize on culture.⁴

Conceptualizing on community culture seems harder; a lot of abstraction is required to do it at the social level. It is a known fact that the identity and individuality of a particular culture rest with the metaphysical and moral assumptions it preserves; these characteristics form the invisible, non-empirical core, the access around which more phenomenal and mundane customs and habits revolve. Stripped of these philosophical cores, one could draw parallels between any two cultures, simply based on the empirical theories and pragmatic techniques available to them.

To argue in favor of a common synthetic form of culture for the whole of India, almost a subcontinent, demands over and above a good grasp of the tradition and history of this land, as well as access to the conceptual tools standardly used here to connote a common unifying culture. India reflects a mini globe, encapsulating different cultures, religions, and languages in her rather vast territory for centuries – so much so that it is almost a textbook for new and emerging multicultural communities to learn ways to settle issues that may emerge in a multicultural context. Anyone who would travel within India would be amazed at the divergent cultures that it nourishes within it, as though there exist several Indias within one single country. Every few kilometres there is a change, a change in the language,

³ T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, as quoted in *Philosophy, Culture and Pluralism*, ed. William Sweet (Aylmer: Editions du Scribe, 2002), vii.

⁴ William Sweet, Introduction in *Philosophy, Culture and Pluralism*, ed. William Sweet (Aylmer: Editions du Scribe, 2002), vii.

dialect, customs, and costumes, the way men wear their *dhoti* and turban, and the different jewellery with which women deck themselves on different occasions, different food habits, ways of entertainment (including music, dance and theatre) and various handicrafts. The existence of pluralities of culture necessarily raise a few epistemic questions such as how to determine truth or knowledge in a pluralistic society; what are the epistemic prerogatives of the dominant culture; and how it is related with other cultures, particularly when attempts are on to eliminate equations between the dominant culture and the minority cultures – questions that are answered in the Indian cultural soil down the centuries through the ways in which different cultural traditions are nurtured and retained with their distinct identity and collectively giving the image of a bouquet of different flowers. This bouquet analogy employed by S.R Bhatt, a noted contemporary Indian philosopher,⁵ is a better depiction of Indian culture than the *Thali* meal analogy put forth by the popular Indian writer and diplomat, Sashi Tharoor. In a *Thali* meal, each individual item stands separate, and there is no binding together of these individual delicacies. But, in a bouquet, the individual flowers, even as they stay independent, stand better placed together, constituting a very different entity than the individual constituents.

According to G.C. Pandey, among the three approaches to culture – the scientific, historical and metaphysical – it is the final approach that seems best suited to study Indian culture.⁶ It represents Indian culture as revealing universalistic elements, immutable and time tested. This idea of culture, however, is open to criticism now: any culture claiming to be a representation of a universalistic perception is cast with suspicion, for wisdom, as we believe today, cannot be confined to any one particular culture. Granting this view, it is only legitimate to argue that any culture which has its foundation in deep metaphysical thought, can claim more sustainability and has a right to represent human wisdom from a wider perspective.

We know that culture is one aspect of human life, which has a dual function of individuating as well as integrating the individual with the collective. It contributes elements of self-identity and also unites the *self* with the *other*. The challenge of every culture is to safeguard the values of the individual and the values of the community, and to see that there is no conflict between the two. Theoretically speaking, it is essential that individual values be given an upper hand over community values, since the very function of culture is to develop and safeguard individual values and transmit the same to the generations to come. With regard to Indian culture, philosophers often feel that individual values are taken on board at the cost of community values. Limiting our *inculturation* interests to individual items independently of their context may result in a negative response from the community. *Inculturation* is for the community. It has to do with meanings

⁵ See S. R. Bhatt's various works.

⁶ See G. C. Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, 2 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 1984).

and symbols and, therefore, the sensibility of the community should influence all decisions. Critics point out that in Indian philosophical discourses, and the foundation upon which the culture has been raised, the self looms large, and its role in human wellbeing is often blown out of proportion – and, to add to this, these works are almost silent about social values. Any form of defense for this can be issued by standing within the tradition alone, and, hence, will be considered circular. As a result, I choose to put aside this criticism, and instead argue that the intriguing relation between the *vyashti* (individual) and the *samashti* (community) in the Indian cultural context opens up a possibility to project Indian culture as a fresh model of synthesizing individual values with those of the collective, by conceiving the latter as a mere expansion of the former, and vice versa, the very identity of the self as rooted in the cultural evolution of the society.

It seems necessary that we pay serious attention to the charge that comes particularly from the postmodernist camp, that there is nothing called Indian culture *per se*, for, whatever we today identify as Indian culture, is only a collection of mutually exclusive ideas that have come from different cultural traditions. Over and above a perspectival difference, such a view attempts to undermine a tradition that survived for centuries, rich in both empirical and transcendental knowledge schemes. One could easily reject their claim that India was united for the first time by the British, with the railway that connected different parts of the vast land together, and by common tax and revenue charges, as naïve – for little they realize that cultural unity and its continuity is not achieved through empirical means. It requires only common sense to visualize a common cultural string that holds the whole country together, a string that flows out from fine metaphysical strands, strong yet invisible. The trouble with the postmodernists is this – that they choose to stand outside the tradition and criticize it, while the norm remains that, to be an effective cultural critic, one will have to be an insider of a cultural consciousness, for culture reveals its best to a participant. As Gadamer notes, one will necessarily have to place himself within the cultural tradition in order to bring out an effective interpretation.

The dissident streams of thought that have emerged from mainstream Hinduism down through the centuries, such as Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, the Tantra school, and the Bhakti cult, to name a few, have evolved as distinct cultures, and, in due course, they formed part of the mainstream Indian culture, not by being robbed of their identity, but rather by being accommodated within the dominant culture with their distinct identities. Interestingly, the pluralities thus added seem to have posed no threat to retaining the self-identity of the dominant culture. On the contrary, the dominant culture was enthusiastic to embrace them, probably with the conviction that the hermeneutics of the text and the tradition would only enhance the growth of the culture. True, multiculturalism *de jure* cries foul at the assimilative attempts of the dominant culture towards the minor cultures, but what has happened with regard to Indian culture is quite distinct from the normal case of assimilation. Here, the dissenting *other* has been accepted and accommodated

within the *self* at the cost of losing identity for the larger self. The mainstream or dominant culture in India never feared of losing its (self-)identity, for it has had its roots deep in the fertile soil of India's metaphysical bounty.

Contemporary political scientists have often held that it is difficult to brand India as a nation state, for, other than geographical continuity, what is it that binds us all together to construct a nation? Has it a common language, culture, tradition, ethos, values, heritage? The British, when declaring India independent, predicted that Indian political leaders would not find it easy to preserve it, nor take the nation ahead towards prosperity. Though history did not vindicate this prophecy, we cannot say that their assertion was irrational. As Vallabhai Patel has popularly commented, it is not the British who divided and ruled Indians; on the contrary, Indians were divided among themselves, and, hence, the British ruled.

Who is an Indian? Is there something called the *Indian ethos*, in partaking which one becomes an Indian? A popular Indian historian has mused that the more one gets deep into the history of India and the mobility of its borders, the more confused and amazed one gets. Confused, because it is difficult to decide culturally who really is an Indian. Are Pakistanis and Afghans Indians? Remember their countries were parts of India at some periods of history. Are Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans Indians? Are groups in Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia Indians? Once again, these are difficult questions for there to be a straight answer. The difficulty emerges precisely from the nature of this unique thing called *culture*, that refuses to yield to a plain, definitive, and explanatory kind of analysis. As Gadamer has popularly pronounced, *understanding* culture, or any human science for that matter, demands hermeneutic intervention, the only method conducive to bringing about knowledge regarding them.

The Problem of Self Identity in a Multicultural Environment

The issue of identity has emerged as one particular problem that overlaps with almost all issues in the postmodern world. Formulating self-identity in light of the changing patterns of democratic and technocratic society that are reflected in the new emerging social relations is definitely one of the major tasks of contemporary philosophy. Since identity politics has occupied the center stage in cultural studies in postmodern philosophy, it is imperative for anyone theorizing on multiculturalism to address the issue. Cultural elements such as religion, language, customs, and traditions play a significant role in shaping our self-identity. In a multicultural, multi-religious, multi-linguistic community like India, burdened with a caste hierarchy to top all of that, issues of self-identity remain. To borrow David Chalmer's terminology, it is the hard problem in the field of philosophy of culture.

It is envisaged that the Lévinasian theory of the *other*, that the *other* is a responsibility that in a way defines oneself, helps to resolve the problem of the *other* in a multicultural environment, particularly that of India. The

Lévinasian notion of the *other* suggests that understanding the *other* is essential to understanding and expanding the horizon of the *self*. According to Lévinas, a true subject responds to the *other* in a way that defines himself. There is no way in which the subject can get rid of the *other*. The *other* falls upon him as a necessity, and responding to the *other* is his responsibility. In fact, the *other* does not stay outside the subject; it extends to the *self*. However, this *other*, which is an inextricable part of my consciousness, is not given objectively, and philosophy is the alchemy whereby this alterity is transmuted into sameness by means of the cognizing ego.

Lévinas speaks of the face of the *other* as one that commands justice for others: "The other's face is not a case of justice but its very source."⁷ The Lévinasian *other* loses its stimulating force if the face is taken either as something too real or as something too sublime.⁸ Notice that, in the present context, we are confronting a dual *other* – *other* as an individual and *other* as a culture. Lévinas indeed speaks of *other* in two different senses, as the non-personal *other*, e.g., *other language*, *other religion*, etc. referred by the lower case *other*, and also as the *other person*, the upper case *Other*. Lévinas argues that the latter kind defines the *self* in a more serious way and intervenes in constituting self-identity more significantly than the former, and, hence, we have a greater responsibility to respond to the *other individual*, than to other cultures. Nevertheless, the involvement of the Lévinasian notion of the *other* as a necessity and responsibility permits us to argue that individual cultures have an obligation to not only tolerate the *Other*, but to favor its development as well. Stretching the theory too far, however, is not feasible, since Lévinas is not clear how it may happen that the *Other* appears to us without being reduced to *somebody* or *something* in the world.

In order to blur the divide between cultures and to cause the collapse of cultural walls, multicultural theorists contemplate the possibility of constructing cross-cultural norms. Cultural anthropologists, however, stand divided on this: while one group argues that it is possible to form cross-cultural norms, there is strong opposition to this. Those who oppose, argue that cultures are incommensurable and, hence, reducing one to another would be fallacious. Even as scholarly debate continues, history has indeed supplied us with a model, indigenously developed in India, wherein cross-cultural norms evolved with the sheer proximity of major cultures of prominent religions. For instance, Christianity in India has adopted several cultural practices from Hinduism and Indian culture in general, practices alien to its western counterpart, thus raising a sub species of Christianity called Indian Christianity. The same is the case with Judaism and Islam.

Both Indian culture and theories of multiculturalism strike a parallel note when they see that the notion of diversity receives a positive value. In

⁷ Bernhard Waldenfels, "Lévinas and the face of the other," in *The Cambridge Companion to Lévinas*, eds. Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 70.

⁸ Waldenfels, "Lévinas and the face of the other," 70.

the context of contemporary multiculturalism, Indian culture, too, has treated plurality and diversity differently. While plurality merely suggests the preservation of many, diversity points to the existence of many that are different, heterogeneous, and often incommensurable. Cultural theorists differ in their view on ways to preserve minority cultures. While some maintain that the aim should be only to shelter marginalized cultures from external pressures of disintegration, a few others argue in favor of protecting it from internal and external pressures alike. It is difficult to determine how the dominant tradition has protected the minor cultures in India, but one thing is definite – the dominant tradition always paid close attention to safeguarding the minor cultures from disintegration, as it turned out to be an internal requirement for it.

Indian Culture as a Way of Life

Throughout the ages, India has retained certain metaphysical principles upon which the edifice of culture has been raised; the primacy of the self stands uppermost among them. Most of the philosophical literature in India reiterates that a transcendental self is a presupposition of all empirical endeavors. For instance, in the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad*, Yajñavalkya has famously said “Oh Dear Mitreyi, Wife loves her husband not for the sake of the other, but for the sake of the self....In fact, all things are loved for the sake of the self.”⁹ Since the empirical self is a paradoxical union of the *self* and the *not self*, there is a perpetual struggle in human life to regain its autonomy obscured by inauthentic images. This struggle constitutes the core of the dialectic of value-seeking, at both the individual and social levels.

Even as the roots of Indian culture can be traced back to transcendental philosophy, the exteriors were well decked with myths and rituals that contributed immensely to enrich the culture. Indeed, Indian culture is a fine model, depicting how the tradition of value-seeking can be enshrined in symbols that originate at the individual level and enter the social psyche. Cultural theorists of contemporary times have pronounced that, although conceptually autonomous, culture is in fact found embedded in the life of historical communities in space and time, and is actualized by human beings. Language is one entity that functions both as a tool as well as a reservoir of culture. There is no other tradition that has explored the possibilities of language as much as the Indian tradition, and, down through the centuries, the Sanskrit language both evolved and served as a cultural house of Indian tradition. It would be wrong to depict Sanskrit as a mere language for, over and above functioning as a wonderful linguistic tool that facilitated accommodating different connotations of the same word over a long period, it epitomized itself as the storehouse of Indian culture and facilitated a continuity of thought from Vedic times to modernity. For instance, in Vedic literature, you find the ritualistic tradition giving way to deeper metaphysi-

⁹ *Bṛhadaranyaka*, 2.4.14.

cal insights, as in the case of the *asvamedha* sacrifice. Here, an empirical ritualistic practice found in the early Vedic literature, later, in the *Brahadaranyaka*, allegorically gets described in terms of meditation, giving a definite subjective turn to it. Extreme dependence on language and an early development of linguistics and hermeneutics tempt us to assume that the rationalistic and analytic tradition in India was indeed the offspring of the linguistic philosophy of this land – a school which also gave birth to innovative conceptual schemes unheard of elsewhere in the globe. (Encapsulating logic in grammar was a unique method developed by Indian thinkers, which has no parallel anywhere else in the world.) Interestingly, this same linguistic tradition has shown ways for the human psyche to transcend the limits of logico-linguistic framework in which the empirical self is housed.

Who is an ultimate authority of Truth? In India, the ultimate truth has never been held as something beyond human ken, confined to the revelations of any holy text or of any prophet or incarnation. G.C Pandey seems to have drawn the sum and substance of the Indian pursuit of wisdom in these words: “It is a living vision which transforms the inner life faculties and powers of the person who attains to it. Authority belongs to one ‘who has attained (*apta*) the truth.’ The Vedic seer (*Rsi*), the enlightened one (*Buddha*) or the perfected one (*siddha*) or the worthy one (Arhat) among the Buddhists and Jainas, or the Adept (*siddha*) among the Tantrikas or the *Sant* in the Bhakti schools are all variations of the same ideal figure.”¹⁰ The vision is that any life appropriately lived takes you to a level where you transcend it. Hence, the emphasis has been to explicate methods of appropriate living.¹¹ As the Gita extols: *Yogah Karmasu kausalam*; yoga is indeed seeking perfection in the performance of action. Since spiritual goals may be sought from any kind of social situation, one is not advised to discard the station he is in, in order to set on a path in search of absolute truth.¹² For, it is famously said, “*svakarmana tamabhyarchya siddhimavindetimanavah*” – man obtains perfection by worshipping himself with his own work. Corresponding to individual preferences, cultural tradition, or social practices, man is allowed to follow various practices as ways that elevate them to spirituality.¹³

This internal freedom paves the way for accommodating other religions. *Vineya bheda darsana bheda* – Teaching differs according to the individuality of the recipients.¹⁴ “This catholicity,” observes Pande, “not only tolerates moral and religious differences, it discovers a rationale for such diversity. It rejects the notion that there is one true religion, a single spiritual straightjacket.”¹⁵ In brief, everyone must construe his own path

¹⁰ G. C. Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, 1984), vol. I, 1.

¹¹ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 2.

¹² Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 3.

¹³ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 3.

¹⁴ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 3.

¹⁵ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 3.

from the house to the highway, joining other pilgrims at different points, and tending to identify the highway with their path.¹⁶ Even as *nigama*, Vedic knowledge that reveals the eternal truths, and *agama*, represented by the various mystical traditions of Saivism, Vaishnavism, and also of secular sciences like Grammar, Ayurveda, Kamasutra and the like, constitute two sources of knowledge, they are postulated as parts of one single progressive system, beginning with the analysis of phenomenal experiences employing the tools of reason to arrive at contingent truths, to a transcendental level seeking absolute truth with the aid of revelation, one leading to the other with no conceptual division. In brief, Indian culture offers a model where experiences, reason, and revelation are united in a hierarchy.¹⁷

Even while staying rooted in abstract ontological principles, Indian culture is indeed a way of life, placed within the life world of humans, and the praxis-oriented nature of all sciences, be it empirical or trans-empirical, depict well this fact. Every intellectual discourse worth the name commences with a discussion of its pragmatic input, suggestive of the great place that *prayojana* or usefulness carries in any discipline. Indian scholars, unlike those in the west, did not believe in vain argument that leads one nowhere. Arrival at fresh truth, hitherto unknown, should be the target for every debate. Even as a discipline enlists the *prayojana* or usefulness it carries, very often there is mention of an ultimate goal over and above the transient immediate goals, which is release from the worldly life. Even in a subject matter like logic, after composing the *Nyaya sutra*, consisting of epistemic and logical categories, Gautama declares at the end that the whole exercise is aimed at *nisreyas*, release from the worldly life; someone who has not had an exposure to the culture of the land would be left wondering how a work of logical exegesis could fetch us *nisreyas*.

Even as reason, analysis, and scientific spirit received due recognition, they were never permitted to go overboard and claim the ultimate position. This, however, does not permit us to conclude that science has been subdued by metaphysical speculation. On the contrary, we could even claim that Indian scholars were more scientific when compared with their western counterparts, for critical inquiry began here, not by adopting *a priori* axiomatic principles, but rather with inquiry into our phenomenal experience, the given. The inquiry into the phenomenal, of course, seems to have had this Platonic presupposition that truth lies elsewhere, thereby leading them to avenues of transcendence, where the awareness of the primal Being as one and non-dual is experienced.

This holistic perception has provided ground where Science, Art and Religion intermingled and continued to make ever fresh combinations in the wider platform of Philosophy. To borrow a simile from Rabindranath Tagore, these disciplines in India seem to have flourished in a joint family, unlike their Western counterparts, with no strict dividers amidst them. What

¹⁶ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 4.

¹⁷ Pande, *Foundations of Indian Culture*, vol. I, 8.

is more, all of these above-mentioned disciplines, be it fine arts, science, logic, or religion, all seem to share a common philosophical flavour. Even the performing arts, dance, music, and theatre seem to partake in this philosophical immersion, for the approbation rendered to aesthetic experience is based on the conviction that it is qualitatively similar to *Brahmanubhava*, the experience of the Absolute reality. (*Kavyanubhava* is hailed as *brahmanandasahodara*, a fraternity of the bliss experienced at the Union with the absolute.) In brief, a cleavage or hierarchy among different routes to experience the Absolute at the phenomenal level was never cherished as ideal.

To sum up, Indian culture, in some way challenging the established norms of multiculturalism, depicts a model of culture that has fostered internal divisions without animosity, and multicultural living has been made possible, accommodating dissident streams of the dominant tradition as well as other religions. It is a way of life that has not led to crusades in its history, but has been relatively peaceful and rich with varieties of subcultures, all alike partaking in the eternal values embedded in metaphysical principles that have become the salt of the land. It has succeeded in preserving ontological inquiry at its axis and, at the same time, wisely used the ritualistic tradition as a thread to integrate the divergent modes of its expression, which evolved and took different forms down through the centuries.

Philosophizing Acholi Culture as a Way of Life

Wilfred Lajul and Benedetta Lanfranchi

This paper engages with the historical dimension of Acholi thought systems as *traditions* of philosophy, with a focus on non-written sources grounded in an oral and communitarian context of knowledge generation, where philosophy is also understood as *lived*. We identify Acholi philosophy as *ongon*; that is, the quality of perceiving and comprehending deeper issues behind reality and the capacity of making due use of this ability for practical living. *Ongon* is also defined as the ability or skill of sustaining balance between the rational and sensitive spheres of human existence. Our analysis focuses on Acholi traditions of social and moral philosophy, where relations constitute the foundation and end of “upright” thought and action. This research is centered on past rather than present moral thought systems in Acholi, and does not, therefore, engage with the question of contemporary transformations of these, which have been significantly influenced by the presence of Western education, monotheistic religions, and radical and rapid socio-political and economic changes over the last century.

Introductory Considerations

Our research in Acholi philosophy finds itself placed in a number of very broad and very fundamental debates on the nature of philosophy in general, as well as on the nature of African philosophy more specifically. Given the vastness and complexity of these debates, we can only but touch upon the way our work intersects with some of the major questions therein contained and on why these comprise fundamental elements in the landscape of our critical inquiry.

The first broad debate we touch upon as we write about Acholi philosophy is the one between particularists and universalists, which has important implications for African philosophy since it calls into question the matter of cultural practices as sites of philosophy and the notion of philosophy as a not exclusively theoretical activity but also as a way of life in the world, concretized in human practices.

The overriding concern of universalist philosophers is to create an arena in which different cultural traditions can begin to correspond with one another – the grounds upon which a communicative exchange is possible. The possibility for this correspondence is based on the belief that at “the biological level, all humans are the same – we are animated, self-enclosed, acting beings that experience our environment. As human organisms, we all share the same capacity to experience our world.” These instinctual drives,

so the universalists claim, will ensure “uniformity of reaction within a species.”¹

According to the universalists, the acceptance of cultural philosophy on behalf of the particularists is tantamount to the reduction of philosophy to mere possession of beliefs that are enacted in everyday life; a way of seeing the world or, as argued by Beninese philosopher Paulin Hountondji, a kind of individual or collective wisdom whereby any set of principles presenting some degree of coherence and intended to govern the daily practice of a person or a people are called philosophy. This is what Hountondji has famously labeled *ethnophilosophy* in his critique of certain contemporary African intellectuals whom he believes were attempting to exhume philosophies from common cultural sites such as proverbs, folk-tales and widespread contingent cultural habits.²

One of the major problems we identify with the universalist approach is that, in setting the premises for what it considers to be the universal base of and for philosophizing, it is already imposing certain standards at the expense of other philosophies’ standards. One of these is the glorification of universality, principally in the name of criticality, logic, and rationality. This not only overshadows different orientations in philosophy, some of which do not exclusively privilege rationality and logic in their quest for meaning; it also flattens out the particularity of cultural landscapes that inform different traditions of philosophy and that contribute to the setting of philosophical standards. Instead, if we resist the universalists’ eagerness towards assimilation, and vindicate cultural differences rather than reading them as obstacles to the elaboration of a uniform philosophical tradition, we must admit that culture may be highly significant for philosophy and that philosophers may draw their inspiration also from their cultural settings.

According to Kenyan philosopher D. A. Masolo, one of the most distinctive features of African philosophizing is “a communitarian outlook expressed through various forms of narrative.”³ The connection with culture is evident here, as Masolo traces the unique feature of African philosophizing from the cultural reality of the community “as the axiomatic principle around which experience is organized and evaluated.”⁴ For Masolo, this

¹ Michael Thompson, “An Open-ended Conversation: Western and African Philosophy,” in *Conversations in Philosophy: Crossing the Boundaries*, eds. F. Ochieng-Odhiambo, Roxanne Burton, Ed Brandon (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), 125.

² Paulin Hountondji, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983). See also A. Hampaté Bâ, “The Living Tradition,” in *General History of Africa I. Methodology and African Prehistory*, ed. J. Ki-Zerbo (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981); Thomas Harlacher, Francis Okot, Caroline Aloyo, Mychelle Balthazard and Ronald Atkinson, *Traditional Ways of Coping in Acholi: Cultural Provisions for Reconciliation and Healing from War* (Kampala: BMZ and CRS, 2006).

³ D. A. Masolo, “Narrative and Experience of Community as Philosophy of Culture,” *Thought and Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association on Kenya (PAK)* 1, no. 1 (2009): 43.

⁴ Masolo, “Narrative and Experience of Community,” 46.

cultural principle is particularly influential in the *style* of present-day African philosophy as narrative, since “plotting theoretical representations through narratives is a well-known medium of oral cultures, and lies at the heart of African traditions.”⁵ The style of African contemporary philosophy also appropriates the customary element of interactive engagement, and shows “that thinking is a relational process that takes place meaningfully only in a communal context” so that “communitarianism is all over African texts.”⁶ This, according to Masolo, is reflective of the African paradigm of knowledge generation as communitarian.

The first apparent difference between the African and Western tradition and/or history of philosophy thus appears to be that, while Western philosophy has developed as a mainly written enterprise in which ideas can be traced to individual authors, the African tradition comprises both the above-described modality as well as a prevalently oral tradition of philosophy in which the recording of individuals’ authorship of thoughts was not always deemed an essential feature of their preservation.

Another important difference is the notion of philosophy as concretized in cultural practices, which legitimises them as sites of philosophical investigation. This point has raised profound disagreement among contemporary African philosophers, with certain thinkers strongly opposed to such positions and others advocating that to deny this aspect of African philosophy means refuting one of its founding elements, together with oral and collective dimensions of knowledge transmission.⁷

One of the major advocates for the study of cultural practises as sites of philosophy in Africa is the Ghanaian philosopher, Kwame Gyekye, who holds that proverbs, myths and folk tales, folk songs, rituals, beliefs, customs, tradition, art, socio-political institutions, and practices are all sources of African philosophy. This is in line with his notion that, “Philosophy in traditional Africa is also expressed or reflected in social values and has never confined itself to pure conceptualizations”⁸ and that:

...it is indeed a mistake to maintain that the term “African philosophy” should be used to cover only the philosophy, that is, the written philosophy, that is being produced by contemporary African philosophers.⁹

⁵ Masolo, “Narrative and Experience of Community,” 43.

⁶ Masolo, “Narrative and Experience of Community,” 43.

⁷ See Masolo, “Narrative and Experience of Community” and Barry Hallen, “Ethnophilosophy Redefined,” *Thought and Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association on Kenya (PAK)* 2, no. 1 (2010): 73-85.

⁸ Kwame Gyekye, *African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Philosophical Scheme* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995), 14.

⁹ Gyekye, *African Philosophical Thought*, 10-11.

Further, if we agree with Belgian historian Jan Vansina that “the oral approach is an attitude to reality and not the absence of a skill,”¹⁰ what implications does this have for African philosophy? Is this attitude to reality philosophical in itself? Or, at least, is it not something to investigate philosophically? If we refute the universalist tendency towards assimilation and understand philosophy as inexorably situated within a cultural landscape that is important, we must admit cultural differences as philosophically meaningful in themselves.

An important question one may then add, when engaging with “traditional” African philosophy, is whether the absence of pure conceptualizations is also philosophically meaningful in itself. Does traditional African philosophy also exist *in* and *as* an absence, where by absence we mean the absence of a particular theoretical activity independent of other activities and categorized into its own specific domain?

One may also wonder to what extent the need to explain African philosophy through “pure conceptualizations” was dictated by Western civilisations’ aggression to non-Western systems of knowledge, whereby different forms and traditions of thought were officially deemed as either non-existent or inferior during the colonial era. These reflections are essential in understanding what paradigms to apply in the uncovering of African philosophical concepts, for the forcing of paradigms produced in one culture onto the philosophical contents of another will almost certainly obfuscate those contents if not assist in making them extinct.

If we uphold the importance of the hermeneutic approach to philosophy that maintains as fundamental the broader horizon of meaning into which all philosophical contents are situated, we see how the understanding of cultural paradigms assist in uncovering the conceptual “truths” of philosophical reflection, because they make up the broader landscape of those reflections from which the latter trace inspiration also in terms of style and method. A deep supporter of the hermeneutic approach for the study of African philosophies is Ugandan philosopher Dani W. Nabudere, who traces the origin of this method of inquiry to ancient Egypt where the *hermeneutic circle* was maintained as an essentially mystical notion of understanding, according to which “in order to understand the part, its function as a whole must first be clear; and yet the function of the whole...can only be derived from the understanding of its parts.”¹¹

Drawing inspiration both from ancient African epistemologies and from contemporary hermeneutics, particularly the philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Nabudere holds that:

¹⁰ Jan Vansina, “Oral Tradition and its Methodology,” in *General History of Africa I. Methodology and African Prehistory*, ed. J. Ki-Zerbo (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), 144.

¹¹ Dani Nabudere, *Afrikology, Philosophy and Wholeness: An Epistemology* (Pretoria: African Institute of South Africa, 2011), 115.

In moving in the direction of trying to establish an epistemology that enables us to understand knowledge and wisdom from diverse cultural and civilisation sources, and to be able to tap and locally transform that knowledge and wisdom for common human use, we must adopt an approach that can take account of the knowledge-seeking activities of these different actors in the way they understand it themselves through their language and lived experiences. Hermeneutics is a good starting point for restoring the balance between the knowledge-seeking ‘scientific subject’ and the ‘researched object’ in creating dialogue between their traditions.¹²

We consider philosophy in Acholi culture to be a way of life that is not blind but informed by meanings, theories, principles, and value systems. The possession of these sets of cultural values in Acholi is informed, sustained and transmitted, consistently and consciously, by the people with sufficient reasons and explanations from generation to generation, not through writing, but through other cultural forms such as proverbs, folk tales, and songs. These cultural practices are not just ways of seeing the world, but ways of life in the world, pursued consciously, passionately and rationally.

Context of Our Research in Acholi Philosophy

Acholiland is a region in northern Uganda of about 28,500 km², populated by about 1.5 million people. According to historian Ronald Atkinson, a “crucial stage” in “the evolution of an Acholi society and identity” occurred between 1725 and 1790, with the extension and entrenchment of a new chiefly order in northern Uganda and the spread of the Luo language which “provided the people of north-central Uganda with a broadly common historical experience, social order, and political culture.”¹³ Atkinson places great emphasis on the presence of Arabic speaking outsiders from the north – the Kutoria traders who arrived in the 1850s and the Jadiya representatives of an Egyptian administration of the Upper Nile who followed in 1872 – in the shaping of Acholi ethnicity. It was the Kutoria who gave the name Shuuli to the inhabitants of north-central Uganda, because their language resembled that of the Shilluk whom the Kutoria knew. According to the Italian Comboni missionary, Joseph Pasquale Crazzolaro, since the Lwoo are unfamiliar with the “sh” sound, Shuuli became Cuuli and then Acooli.¹⁴

In describing the cultural practices and institutions that make up our research material, we describe these in a manner that is mostly reflective of the pre-colonial past rather than present-day Acholi, which is why we have

¹² Nabudere, *Afrikology, Philosophy and Wholeness*, 116.

¹³ Ronald Atkinson, *The Roots of Ethnicity: Origins of the Acholi of Uganda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2010), 261.

¹⁴ Atkinson, *The Roots of Ethnicity*.

chosen to refer to them mostly in the past tense even though many of these practices either still exist in the present day or importantly inform present day Acholi culture. This time frame is used as a reference point only, and wants to avoid the risk of fixing conceptual essences.

We admit that the absence of written records of philosophy makes it extremely challenging to temporally collocate traditions of thought. In describing Acholi philosophies of the past, we thus incur the risk of portraying these as monolithic traditions, identical to themselves over a period of time as extended as one hundred and fifty to two hundred years, which, when applied to the same historical period in a European country like Germany, includes philosophies as diverse as those of Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel and Friedrich Nietzsche – though these, too, are understood as comprising a *tradition* of German philosophy.

Perhaps one path out of this predicament is Wilfred Lajul's distinction between communal/collective philosophy and pluralistic/individualized philosophy. He contends that, while African philosophy is communal as an *output* or *by-product* of generations of individual thoughts, African philosophy is individualistic in its *origin*, since ideas can only be produced individually and never communally. What is meant by *output* is "the by-product of generations of individual thoughts that generated principles and theories that have been accepted, adopted, updated and used to guide the life of the different African peoples."¹⁵

In the Acholi tradition, this feature of philosophical production can be read closely with its song culture, where songs "are not written down under one person's authorship. They are sung and adapted by singer after singer, and each singer is free to create in his own way and change the song to fit current events..."¹⁶ This oral tradition of knowledge generation and transmission thus preserves traditions of thought in which changes and adaptations are constantly embedded. In this sense we, too, are like singers, listening to and reinterpreting the vast and varied body of knowledge that we have encountered in the course of our research in Acholi philosophy through conversations with prominent thinkers, personal observations of ways of life, and engagement with academic literature and artistic material.

We have chosen to maintain the use of the word "traditional" in describing Acholi philosophies of the past despite the controversial nature of this term. We maintain "traditional" to be the best translation for what in Acholi would be described as *kwo kwaro* or *kwo macon* (the way Acholi people lived their lives), which is what is most commonly used to refer to

¹⁵ Wilfred Lajul, *African Philosophy: Critical Dimensions* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2013), 72.

¹⁶ G. A. Heron, "Introduction," in Okot p'Bitek, *Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1972), 8. See also Okot p'Bitek, *Song of Lawino. A Lament* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1966) and *White* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1989); Angelo Victoria, *Thoughts About Acholi Music*, accessed June 24, 2013, folkartpa.org/artists/angelo/documents/AcholiMusic.pdf.

the historical dimension of Acholi customs, philosophies, religion, and institutions. The term “traditional” in Acholi is also used to signify *indigenous*, so that one can often hear people in Acholi referring to *ngec kwaro* (indigenous knowledge), *cam kwaro* (indigenous food), *myel kwaro* (indigenous or traditional dance), *wer kwaro* (indigenous songs). In all these examples, the word traditional can be replaced by the word indigenous without creating any confusion. The choice of the term “traditional” in this article is, thus, in accordance with its widespread use in Acholi to refer to one of the many bodies of knowledge that make up present day Acholi cultural, socio-political, religious, economic, and philosophical life.

With regards to our field of inquiry, reference to “traditional philosophy” should not be taken to signify that Acholi philosophical production can be understood only as pre-colonial and that contemporary Acholi philosophy that has adopted new and varied frameworks of philosophizing is not genuine, as this would lead us into the very dangerous terrain of authenticity myths that interpret any outside influences in African life as not truly African. The affront contained in this kind of reasoning accompanies its futility, as it is virtually impossible to trace any human civilisation that has developed purely from within itself without foreign influences, be they from across the oceans and seas, or simply from across the local river or lake.

The point of embarking upon research in African history of philosophy is not to try to impose “traditional” African ways onto the present or to undermine contemporary African realities that are also informed by the experience of globalisation, but simply to produce knowledge on the African past and present and to understand African philosophy in its historical dimension as a *tradition* of philosophy, both in terms of content and in terms of style. Present day Acholi philosophy, for example, exists in both the written/individualized and oral/communal forms as both a tradition of philosophy that is concertized in practices and lived, shared by the community and transmitted through cultural institutions, folk tales, proverbs, dance, and music, and as scholarly productions by individual Acholi thinkers.

Our work moves in the direction of tracing a tradition of Acholi philosophy, with a focus on non-written sources, to try and uncover a methodology suitable for research in philosophies that are grounded in oral and communitarian contexts of knowledge generation where philosophy is also understood as lived.

Relations as the Foundation and End of Acholi Traditional Social and Moral Philosophy

Traditional Acholi philosophy can be translated as *wisdom*, which in Acholi is *ongon*, signifying the quality of perceiving and comprehending deeper issues behind reality and the capacity of making due use of this ability for practical living. For instance, an Acholi will say: “man ongon pa lodito” to indicate that, “this is the wisdom of the elders.” Lived experiences

and advance in wisdom are at the heart of *ongon*, which the elders have privileged access to on account of their longer life.¹⁷

Ongon was traditionally profoundly laden with elements from the Acholi value systems and reasons or justifications as well as consistent and coherent explanations of those value systems, which were understood and passed on from one generation to the next, using various ways like songs, folk tales, wise sayings, and socio-political arrangements and institutions. Another important aspect of *ongon* was the safeguarding of balance between the sensitive/emotional and rational spheres of human existence, since the human way of life in Acholi society was built around rationality and sensitivity as two complementary human faculties that did not exist in a dichotomy. The rational aspects of human existence were expressed in the well-calculated way of harmonizing relations between the humans, their gods, and the living dead, putting in place measures to repair damaged relationships and measures to prevent conflict within this harmonious circle. Such a cultural system was not accidental, but well thought out by the elders, leaders and other thinkers of the society¹⁸ in their own capacities, to maintain relational harmony and peace. This rational design reflected the deeper meanings, explanations, and justifications underpinning the Acholi cultural practices.

The human sensitive sphere was revealed in Acholi culture through dances, songs, and gestures, which artistically expressed thought systems and ways of life. The gestures and bodily expressions shown in dance and music not only celebrated life, but also expressed the meanings, pains, joys, and dilemmas of life. A suffering woman might tell the story of her afflictions through songs. Indeed, the *Song of Lawino*, is a clear example that Okot p'Bitek uses to illustrate the Acholi thinking and way of expressing meanings, joys, sorrows, wishes, history, dilemmas, and yearning for justice. In this way, rational thinking was expressed and verbalized through sensitive means. The rational and the sensitive were not separated, but harmoniously intertwined and lived in the intensity of day-to-day life.

The Acholi divided their world into two: the underworld (*lupiny*) and the over world (*lumalo*), where the nature of life in the first was spiritual, and that in the latter material. The underworld was the abode of two categories of beings: the gods and the ancestors (also called the living dead).

¹⁷ *Ongon* is sometimes used to refer to both legal norms and history in the Western sense of the terms. Strictly speaking, *ongon* is not really a norm, though normative prescriptions can be part of *ongon*. When it is used to refer to history, its precise meaning is the knowledge of history based on the experiences that the elders have gone through.

¹⁸ The Acholi leadership structure composed of the gods at the summit, followed by the chief (*rwot*) who ruled over a chiefdom that comprised several clans. The *rwodi* (chiefs) had a council of clan elders (*ludito kaka*), with whom they governed the society. *Ludito kaka* were always supported by other local leaders, both men and women. There were also religious leaders who led religious practices like sacrifices and divination. Lastly, in every chiefdom there was a *rwot moo*, who was designated purely for cases like reconciliation and reparatory ceremonies.

Lumalo was the abode of children (born or unborn, for the unborn were found to be in the loins of the living), the adults, the elderly, and other material beings. *Dano* (human beings or persons)¹⁹ living in this world were described as *lumalo* – “those living above the earth” – while those who had another form of existence were described as *lupiny* – “those living in the underworld.” The presence of all these beings characterised Acholi traditional society’s profoundly relational foundation: among the human beings themselves, among the living human beings (*dano makwo*) and their ancestors (*dano muto*), among adults (*lodito*) and their children – including the not yet born (*likwayo*), – among humans (*dano*) and non-humans (*gipiny*) – such as other members of the material world, – among humans and the minor gods (*joggi*), and among humans and the Supreme Being (*Jok Madit* or *Jok Mamalo*).²⁰

Moral actions were deemed to be those that were carried out in respect of these beings and that were aimed at maintaining balance among all of their existences. Morality can be described as *kwo matir*, meaning upright life, with its opposite being *kwo ma pe atir*. *Kwo matir* was a type of life that was consistent with the moral principles of the Acholi people. Two of the many proverbs describing *kwo matir* can be cited here. The first one is *Alii ber ki Kwateng*, meaning “discord or hostility fits the kite.” Angelo Banya who has collected and translated a large number of Acholi proverbs in his book *Adoko Gwok*, explains the meaning of this proverb as follows:

Discord or hostility is a crime which when committed requires atonement. When a kite snatches our chicks, it commits a discord to us, but we have no wings to fly and chase it, we look on in despair and cannot ask it for atonement. So we say that is its luck. But when we human beings commit such crime we can escape nowhere. We are caught and made to do atonement.²¹

This proverb teaches that discord or hostility is deviation from *kwo matir*, so it is morally wrong for human beings. It is the non-moral entities like kites that may play around with it, but not humans, who live within the confines of social fabric. Banya then offers another proverb, *Apidi Nyaa Wol*, meaning, “Discord, the daughter of Wol,”²² and explains the context from which this proverb was derived. Wol is an Acholi clan from Kalongo,

¹⁹ The word for human being and person is the same in Acholi.

²⁰ The discussion concerning the existence of a Supreme Being in Acholi and in African religions more generally are too broad to be addressed in this article. For further reading on this topic see Okot p’Bitek, *African Religions in Western Scholarship* (Kampala, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam: East African Literature Bureau, 1970) and *Religion of the Central Luo* (Kampala, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam: East African Literature Bureau, 1971); John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1969).

²¹ A. Angelo Banya, ed., *Adoko Gwok (I have Become a Dog)*, Uganda Development Series, no. 2 (Kampala: Foundation for African Development, 1994), 121.

²² Banya, ed., *Adoko Gwok (I have Become a Dog)*, 126.

which was formally under the Kitgum District. Once upon a time, a girl born of this clan was named *Apidi* (discord). When she grew up, she became so vivacious and of bitter tongue that she one day caused a big fight between the Wol clan and another clan. In this fight, the people of Wol suffered very many casualties due to their daughter *Apidi*.

This proverb is invoked to guard against discord in society. When an elder tells you that you are *Apidi Nyaa Wol*, he/she is saying that you are a source of trouble, discord, and disharmony in society, and that one who antagonizes communities against each other bears moral disgrace and is not admired. In the Acholi traditional culture, whatever happened to an individual belonging to a community was participated in by the entire community from which that individual originated. Similarly, whatever the community experienced as a whole was felt as equally affecting each and every member of that community. What is intended by ‘community’ in pre-colonial Acholi is a clan (*kaka*), which was made up of several families. Clans made up chiefdoms, with several chiefdoms forming the Acholi people as a whole.²³ From this strong sense of communal belonging, social arrangements and principles of communal responsibility were derived. An individual action was deemed as morally right if it promoted the welfare of the entire community. In parallel, an individual action that harmed the community was considered to be morally wrong.

The extent of an individual’s moral responsibility over his/her actions was set within the different levels of communal relationships between the members of the family, clan, and tribe. The responsibility for an act that affected a member of the same clan lay with the individual who committed the act or with his/her immediate family member (according to the principle of individual responsibility) whereas, when an individual offended a member of another clan, then the responsibility fell on the offender’s entire clan (thereby applying the principle of communal responsibility). The same applied for offenses committed against members of another tribe. The different levels of responsibility deeply informed accountability measures in the case of wrongdoing on the part of a community member.²⁴ The Acholi had profound regard for blood relationships on the basis of which several moral obligations and implications were attached. Instituted relationships were either natural or contractual, and some form of blood tie consecrated both.

The justifications for these types of socio-religious arrangements are quite important if one wants to understand the social philosophy behind the Acholi social institutions. This social philosophy was based on the notion

²³ In a clan, most members claim common ancestry. This remains a claim because, for the Acholi, there are other ways by which individuals become members of the same clan, for example, through adoption, where an individual and his/her family are ceremoniously adopted and accepted as members of a particular clan, even when their origin is foreign. Another way is through marriage, when a woman becomes fully incorporated into the clan that she marries into. Members of the same community, i.e., clan, do not get married to each other, for they can only marry members of another clan.

²⁴ We are grateful to Mukasa Luutu for this insight.

that blood binds humans to each other. *Ongon*, as we have said earlier, is a reflection on and discovery of deeper issues behind observed phenomena, in this case, a social relationship. The Acholi had thus designed their social institutions to reflect the observed reality that blood binds humans to each other. It is the existence of these social relations that inspired their philosophy: in that sense they are the beginning point of moral reflection. Traditions of moral thought then added concepts to make those relationships *be* in a certain manner, thus making these relationships the end of philosophical reflection as well.

Blood, which in Acholi is *remo*, was considered to be a symbol of life. From this word, *remo*, several social relationships based on blood ties were described. *Remona* (my blood), described a relationship between a child and the parent; *larema* or *lorema* (my friend/s), a close relationship between two or more individuals who treat each other like blood relatives; *wat remo* (blood relative) would be used to distinguish relatives that come out of social arrangements like marriage (*wat nyom*) and of relations based on family blood ties (*kwong*). *Wat* is a term that means relative, but a relation could be derived from blood (*remo*), marriage (*nyom*), or pacts (*kwong*). While blood relations (*wat remo*) were natural, both marriage relations (*wat nyom*) and pact relations (*kwong*) were contractual. Though marriage relations were not natural, they were the basis of blood contracts, and they instituted a permanent human network of relationships called the family.

In Acholi traditional communities, marriage was not a contract between two individuals, witnessed by the community, but a contract between two communities represented by two individuals. In the case that one of the representatives ceased to exist, the contract did not end with their death for, if a woman lost her husband, it was understood that it was only in order to replace the deceased representative with another member of the community. This was in some cases applicable to both the male as well as the female partners.²⁵ In some instances, it was not the choice of the individuals to enter into these contracts, and it was the community at large²⁶ that determined

²⁵ As Nyarwath and Ojwang have correctly observed, since the Luo people – to which the Acholi as a cultural group belong – are patrilineal, the practice tended to be more common in terms of wife inheritance rather than husband inheritance. However, among the Alur of both North-western Uganda and Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, instances of husband inheritance were equally common. See Oriare Nyarwath, “The Luo Care for Widows (*Lako*) and Contemporary Challenges,” *Thought and Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK)* 4, no. 1 (2012): 91-110; H. J. Ojwang, “Towards a Social Philosophy of the African Leviratic Custom: How the Luo Marriages Survive Death,” in *African Philosophy at the Threshold of the New Millennium*, eds. B. Gutema and D. Smith (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Printing Press, 2005), 63-67.

²⁶ Normally this would involve the immediate or the extended family but also any other clan member who helped in deciding an individual’s marriage partner. The aunts (the sisters of one’s father) and the uncles (the brothers of one’s mother) were quite instrumental in identifying the rightful marriage partners for their sisters or brothers or children, be they girls or boys.

who the right partners in marriage were. Neither was it the individuals who were responsible for paying the dowry, but the entire clan that contributed to the bride wealth.

In case of levirate, no new contracts were entered into, but the relationship continued on the basis of the already-established contract so that no new bride wealth was paid. In case both partners died, the relationship between the two communities that they originated from did not end either, since the relationship continued in terms of mutual visits, especially at the time of social ceremonies that brought the two clans together. This was particularly strong when children were born out of such relationships.

Bride wealth – a dowry that was paid by the groom to the family of the bride – was another important cultural institution in Acholi, which for many critics translates into a man's buying of a wife. The institutional justification for bride wealth was the fact that it was a means of social control of the husband's family over the children born in the context of his marriage to a woman. Even in case of the husband's death, social control over the children remained with the family of the father and not with that of their mother. The eagerness and anxiety with which the members of the deceased husband's family wanted to take social control of the children of their late relative was not meant to disadvantage the widow's free choice of another marriage partner, but to ensure that the social control over the children was not lost, as it was a very strong cultural pillar among the Acholi that, after marriage, all the children would belong to the family of the husband, whether they were biologically his or not. This was the case even when a child was born out of wedlock: such a child would still belong to the man who was officially married to the woman.

Bride wealth was also paid in acknowledgement and appreciation of a procreative gift of fecundity transferred from one family member to another family, and a marriage contract was not considered complete without it. Laureatta Ngcobo, who has researched the institution of marriage in different African societies, states that in the context of patrilineal societies, fecundity is transferred from a woman to the family of the husband to whom she is married, and not vice versa. The dowry paid by the husband thus justifies this procreative gift from the woman, who not only belongs to another family, but to another clan altogether to whom he is not related by blood.

Ngcobo links fecundity with the spiritual world's three levels of existence, the world of the unborn, the world of the living dead, and the world of the living and concludes that:

Belief has it that the children of any given family are always there waiting for the mothers to come and rescue them from oblivion and bring them to life in the land of the living. Failure therefore, to 'rescue' the children, is a sorrowful capitulation and a betrayal. In cases of childlessness, people do not think of and share the couple's or

woman's agony – rather, they hear the echoing cries of the unborn children that she (the mother) will not 'rescue' and bring to life.²⁷

We have said that the Acholi divided their world in two, because the unborn were found in the loins of the living and not making up a world of their own (that of the unborn described by Ngcobo). The living dead, who did not want their lineages to perish on earth, always pleaded with the gods to 'give life' to their family members living in this world through having children. Cases of infertility were often interpreted in terms of a breach in relationships between those living in the underworld (*lupiny*) and those in this world (*lumalo*), where *lumalo* were seen as potentially preventing the unborn from coming to life because of their wrong actions towards *lupiny*. Infertility was also interpreted as an indication of some misconduct on the part of the living or dead members of the community.

Some of this misconduct was thought to be carried out in secret, while others were committed openly. However, it was believed that the effects of these actions could never be hidden; childlessness was interpreted as one of these. Other effects could be forms of sicknesses and misfortunes that befell the living. From such moral convictions, the Acholi coined several proverbs that explicated this reality. One such proverb is *Kadi ibut ki maro wa i te pii, twal wang ma ongene*, meaning that: even if you have sex with your mother-in-law under water (standing to signify the most secretive of places), one day it will be known.

In many instances, childlessness and other misfortunes were considered consequences, not so much of physical factors but of moral or spiritual factors and, in most cases, the method used for investigating their causes was divination. This may not have always been a reliable method, but the majority of the people took the results of such findings to be absolute. From these different blood relationships – *wat remo*, *wat nyom* and *kwong* – arose four main cultural dimensions among the Acholi pertaining to the divine, the social, the ancestral, and the personal. Cultural practices pertaining to the human-divine relationship were generally characterized by divination (*tyet*), sacrifices (*tum*), and prayers (*kwayo jok*). The Acholi cultural practices in this area involved sessions, mediated by the diviners (*ajwaki*), to be in contact with the gods (*joggi*) or the spirits of the dead (*tipu*).

Divination may have included attempting to find the mind of the gods in as far as human conditions and situations were concerned. In time of war, abundant harvests, famines, sicknesses, and major decisions to be made by the society, the gods were consulted and, through divination, their wills revealed. As pre-conditions, sacrifices were made to the gods through a ceremony called *tyero jok* (divine sacrifice), the implication of which was that being in good harmony with the gods had good effects for humans on earth.

²⁷ Lauretta Ngcobo, "African Motherhood – Myth and Reality," in *Criticism and Ideology, Second African Writers' Conference Stockholm 1986*, ed. Kirsten Holst (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1988), 142.

When there was harmony between humans and the gods, then humans themselves lived in peace. When things went wrong in this relationship, then the only thing they could do to restore normality was divine sacrifice (*tyero jok*), divine ceremony (*kwero jok*), or invocation of the highest God (*lamo Jok malalo*). The second dimension was the social dimension. Since humans were seen to be essentially social, there was no way an individual or groups of individuals could be considered to live happily without some form of social cohesion.

When the spirit of such communal solidarity was violated (for example, through killing a member of a different clan), then the solution was to perform a reconciliation ceremony. One such ceremony performed to reconcile members from different clans was *mato oput*. This reconciliation rite was built around four pillars: acceptance of guilt, restitution or compensation, reconciliation, and restoration of the original state of the relationship. Acceptance of guilt was the basis of *mato oput*, which the Acholi generally believed was always shared by the two conflicting parties, though one also always bore a greater degree of responsibility and, thus, of guilt. For instance, if conflict started with one of the parties destroying the property of the other and as a result a murder was committed, the greater guilt was seen to lie with the one who had caused death. Still, the initial offence committed would also have to be acknowledged and accounted for, so that each of the guilty parties could agree on compensation (*cullo kwor*) for the wrongs committed. Such compensation was not a simple matter, because for very severe cases it was the equivalent of a human life: a young girl from the offending community would be given to the offended party as a possible mother that would generate a new life. Her child would then be given the name *Okwor* (for boys) or *Akwor* (for girls), which literally means compensation. In other instances, the equivalent of bride wealth had to be paid so that a woman from the offended clan could be married to bring forth a new life to fill the void left by the one lost in the conflict.

Cullo kwor would be followed by reconciliation that was centred around the sacrifice of an animal whose blood was shed in substitution for the human blood that would have otherwise continued to flow in conflict. This blood was mixed with the pounded roots of a plant called *oput*, which was not only drunk, but also sprinkled on the feet of the two offenders while the rest of the blood was sprinkled on members from the two conflicting communities. This would be followed by celebrations where the different community members came together to eat and drink before dispersing.

Mato oput as a measure of restoring sanity in damaged relationships reflected the philosophical wisdom of the Acholi in practice. It was a rationally designed measure that harmoniously balanced reason and emotion by dealing with elements of religiosity – by invoking the forgiveness and blessings of the living dead and the gods; humanity – by reconciling and restoring the communities that were in conflict; and sensitivity – by incorporating celebrations in terms of eating, drinking, music, and dance.

The ancestral dimension of the Acholi concerned the sets of cultural practices surrounding the culture of the dead. This was done right from the time of death until much later, when ancestral shrines became centres of religious ceremonies. A recently deceased ancestor was granted profound respect and honour by the living members of the community, which climaxed in the ceremony called *guru/keto lyel* (last funeral rites). During this ceremony, animal sacrifices were made for the dead ancestors in recognition of them being part of the community, since they also needed to drink and eat. After the last ceremony, special attention was paid to the leaders and/or founding members of the families. Such elders, in most cases, would have already been given distinctive burial signs. For instance, bark cloth trees were planted on the graves of such elders, and these trees over time could become possible sites for religious ceremonies. Later, a small shrine was built on such sites, especially where the members of the family went for invocations, seeking of blessings, and asking of favours.

Over time, heads of such extended families could become ancestral spirits of entire clans.²⁸ *Kac* was the biggest shrine built in honour of such ancestors, who were believed to lead all the other elders who died after them. Whatever recognition was given to each of these ancestors did not exclude the other elders of the same family. From time to time, animal sacrifices called *mato remo* were made in favour of such living dead, through which they were acknowledged, recognized, and given honour and respect, since it was to them that members of the society would turn to for help. *Abi-la* (ancestral shrine) was the place of contact between the living and the dead and where sacrifices to the ancestors and the gods were made. At a personal level, the Acholi believed that every individual was as important as the whole community. Indeed, Acholi social and moral philosophy is no exception to the Mbitian maxim: "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."²⁹

When an individual promoted the welfare of the members of the same community, that individual's actions were praised as morally right. On the contrary, when an individual acted contrary to the interests of the same community, his/her actions were considered morally wrong. The individual in such cases bore the responsibility personally. To remedy some of these wrongs, animal sacrifices were normally required. This is because the individual, the community, the ancestors, and the gods were cosmically linked, so that a bad action indirectly affected the relationship of that individual with all the members of the cosmic community. The individual would have to make a sacrifice that the Acholi called *tumo kir*, and that was based on the belief that *kir*, which is an offence, required a sacrifice, *tum*, as an

²⁸ Such clans may have enlarged, depending on the circumstances like immigration and joining by outsiders. These outsiders were called *adonyi* (foreigners), who were treated as members of the same clan, but who could never become members of the ruling family.

²⁹ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 106.

atonement to the cosmic community. *Tumo kir* was the *personal* reparation for wrongdoing committed by an individual where he/she stood in representation of him/herself, unlike *mato oput* where the whole clan would stand in representation of the wrongdoer and assume responsibility for his/her actions.³⁰

Interestingly, Joseph Okumu refers to these individual cleansing rituals also as *reconciliation* rituals, because he defines them as “individual reconciliation between one and his/her conscience”³¹ calling to mind the Socratic notion of conscience as “the two-in-one,” and further extending the notion of relational morality to the individual dimension by conceptualizing the individual also as an interiorly relational being. All these philosophical dimensions of Acholi life were preserved through the actual institutional practices and religious rites such as the ones we have mentioned above as well as through other means of knowledge transmission.

Music, for example, was one of the means through which morality was taught and feelings expressed. Music was used to teach Acholi children respect, humility, and reverence for their elders and the gods, and as a means of expressing that they valued them. Music was also very important to worship and praise the gods and to show gratitude for everything God-given. An example of song that gives moral teaching is the one sung by Ogwang Clipper³² in his *Wer Nanga* (nanga music), entitled *Roro Balo Paco* (malicious propaganda or misinformation destroys social harmony):³³

Chorus: Roro balo paco, lok monne neko dano (Malicious propaganda, misinformation, lies, or jealousy destroys social harmony; hatred kills)

Roro me yenyo Kom, tyeko Acholi woko (Malicious propaganda intended to gain political positions, is now destroying the Acholi people)

Kadi icelo Saba Saba, pe icel ki roro (Even when you fight using Saba Saba [a military weapon] don't fight with bitterness or hatred)

³⁰ It is important here to note that, even in those restoration rituals involving the community at large where the members shared responsibility with the wrongdoer, he/she would still have to undergo some aspects of the ritual on a purely individual basis.

³¹ Joseph Okumu, “The Acholi People’s Rites of Reconciliation (Part One and Part Two),” *The Examiner*, Issues 2 and 3 (Gulu, Uganda: Human Rights Focus, 2009), 12. See also “The Acholi People’s Rites of Reconciliation,” Caritas Gulu Archdiocese Working Paper, 6 (Gulu, Uganda: Caritas Gulu Archdiocese).

³² Ogwang Clipper is an artist from Kitgum town, who is well known for his gift in playing traditional songs using a six stringed bow-like instrument called *Nanga*. The songs he sings have been recorded and are available in many music centers selling Acholi traditional music. Not all of his songs are original, since he sings many of the traditional songs using traditional melodies. In some cases, he adjusts the wording while maintaining the traditional melody so as to reflect current situations and social setting.

³³ The word *roro* is difficult to translate into English, because it is very conceptually “heavy.” It can mean malicious propaganda, misinformation, lies, jealousy, bitterness, or hatred, which all affect social harmony and can lead to death.

Kadi iyenyo tic, pe iyeng ki roro (Even when you are searching for a job, don't use wrong means)

Kadi icito ulaya, pe icit ki roro (Even when you want to go to Europe, don't use wrong means)

Kadi iloko leb munu, pe ilok ki roro (Even when speaking the white man's language, don't use it to destroy others)

Kadi idwoyo Pajero, pe idwor ki roro (Even when you drive a Pajero, you should not drive it with malice)

Kadi iringo ki lela, pe iring ki roro (Even when you ride a bicycle, do not be jealous)

Kadi iyenyo dako, pe iyeny ki roro (Even when you are looking for marriage, don't use lies).

Another important place of teaching and knowledge transmission in Acholi was the *wang-oo* (fireplace), which was the traditional evening school. Around the *wangoo*, the teachers were the grandparents, the parents, the uncles, and all the elders who, one by one, told their folk story to the attentively listening children: the learners. Each folktale ended with a moral lesson for the children to remember. Adolescents in the group were also encouraged to re-tell the story narrated to them earlier, and the elders listened attentively, to make sure they got the story right and particularly the message it conveyed.

Conclusion

The traditional Acholi cultural way of life surrounding relationships was informed by the notion of cosmic relations linking the living with their dead and the living with their gods. The contractual relationships between two communities in terms of marriages were sealed and consummated when dowry was paid and a life was born. The birth of a child created blood ties among the members of a family. All other relationships in the community were seen and measured on the basis of blood ties. For an individual to be called a friend, he/she must have had the characteristics proper to those that exist between people who share blood relations, making them truly *lorem*, "of the blood."

All these reflect the social philosophy of the Acholi people, who did not take relationships loosely. For such relationships to be complete and holistic, they needed to have the protection, not only of the entire community, but also of the ancestors and the gods. Cosmic relationships among the Acholi were explained by closely-knit relationships defined by blood, either naturally or by intent through human contractual relations sealed in blood. When such relationships were broken, the blood of a sacrificial animal was used to purify the act. Blood therefore was not only a symbol of life, but also a means by which life was purged in the rhythm of a tightly knit human community.

This article equates culture with philosophy; it identifies with the hermeneutic stance towards understanding, which maintains the historical breadth of philosophical concepts, the awareness of their temporal evolution within cultures, and the knowledge of the specific traditions of thought they generated from, as fundamental in the process of approaching philosophical concepts and their relationship to *truth*. In this sense, then, this article is more like the laying of a foundation from which to pose further philosophical questions.

This methodological positioning is particularly inspiring when studying philosophy in cultures that do not operate through strict compartmentalization of knowledge elements into separate knowledge domains, and that do not privilege the written word as a guard keeper of knowledge. From this research, we can additionally conclude that African philosophy is also about the uncovering of philosophical principles and theories that are embedded in shared thought systems and practices upon which African communities are built.

While in the study of Western philosophy we are accustomed to relating specific philosophical ideas to specific individuals, we have seen that this is not so in the study of Acholi philosophy. This is because philosophers come from across the board. Originators of ideas can be traced to a variety of groups: some are dancers and singers who compose and sing songs; some are women who reflect on their sorrows or joys in marriage and sing while grinding millet; some are men who reflect on their hunting and war experiences; some are political or religious leaders; some are elderly wise-men and women; some are experts of traditional musical instruments; some are medicine-men and women; some are herbalists; some are farmers; some are herdsmen and some are blacksmiths. We discovered that it was dangerous to attribute the role of philosophizing to a particular category of people, and that is why we say philosophy is a way of life in Acholi.

The main site of Acholi philosophy still remains their culture – a way of life – which, up to today, remains relatively strong, despite the over twenty-year interruption by the Lord's Resistance Army Wars.

Ubuntu as a Human Right

Mogobe B. Ramose

Introduction

The historical background to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations in December 1948, is well-known. For specific and, sometimes, other reasons that will be made explicit in the course of this essay, I wish to highlight the following points from the historical background. (1) The original progenitors and signatories to the UDHR were predominantly countries in the Northern Hemisphere. At the time, the countries in this region of the world were divided into “East” and “West” in terms of political ideology. (2) Conspicuously absent from the category of original progenitors and signatories were the colonised countries. Their absence was indeed physical and their muted presence – a species of epistemological violence¹ – was circumstantially subsumed under the authority of their respective colonial rulers. It does not necessarily follow from this that they had a voice of their own at the origin of the UDHR. (3) The circumstantial absence and silence of the colonised over the origin and inspiration of the UDHR is the seedbed for the germination of varied conceptualisations and interpretations of human rights. However, some of those originally and actively present at the making of the UDHR also subsequently composed their own regional human rights instruments. A number of regional human rights instruments such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, The Arab Charter on Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights – Human and Constitutional Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights attest to this. This phenomenon speaks, philosophically, to the following aspects: Ontologically, it is the re-affirmative assertion by the decolonised peoples of their right to exist and to reason. This right was abrogated under colonial conquest and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, especially. It is a right contingently available to all human beings on the planet. Epistemologically, it is the repudiation of the epistemic violence, the near complete epistemicide, continuing to be perpetrated by both the erstwhile colonizer and its politically and militarily powerful allies. (4) Ethically, it is the reaffirmation of human equality and the necessity for justice in human relations. This necessity is underlined by the thesis that epistemic justice is indispensable to social justice in national and international relations.² The purpose of this essay is to focus primarily on

¹ G. Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 76.

² B. de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* (Boulder/London: Paradigm Publishers, 2014), 42.

these aspects taking *ubuntu* philosophy as a specific example of the reaffirmation of the ontological equality of all human beings, on the one hand, and the ethical imperative for epistemic and social justice in human relations, on the other. In doing so, I will engage the “Holism” of J.C. Smuts in dialogue with the philosophy of *ubuntu*. The essay may thus be construed as an argument for a liberation intercultural philosophy.³ I will adopt primarily a philosophical approach to the examination of the issues on hand.

On the Right to Exist and to Reason

The point of departure for the ontology of social being⁴ is the recognition that the individual being is not the result of the prior conscious will of the individual to ex-ist. The individual simply ex-ists without any right to an anterior own decision on the reason for coming into being as an embodied entity with consciousness. At the same time, no single individual decided, prior to their birth, on who its parents would be or when and where it would be born. Except in the case of adoption, parents do not choose their children in advance. Nor do babies, before their birth, shop for future parents in a metaphysical marketplace. On this reasoning, individual ex-istence is the manifestation of the contingency of be-ing. To ex-ist as an individual is a right in the sense that one may and, indeed does, claim existence on the basis that no other individual is an exception to the ontological contingency of be-ing-in-the-world.⁵ In this regard, all human beings are equal. It is therefore vital to keep in mind that “equality is an empty vessel with no substantive moral content of its own. Without moral standards, equality remains meaningless, a formula that can have nothing to say about how we should act... Equality is an undeniable and unchangeable moral truth because it is a simple tautology.”⁶ Embodied human ex-istence is an ethical appeal to give substantive moral content to equality as “an undeniable and unchangeable moral truth.” The right to exist is the ontological affirmation of the ethical equality of all human beings.

Against the background of the distinction between ontology and metaphysics, corporeality is the ontological manifestation of ex-istence. To ex-ist is to appear as, in, with, and through the body. Thus embodiment is the means of entry into the world and a mode of existence until death.⁷ In the case of human beings, an embodied consciousness includes the faculty of reason, that is, the disposition to differentiate and to discern good and evil to

³ W. Sweet, ed., *What is Intercultural Philosophy?* (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2014), 2.

⁴ G. Lukacs, “Labour,” in *The Ontology of Social Being*, trans. D. Fernbach (London: Merlin Press, 1980), 3-4.

⁵ J. Donnelly, *The Concept of Human Rights* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), 13.

⁶ P. Westen, “The Empty Idea of Equality,” *Harvard Law Review* 95, no. 3 (January 1982): 547-548.

⁷ R. Zaner, *The Problem of Embodiment* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), vii.

the extent of making a choice for one or the other in respect of oneself and others. Reason, understood as a dispositional concept, is theoretically available to all human beings, including the mad.⁸ It is an indispensable complement to the human right to exist. "Being able to reason and to choose is a significant aspect of human life."⁹ To be a human being is to be the bearer, contemporaneously, of the right to exist and to reason. According to Gustavo Gutierrez, "The right to think is a corollary of the right to be, and to assert the right to think is only to assert the right to exist."¹⁰

The Principle of Equality and the Ethical Imperative of Justice

The principle of the ethical equality of human beings is immediately and directly linked to the principle of justice. The question of justice towards other human beings does not arise if and when there is only one solitary human being on the planet Earth. If all human beings are equal in their humanity, then all human beings can claim, in the first place, the right to life.¹¹ This is the right to access, use, and enjoy all that is necessary to preserve life in its material and intellectual aspects.¹² The existential encounter with other human beings demands a response to the fact of meeting; to living side by side or together. Many responses are conceivable and are well-known in the history of human beings. Not all the responses have received unreserved ethical approbation. Some have been censured on ethical grounds and have even received the stamp: "never again." The ethical censure of some responses to the fact of encounter between and among human beings speaks directly to the principle of justice. Justice, like equality, is an empty concept. It, however, becomes a vital issue in concrete historical conditions that give a specific content to it. The principle of justice is significant in its substantive character only within the context of actual and continual human interaction in concrete historical conditions. Thus, the decisive comprehension of justice lies not so much in the clarity and precision of its conceptualisation but very much in its actual substantiation and vivacity in the concrete context of human interaction.

On the basis of the principles of ethical equality and justice, the formerly colonised and their posterity are also the bearers of the right to exist and to reason. This is so despite the wilful but ethically unjustified abrogation and negation of this right by the erstwhile colonizer and the predator trans-Atlantic slave traders. With regard to the latter, it is vital to bow in

⁸ D. P. Chattopadhyaya, "Human Rights, Justice and Social Context," in *The Philosophy of Human Rights*, ed. A. S. Rosenbaum (London: Aldwych Press, 1980), 177.

⁹ A. Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 18.

¹⁰ G. Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, trans. R. R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 101.

¹¹ B. G. Ramcharan, "The Right to Life," *Netherlands International Law Review* 30 (1983): 301-302.

¹² Donnelly, *The Concept of Human Rights*, 13.

honour and infinite gratitude to Abraham Lincoln who cautiously but steadfastly steered the rulers of the United States of America to adopt the 13th Amendment, in 1865, to the Constitution of the United States of America. This was the formal legal abolition of slavery in the United States. It is rather odd that shortly after this President Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865. Was the President wrong in recognising and defending the truth that even slaves are ontologically equal to those who hold them as slaves? Truthfulness and truth are indispensable for the realisation of justice and peace in human relations.

Lincoln's success ought to be complemented not by McCarthyism,¹³ which to all intents and purposes has rendered natural the continuation of an economic system based upon the metaphysics of not being "each other's keeper,"¹⁴ for the sake of accumulating wealth making and profit.¹⁵ Formal political decolonisation has come and it is gone. However, substantive colonisation, especially in the epistemological and economic domains, persists. The reality is that formal political decolonisation was insurance for the continuation of colonisation by other means, most prominently, economic and epistemic (cultural) means.¹⁶ This is the challenge of justice at both the national and international levels.

The Right to Food

The UDHR recognises the right to food. The right to exist and to reason necessarily implies the rights to food – adequate, nutritive, and available at regular intervals – shelter, and the pursuit of intellectual and spiritual inclinations; all in the service of the individual right to the pursuit of self-fulfilment. This is the basic and ubiquitous character of the human right to exist and to reason. This right is best understood, ontologically, from the point of view that, at any given point, the human being is a continually unfolding wholeness demanding that human rights be conceived from a whole-istic perspective. Speaking of the classification and hierarchisation of human rights is not a matter of ontology. It is an epistemological statement

¹³ R. Griffith and A. Theoharis, *The Specter, Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974); A. Fried, *McCarthyism The Great American Red Scare: A Documentary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ R. Burggraeve, *Each Other's Keeper? Essays on Ethics and the Biblical Wisdom of Love* (Thissur, Kerala: Marymatha Publications, Marymatha Major Seminary, 2009).

¹⁵ C. Arnsperger, "Competition, Consumerism and the 'Other': A Philosophical Investigation into the Ethics of Economic Competition," Discussion paper 9614, Institut de Recherches Economiques (IRES), Departement des Sciences Economiques, Université Catholique de Louvain D/1996/3082/14, 12-13; S. J. Sullivan, *Killing in Defense of Private Property: The Development of a Roman Catholic Moral Teaching, Thirteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976).

¹⁶ Y. D. Makonnen, *International Law and the New States of Africa* (Addis Abeba: UNESCO. Regional Participation Programme, 1983), 363-364.

pertaining to the political-cultural history of the West.¹⁷ The West is not the rest of the world's communities and histories. There is no necessary ethical imperative to extend the Western conception of human rights beyond its political-cultural sphere to all the communities of the planet. The will to political-cultural proselytization is already the beginning of the questionable putative right to hegemonisation.

Since rights discourse is meaningful in the context of human relations, it follows that the principle of the equality of all human beings demands truthfulness¹⁸ and justice as the measure of human relations. Peace cannot be attained without adherence to truthfulness and the meting out of justice in concrete historical situations. Formal equality shall not be enough as a response to the demand for concrete substantive, and not abstract procedural, justice. The tension between empty equality and substantive justice remains the paramount question after formal decolonisation. This is because, from the perspective of truthfulness, formal decolonisation did not terminate substantive colonisation in epistemic and economic terms. As a result, colonisation, now manifesting itself as imperialism oriented towards forcible hegemonisation, remains deeply rooted in the black humus soil nourishing defective political independence; a limping sovereignty in Africa, Australasia, the Caribbean area, and Latin America. I now turn to South Africa to examine this question.

The Challenge to the Subversive Power of Naming

It is vital to note that the name South Africa refers to a geographic point. It literally refers to the South of Africa. This does not necessarily have to do with the peoples who lived there from time immemorial and continue to live there. For example, it gives no clue about the Khoi and the San peoples who according to Schapera, "already inhabited Africa South of the Zambezi" before "the year 1652, when the establishment of the pioneer Dutch settlement at Table Bay laid the foundations for the present political dominance of the white man" in South Africa.¹⁹ It would appear that Elphick would concur with this statement.²⁰ Also, the name South Africa does not give even a hint at the existence of the ancient Kingdom of Mapungubwe.

The silence about the indigenous peoples of South Africa who inhabited the country from time immemorial is neither innocent nor accidental. It is

¹⁷ H. Bokor-Szego, "The Classification of Certain Types of Human Rights and the Development of Constitutions," in *Questions of International Law, Hungarian Perspectives*, ed. H. Bokor-Szego (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1991), vol. 5, 20-22.

¹⁸ Hans Küng, *Truthfulness: the Future of the Church* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1968), 36.

¹⁹ I. Schapera, *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa: Bushmen and Hottentots* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1930), 3.

²⁰ R. Elphick, *Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), 15-17.

the result of interested historiography: the active reconstruction of a narrative becoming his-story but wrongly referred to as “history.” Since the indigenous peoples of South Africa inhabiting the territory from time immemorial were conquered and silenced by the colonist, the his-story of this territory became known as the “history” of South Africa. In recent times, the almost half a century of carefully controlled silence by the University of Pretoria about the existence of the Kingdom of Mapungubwe is the reaffirmation of the will to preserve the “history” of South Africa.²¹ The silence is objectively the denial as well as the abrogation of the right to exist and to reason of the indigenous peoples, conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation. Thus, the name South Africa speaks to the use of ethically unjustified armed force supplemented by persuasive manipulation and, at times, even by outright coercion to exclude and negate the right to exist and to reason of the indigenous inhabitants of the country living there from time immemorial.

Against this background, the claim of Van Riebeeck, leader of the Dutch colonists, is ethically problematical. In reply to the Khoikhoi peoples’ resistance to the colonists taking their land, Van Riebeeck declared that “The country had thus fallen to our lot, being justly won in defensive warfare and...it was our intention to retain it.”²² From the point of view of the just war doctrine, Van Riebeeck could appeal to “defensive warfare” on the ground of the principle of recoverability (*ad repetendas res*) only if their ship from The Netherlands had carried “the country” to South Africa and off-loaded it in the Western Cape. Since Van Riebeeck’s ship did not carry any land from Holland, his appeal to “defensive warfare” fails ethically because one may not qualify unjustified forcible expropriation as a just acquisition. However, the history of South Africa to date is the reaffirmation of Van Riebeeck’s vow to “retain” the unjustly acquired country. In view of this, it is historically blind, politically naïve, and ethically insensitive to insist that apartheid was the one and only major problem of truth, justice, and peace in South Africa. No doubt the abolition of apartheid was necessary. But it was not sufficient by itself as the foundation of justice and peace in South Africa. Thus, the name South Africa is a living reminder of the unfinished ethical business of organising human relations in the country in the service of truth, justice and peace.

On the Name “Africa”

I have previously discussed the ethical and political issues concerning the name Africa.²³ The discussion served multiple purposes. One was to

²¹ O. Ebrahim, “Mapungubwe History of Africa Denied,” *Identity* (March/April 2010): 56, accessed October 9, 2011, <http://www.rebirth.co.za/mapungubwe.htm>.

²² F. Troup, *South Africa: A Historical Introduction* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1975), 53.

²³ M. B. Ramose, “I Doubt, therefore African Philosophy Exists,” *South African Journal of Philosophy* 22 (2003): 114-115.

show that it does make a difference when the indigenous peoples of Africa use their cultural resources to name the continent they live in Africa and when someone else – “a foreigner,” exercising the ethically dubious “right of conquest” – “imposes”²⁴ the name Africa on them. If we take the origin of *homo sapiens* seriously, then every human being on planet Earth is an African by virtue of ancestry. The world became African when the exodus from the mother continent resulted in other human beings inhabiting different parts of the planet. Emigrants from mother Africa, the continent of their origin, lost memory of their mother. Africa did not dwell among her children dispersed across the globe. Instead, the overwhelming majority of her children imagined an ahistorical origin, alienating themselves from Africa by cutting the blood bond of kith and kinship through the erection of boundaries, permeable and impermeable, based on accidents such as language, culture, skin colour, and political ideology. The oneness that we were and, still, are in and through the blood, is now fragmented into often amoral hostile groups ready to defend one’s own identity by means fair or foul, including the ultimate irrationality of the total and complete destruction of oneself and all that lives on earth by the use of strategic nuclear weapons: the ultimate weapons of mass destruction with “overkill” capacity. Only ethical responsibility in action shall respond appropriately to this live prospect of absurd omnicide. Responsible ethical action is the restoration of *bongwe-bojotlhe*; the oneness of the human family.

Having thus constructed and construed themselves as aliens to Africa, the emigrants returned to the mother continent as conquerors. By virtue of the questionable “right of conquest,” the supposed aliens gave their mother the baptismal name of Africa. It is interesting that many sources concerning this history use the concepts “invasion” and “conquest” frequently. However, almost none poses directly and explicitly the ethical question whether or not the “conquest” occurred in a just war. This is more surprising since the rudiments of the just war doctrine lie deep in the antiquity of Western moral philosophy.²⁵ In the light of this, the other reason why I question the name Africa is precisely to highlight the vital importance of the ethical justification of any war. Today the invasion of Iraq has been weighed and found wanting on ethical, political, and legal grounds.²⁶ A similar approach has been adopted with regard to the war on Afghanistan.²⁷ The power of the conquerors in an unjust war to name the conquered or their dispossessed country ought to be questioned. In practice, it has been challenged and it contin-

²⁴ S. Ravan, *Rome in Africa* (London: Routledge, 1993), 1.

²⁵ Cicero, *De Officiis*, ed. G. R. Goold and trans. W. Miller, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: William Heineman Ltd., 1954).

²⁶ M. ElBaradei, *The Age of Deception, Nuclear Diplomacy in Treacherous Times* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 86-87.

²⁷ J. Craig, N. de Paulo, P. A. Messina and D. P. Tompkins, eds., *Augustinian Just War Theory and the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Confessions, Contentions, and the Lust for Power* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011).

ues to be contested. It is against this background that some scholars have opted expressly to use the name Africa “under protest,”²⁸ and so do I.

My third aim was to show that the names “South Africa” and “Africa” share in common: (i) the fact that both have been given by “foreigners” to the indigenous inhabitants from time immemorial; (ii) conquest in an unjust war that putatively vested in the conqueror the ethically questionable “right of conquest”; (iii) both names are already the basis for the continuing contestations about epistemic and social justice in national and international domains; (iv) both names are an urgent and living ethical reminder that it is imperative to restore our oneness as human beings in memory of “mother Africa” for the sake of truth, justice, and peace in our living together. An ethics without memory is blind and deadly.

Ubuntu Was Present at the Origin of the United Nations Organisation

It is a factually incorrect claim, as per the sub-title of this section, that “Ubuntu was present at the origin of the United Nations Organisation.” This error of fact actually refers to Jan Smuts, former Prime Minister of South Africa. According to *Longmans English Larousse: The New Encyclopaedia Dictionary*:

Smuts, Jan Christiaan (1870-1950), South African statesman and field marshal. A Boer guerrilla leader in the Boer War (1899-1902), he supported Botha’s post-war policy of Anglo-Boer cooperation and played a leading part in the establishment of the Union of South Africa (1910). He served as a general in the 1st world war and as a member of the British war cabinet (1917-18). He helped to found the League of Nations. He was prime minister of South Africa (1919-24 and 1939-48). Smuts commanded the South African army in the 2nd world war and became a British field marshal (1941). He drafted the preamble to the U.N. charter and had much influence on the development of the British Commonwealth. He is the author of ‘Holism and evolution’ (1926), a philosophical study of evolution.²⁹

This Dictionary describes Smuts as unmistakably a Westerner in terms of his history and culture. His engagements and activities portray him as someone in pursuit of aims embedded in Western culture. It is significant that the dictionary description of Smuts mentions nothing explicitly about either his views or relations with the indigenous African peoples, conquered in the unjust wars of the colonisation of South Africa. Smuts is portrayed as silent about these peoples, even though their resistance to conquest in an unjust war predates “the establishment of the Union of South Africa (1910)”

²⁸ A. A. Mazrui, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (London: BBC Publications, 1986), 38.

²⁹ “Smuts, Jan Christiaan,” in *Longmans English Larousse: The New Encyclopaedia Dictionary*, ed. O.C. Watson (New York: Longmans, 1968), 1096.

in which he played a leading role. Smuts is portrayed as silent about these peoples even though they were part of the “1st world war.” He is portrayed as similarly silent about these peoples at the founding of the League of Nations and the drafting of “the preamble to the U.N. charter.” The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations reads in part as follows. “We the peoples of the United Nations determined to affirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and....” The depiction of Smuts, as is done in this Dictionary, is consistent with the colonial conqueror’s ethically questionable “right of conquest.” By virtue of this right, the original conqueror and its posterity – remembering and defending Van Riebeeck’s vow – silenced the conquered peoples into submission and defined unilaterally on their behalf the meaning of experience, knowledge, and truth. Thus, the conquered peoples existed only as slaves bound to obey at the beck and call of the slave master. How could Smuts be at peace with this and still be the champion of the human rights focused “preamble to the U.N. charter”? After all, justice – like charity – begins at home.

The logic of subjugation by exclusion was alive in conqueror South Africa long before Smuts was born. Laws prohibiting marriage across skin colour and culture lines were promulgated. The laws would be meaningless unless they were intended to deal with a living reality. But the laws were late because “scientifically, it is impossible therefore to classify each single individual or even each single population into a particular racial category. Especially is this true where the area of vague and blurred overlap between racial groups has been greatly enlarged by extensive interracial crossing, as in South African history.”³⁰ This is corroborated thus: “However little they might be prepared to admit the fact in public, the Afrikaners knew that a significantly large fraction of their nation were the fruit of unions between Boer farmers and their female slaves.”³¹ Why is it that this “fact” appears not to have prompted Smuts to reject the logic of subjugation by exclusion? Why could it not be clear to Smuts already that in the blood we are one; a oneness that is biologically open to sharing blood in order to save and preserve human life?

During the first period of Smuts’ premiership of South Africa, the term “native” was very much in use. The importance of its political meaning overshadowed its conventional etymological meaning denoting a person associated with a particular place by virtue of her or his birth in it. The political meaning in currency at the time was designed to distinguish the “native” from the “European.” The irony of this distinction is that the “European” reaffirmed its alien status in Africa and, in that way, continued to deny the blood bond of kith and kin with the indigenous peoples of Africa by that

³⁰ P. V. Tobias, *The Meaning of Race* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1972), 31.

³¹ B. Davidson, *The People’s Cause: A History of Guerrillas in Africa* (Essex: Longman Group Limited, 1981), 28.

time conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation. This alienation from Africa and the denial of the bond of blood with the indigenous peoples of Africa was affirmed by many legislative measures such as the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Native Administration Act of 1927, subsequently renamed the Bantu Administration Act and the Black Administration Act. The legislation pertaining to the “natives” was rule by proclamation rather than by the Parliament of South Africa. The first mentioned Act was already in force by the time Smuts assumed the position of prime minister for the second time. The second mentioned Act was also in force by the time Smuts assumed the position of prime minister of South Africa for the second time. Why is this that Smuts condoned this manifest logic of subjugation by exclusion? Why was he blind and deaf to the ethical imperative for justice in his country, but was sighted and apparently eager to witness the actual implementation of the United Nations Charter elsewhere? If “universal” means everywhere, then it surely meant the South Africa from which Smuts came from and was twice prime minister.

It is evident that for Smuts the citation from the preamble he drafted did not apply to the “natives” of South Africa. His knowledge of the existence of the “natives” of South Africa did not elevate them to the status of human beings. Thus, they were not worth remembering as beings with “the dignity and worth of the human person”; the bearers of “fundamental human rights.” This resolute abrogation and negation of the human dignity and the fundamental human rights of the “natives” of South Africa, significantly called the Bantu under the subsequent apartheid regime, continues to be the regulative conviction of the “Europeans” about “Blacks” in South Africa. This is despite the inauguration on April 27, 1994 of the new political dispensation in South Africa.

During the two periods when Smuts was prime minister of South Africa, the country was still under British rule, being thus subject to the Colonial Laws Validity Act. This status it shared with countries such as Australia, Canada, and India. To a large extent, these countries shared the same legal epistemological paradigm. Decisions by the courts in any of the countries were cited, at least as persuasive authority, in another country. For example, the Indian case of *Kesavananda v State of Kerala* was cited in South Africa as authority for the “essential features doctrine.”³² Also, the political experiences of “Europeans” as colonisers in Australia, Canada, and India were a common source for the inspiration and sometimes even the intention of specific legislative Acts. Against this background, I suggest that the legal meaning of “native” in South Africa is substantially the same as that of Western Australia. I am referring here specifically to the “Native Administration Act, 1905-1936.”³³

³² D. G. Morgan, “The Indian ‘Essential Features’ Case,” *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 30 (1981). *Kesavananda v State of Kerala* A.I. R 1973 S. C. 461

³³ *Native Administration Act* [South Africa], No. 14 of 1905, as amended by No. 42 of 1911, No. 8 of 1931 and No. 43 of 1936.

According to this Act, “Native” means “any person of the full blood descended from the original inhabitants of Australia; subject to the exceptions stated in this definition any person of less than full blood who is descended from the original inhabitants of Australia or from their full blood descendants, excepting however any person who is – a quadroon under twenty-one years of age who neither associates with or lives substantially after the manner of the class of persons mentioned in paragraph (a) of this definition.” “Quadroon” means “a person who is descended from the full blood original inhabitants of Australia or their full blood descendants but who is only one-fourth of the original full blood.” This echoes the “one drop”³⁴ doctrine in the United States of America.

It is significant that the legal definition of “native” cited above uses “blood” as the criterion and measure in the definition of “native.” This applies also to the “quadroon,” the political-legal synonym of the biological fiction called “Coloured” in South Africa. It is unnecessary to make a special elaborate plea in support of the submission that the “Coloured” is a biological fiction. Suffice it to state that, so far, normal human to human sexual intercourse across skin colour and culture does result – given the right health conditions and, sometimes even the express intention – in the birth of another human being and not a butterfly, a lizard, or an octopus. This biological fiction uncovers the truth that, in and through the blood, human beings are a oneness, a wholeness with the sun and other celestial bodies, with the air we breathe, the water we drink, as well as the plants and animals we eat and use for medicine. Human oneness with animals is such that even some medical experiments are carried out on animals before the findings are applied to human beings. Accordingly, I suggest that the recourse to “blood” in the definitions of “native” and “quadroon” is an inadvertent admission on the part of the colonial legislator that human beings are one in and through the blood. After the Human Genome Project, the situation is even clearer. The eminent chairperson of this Project states that: “At the DNA level, we are all 99.9 percent identical. That similarity applies regardless of which two individuals from around the world you choose to compare. Thus, by DNA analysis, we humans are truly part of one family.”³⁵

It is significant that the author uses the concept “identical.” This underlines the oneness of humanness. To construe human beings as “the same” is to allow for the possibility that others might be “different.” Social myths, such as “blue blooded” human beings, are predicated on the biological fallacy that human beings are “the same.” The imaginary “blue blooded” human beings are believed to be “different” – so “different” that they are justified to treat other human beings as their natural slaves.³⁶ This logic of

³⁴ P. C. Taylor, *Race: A Philosophical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 139 and 146.

³⁵ F. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (London: Pocket Books, 2007), 125-126.

³⁶ K. Wrenhaven, *Reconstructing the Slave: The Image of the Slave in Ancient Greece* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013), 10-21.

“same” and “different” has also been used to make the false but no less deadly distinction between “superior” and “inferior” race.³⁷ History continues to show the heavy price that human beings have and continue to pay for believing in these social myths. It is salutary to note that history has shown the beneficial practical effects of disbelief in “the divine right of kings,” the censure of slavery, the denunciation of racism, and the often not so peaceful transition from monarchies to republics. Smuts must be presumed to have known all this. Why then did he show such placid complacency with the slavery and the racism in the country that he served twice as prime minister? Could his philosophy of “holism” provide an answer to his complicity in the racial enslavement of the indigenous peoples conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation? I now turn to search for an answer to this question in Smuts’ philosophy of “holism.”

Smuts on “Holism” and “Evolution”

Smuts’ book, *Holism and Evolution*, was published in 1926. It is written wholly from the standpoint of the Western epistemological paradigm. Although Smuts was situated geographically outside of the West, his cultural and philosophical outlook was through and through Western. He is, therefore, not an exponent of the epistemologies of the South³⁸ where he was geographically situated. Accordingly, Smuts stood on the platform supporting the injustice of epistemicide committed against the conquered peoples of the South. I propose to study his “Holism” from this perspective in order to show its significance when it encounters an epistemology of the South, in this case the philosophy of *ubuntu*. Smuts understands and defines his philosophy of “Holism.”

We find thus a great unifying creative tendency of a specific holistic character in the universe, operating through and sustaining the forces and activities of nature and life and mind, and giving ever more of a distinctive holistic character to the universe. This creative tendency or principle we call Holism. Holism in all its endless forms is the principle which works up the raw material or unorganised energy units of the world, utilises, assimilates and organises them, endows them with specific structure and character and individuality, and finally with personality, and creates beauty and truth and value from them. And it does all this through a definite method of whole-making, which it pursues with ever-increasing intensity from the beginning to the end, through things and plants and beasts and men. Thus it is that a scale of wholes forms the ladder of Evolution. It is through a continuous and universal process of whole-making that reality rises step by step, until from the poor empty, worthless stuff of

³⁷ B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 30.

³⁸ Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*.

its humble beginnings it builds the spiritual world beyond our greatest dreams.³⁹

It is significant that Smuts chooses to use capital letters for both “Holism” and “Evolution.” The significance lies in the fact that for Smuts there is an immanent “purposiveness” in the whole-making process of “Holism.”⁴⁰ The “purposiveness” is movement “towards wholeness.”⁴¹ The movement is oriented “towards the realisation of Holism as its immanent ideal....It has a trend....It has an immanent Telos.”⁴² Smuts imposes “an immanent Telos” to “Holism.” The “telos” is unspecified. This is apparently because the “endless forms” of “Holism” allow only for the recognition of purposiveness in specific wholes which are always not guaranteed permanent endurance. It would seem, then, that Smuts takes the philosophical position that motion is the principle of being. This, however, is questioned by the “immanent Telos,” which appears to exist alongside but at the same time inside motion. This questioning suggests the need to modify Smuts’s conception of motion as the principle of being.

The motion that is the principle of being for Smuts is characteristically unilinear and one-directional. It is his basis for positing the vertical “ladder of Evolution.” In this way, Smuts admits to the hierarchisation of all entities in the unfolding course of “Evolution.” “Wholes from the lowest to the highest are akin and form one great family, and are derived from one another in the process called Evolution.”⁴³ On this reasoning, Smuts can condone the injustice of conquest in an unjust war and its aftermath. The indigenous peoples of South Africa conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation are not yet at the appropriate rung of “the ladder of Evolution” to qualify for just and humane treatment as human beings, he could argue. For him, “Enough for us to know that the lower is not in hopeless enmity to the higher, but its basis and support, a feeder to it, a source whence it mysteriously draws its creative strength for further effort, and hence the necessary pre-condition for all further advance. Thus, beneath all logical or ethical disharmonies there exists the deeper creative, genetic harmony between the lower and the higher grades in the Holistic series.”⁴⁴ This opens the way for Smuts to disregard and downgrade the “ethical disharmonies” that may exist among human beings. It facilitates his blind participation in the drafting of the preamble of the United Nations Charter. The same blindness is reinforced by his “Holistic” deafness to the loud cry for justice to and for the indigenous conquered peoples of South Africa where he served twice as prime minister.

The problem with Smuts’ “Holism” is that it is based on vertical hierocratic reasoning. This reasoning contradicts the principle of the equality of

³⁹ J. C. Smuts, *Holism and Evolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), 107-108.

⁴⁰ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 140.

⁴¹ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 179.

⁴² Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 179.

⁴³ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 333.

⁴⁴ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 338.

all human beings. This principle is predicated upon horizontal reasoning. Another problem with Smuts' "Holism" is that it is an "-ism." This is interesting because at least once does Smuts mention the concept "wholeness"⁴⁵ but does not take into account the philosophical consequences of the suffix "-ness." I now turn to the philosophical exposition of "-ness" by focusing on *ubuntu*; the philosophy of the conquered peoples that Smuts ruled under the banner of subjugation by exclusion.

The Philosophy of Ubuntu

I have discussed this philosophy extensively elsewhere.⁴⁶ Suffice it to say here that *ubu-ntu* proceeds from the philosophical insight that motion is the principle of be-ing. The "ubu" speaks directly to this, because of its "dangling" abstract conceptual character; being in ceaseless motion in any conceivable direction. It is a "-ness" proper. It retains its "dangling," but becomes concrete, when it "logs into" the "-ntu" and thus becomes one word, *ubuntu*. At this point, the distinction between be-ing and being emerges. Be-ing is wholeness manifesting itself in a plurality and diversity of beings. Difference is not by necessity the reason for opposition. On the contrary, it can be an invitation to mutual recognition based upon transformative dialogue.⁴⁷ Here also we observe the basic philosophical difference with the "Holism" of Smuts. The unelaborated "wholeness" of Smuts is understood here as Be-ing in its potential manifestation of interrelated beings. Here horizontality is the perspective from which the interrelatedness of all beings is understood. Also, there is no "purposiveness" or "telos" imposed in advance upon be-ing.

Umu-ntu (the human being) is the ontological possibility condition for the philosophy of *ubu-ntu*. I have written these as hyphenated words in order to illustrate that the two words follow the same logic in philosophical analysis. From the perspective of *umuntu*, *ubuntu* has two interrelated sides. These are the epistemological and the ethical sides. Taking cognisance of the interrelatedness of all beings, the ethics of *ubuntu* upholds the maxim: "promote life and avoid killing."⁴⁸ Here one is enjoined to perform a positive duty instead of focusing of a metaphysical "harmony," giving meaning even to concrete manifest injustice. Contrary to Smuts' "Holism," the "ethical disharmonies" that arise in human relations are neither subsumed nor subordinated to "the deeper creative, genetic harmony between the lower

⁴⁵ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 179.

⁴⁶ M. B. Ramose, *African Philosophy through Ubuntu* (Harare: Mond Publishers, 1999); M. B. Ramose, "The Philosophy of the Anglo-Boer War," in *A Century is not Enough*, ed. Nexus Editorial Collective (Pretoria: Afriscot, 2005).

⁴⁷ P. Healy, "Rethinking Deliberative Democracy: From Deliberative Discourse to Transformative Dialogue," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 37 (2011): 295-311.

⁴⁸ B. Bujo, *The Ethical Dimension of Community: The African Model and the Dialogue between North and South*, trans. C. M. Nganda (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998), 77.

and the higher grades in the Holistic series.”⁴⁹ *Ubuntu* must be affirmed as a human right since it is the manifestation of the right of the Bantu-speaking peoples of South Africa to exist and to reason in the national and international spheres. To recognise *ubuntu* as a human right is to affirm *bongwe-bojotlhe* – the oneness and wholeness of be-ing. As an integral part of being, *abantu* have the right to equality with all other human beings and the dignity that goes together with this right. Accordingly, it is an imperative of justice to recognise *ubuntu* as a human right.

Conclusion

There is no philosophical ground to preclude the continual unfoldment of multiple and perhaps even divergent conceptions of human rights. This by itself is a challenge to the discourse on human rights from primarily one – *unius versus* – version. The systematic but injurious obliviousness of the “natives” of South Africa by the successors in title to the colonisation of South Africa is an inexcusable epistemic injustice. This injustice is aggravated by the arbitrary total and complete exclusion of *ubuntu* from the 1996 constitution. Affirming *ubuntu* as a human right demands taking seriously the *Sozial* and the *Rechtsstaat* principles in order to achieve justice and durable peace in South Africa.⁵⁰ In support of this argument, I have placed Smuts’ philosophy of “Holism” in dialogue with the philosophy of *ubuntu*. The dialogue shows that Smuts’ vertical reasoning made acceptable to him to condone the injustice of conquest in an unjust war and its aftermath in the lives of the indigenous conquered peoples. I have not problematized the “indigenous conquered peoples” here. I have done so elsewhere.⁵¹ Suffice it to say here that for ethical and historical reasons the “Coloured” and Indian communities are expressly included in this concept.

⁴⁹ Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, 338.

⁵⁰ M. B. Ramose, T., G. T. Maphala and T. E. Makhabane, “In Search of a Workable and Lasting Constitutional Change in South Africa,” *Quest* 5, no. 2 (1991): 5.

⁵¹ Ramose, M. B., “In memoriam: Sovereignty in the “New” South Africa,” *Griffith Law Review*, 16 (2007), 320-321.

The Jain Way of Life: A Philosophical Perspective

Geeta Mehta

Growth of Culture

The birth and growth of culture was made possible by the freedom and security attained by man through the conquest of nature and the building of civil society. It is said that agriculture is the best culture, whereby man can get security. Culture is the sum total of the activities whereby a person relates himself to the significant aspects of reality, actual or imagined. In brief, culture is a way of life, a way of thinking, and a way of worship.

Culture is the sum total of the way of living built up by groups or human beings and transmitted from one generation to another. People with their own long history build up separate patterns of culture. Culture works silently. It makes people feel they are not forced to obey, but do it of their own free will, and gives them a sense of pride in good behavior. In brief, it is that which human intelligence and feeling have accomplished through the ages: values, symbols, myths, language, religion, arts, sciences, technology, laws, and philosophy. As M.K. Gandhi has observed, "A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people."¹

Culture and Jain Religion

Religion, according to Mahavira (6th c. BCE; the last Tirthankara ["ford-maker"] of Jains), should pervade all our activities; it cannot and ought not be pursued in seclusion from one's fellow beings and in separation from life's other activities. The equivalent for 'religion' is *Dharma* in Sanskrit, which means moral obligation and connotes the individual's integrity as well as social solidarity. The universe, as envisaged in Jain teaching, has the motto "*parasparopagraho Jivanam*" (There should be mutual support between living creatures).²

Karma Theory is supreme in Jainism. It is an activity of human beings. There is no concept of grace and God in Jainism. Right knowledge is the knowledge of reality without doubt or error. To acquire this knowledge, one should study the teachings of the *Tirthankaras* who have attained liberation and are therefore fit to lead others. Right faith is an essential preliminary for right knowledge. It consists in an insight into the truth. Right knowledge in

¹ M. K. Gandhi, *Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Vivek Jitendra Desai, Navajivan Publishing House, 1968), vol. V, 10.

² *Tatvārtha Sutra* 5.21.

itself is not enough, if it is not followed by right conduct. Right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct cannot exist exclusively of each other, though right conduct is the direct means of liberation.

Right conduct consists in controlling the passions, the senses, thoughts, speech and action so as to cultivate an attitude of “neutrality without desire or aversion towards the objectives of the external world.” Right conduct is based on the fivefold moral code which Jainas call *panchamahavrata*, which are tenets of *Ahimsa*. This fivefold moral code names killing as the greatest sin. Killing includes harming or hurting not only humans or animals but also insects and plants, because Jains believe that plants are in the possession of souls. A sect of Jain monks even breathes through a piece of cloth tied over their mouths, lest they inhale and destroy the life of an organism floating in the air. It is this morbid fear of injuring life that governs the life of orthodox Jains.

Although principle of *ahimsa* is common to many religious and philosophical traditions, the extent of its explication and depth of understanding is unique to Jainism. Mahavira insisted that non-violence could be practiced by all men and women. It is the law of life. *Ahimsa*, being the law of love, consists not in claiming but in giving. ‘Love never suffers, never resents, never revenges itself. The test of love means self-suffering.’ Mahavira seemed to mark the most marvelous combination of moral and spiritual force. The basic principle on which the practice of non-violence rests is, that what holds good in respect of oneself equally applies to the whole universe.

Non-Violence

In the literature of world religions, non-violence as a way of life has a very ancient history. Jainism is the ‘*ahimsa*’ religion par excellence. Jainism places a strong emphasis on the ethical principle of *Ahimsa* and also discusses it in epistemology and metaphysics. ‘*Ahimsa*’ is the central core of Jain philosophy and religion. Jainas speak of violence as unnatural and non-violence as natural because if you throw somebody into the river, you expect a cause for it, but if you save a man from drowning into river, we do not require an explanation for it. This means that love or non-violence is inherent in the nature of things. Non-violence is as natural as fragrance to a flower. A flower emitting a fragrance is not conditional. It is unconditional and unmindful of its surroundings. Non-violence is intrinsic to the nature of man. It is, therefore, not dependent even on the existence of the other, not to speak of the action of the others.

In the wider sense, non-violence implies ‘Right to life for all’ coming from ‘Respect for life.’ Thus, it is an ethically oriented principle of conduct which can promote the spirit of universal brotherhood and peaceful coexistence. The product of weapons of mass destruction will stop if durable peace is to be achieved. In the *Dasvaikalika Sutra* it has been said, “every human

being wants to live, nobody likes suffering. Therefore, do not inflict suffering on anybody. This is non-violence.”³

The Scriptural Background of *Ahimsa*

Non-violence is observed by Jaina seers as a rule of nature. It is the first principle of higher life: “All miseries arise from violence”⁴ and also “Non-violence is the crux of wisdom.”⁵ The Doctrine of *ahimsa* is narrated and analyzed in the *Agamas* (scriptures) as follows:

(1) All violence deserves to be discarded because it leads to sorrow and fear. This is the basic argument of the doctrine of non-violence.

(2) Violence means ending somebody’s life or torturing others. Still, the blemishes born on violence depend only on infatuation or attachment and jealousy, etc. If there is no infatuation or attachment, mere ending of life cannot come under the category of violence.

(3) The purport of the blemish of violence does not depend upon the relative importance of the size, number, and senses of the living beings that are killed. It depends upon the result of the violating person or the intensity or, otherwise, his knowing or unknowing action or the use of force. This constitutes the purport of non-violence.

In Jainism, *ahimsa* is subdivided into *bhava-himsa* and *dravya-himsa* – or violence in thought and violence in physical action. It is the former violence which is real violence (*nischaya-himsa*). Jains classify violence into 108 varieties, so that the aspirant can detect even the minutest form of violence. The violence according to them is three-fold: (1) *krita*, 2) *karita*, and 3) *anumodita*. This three-fold violence becomes nine-fold as it can be committed either by the instrumentality of mind, or of speech, or of the body. This nine-fold violence again becomes 27-fold for it can have three stages.

- (1) *Sarambha* (thinking of violent action)
- (2) *Samarambha* (making preparation for violence)
- (3) *Ārambha* (i.e., actual committance)

This 27-fold violence becomes one hundred and eight-fold as it could be inspired by either of the four passions viz. *krodha* (anger), *mana* (pride), *maya* (deceit), and *lobha* (greed). Abstinence from killing others must be observed in thought, word, and deed. The mere thought of killing is as much immoral as actually killing. Hence, according to Jains, the principle of *ahimsa* naturally implies purity of thought, word, and deed actuated by universal love and mercy.

³ *Daśvaikālika Sutra* 6-11.

⁴ *Sutra Kṛtāṅga* 1-10-21.

⁵ *Sutra Kṛtāṅga* 1-14-10.

The Practice of Non-Violence: Moral Account

Jainism believes that all living beings have the capacity to feel and experience pain and pleasures in differing degrees. Jainism includes humans, animals, plants, and water, as well as air, fire, and earth as living beings. It not only includes five-sensed beings but also one-sensed beings. According to Jainism, all the sentient creatures that can feel have life. One must carry out all activities with utmost care. It is necessary to be careful in every activity in order to observe perfectly the five great or small vows. According to Jains, doing harm to another is like harming one's own self. This is based on the theory of *Karma* (material particles which defiles the soul). Jainas have proclaimed that if one wishes to have pleasure and earn good *Karma*, one must be compassionate and pacifist (peaceful) towards all living beings. One must practice only those activities which are purposeful for right conduct. The *Karma* theory teaches that better actions achieve better results, which lead to a better environment. A pure environment produces a better mind, less intensity of passions, greater happiness, and an increase in compassionate spirituality.

There are certain rules for the observation of non-violence:

1. One should not eat roots like potatoes, onions, garlic, carrots, ginger, etc., because, while digging them out, many microbes are killed. This is practised by common householders.
2. The monks do not take even baths, which may harm invisible microbes born in water. This is how Jainism supports ecological balance.
3. They do not kill any living being intentionally so much so that, when they go to their temple, they do not wear shoes with the fear that they may kill more germs and insects on the road.
4. Among certain sects they have masks on their mouths so that fewer bacteria are killed by breathing.
5. The monk may never light a lamp at night, walk about in the dark, or put out a fire.
6. The householders will not kill any insects, even bugs, mosquitoes, or lice, because of the principle of non-violence. If an insect is passing on the road and they observe it, they will lift it up and put aside lest it should be killed while walking.

Not taking of life in any form is the instruction of Jain scriptures. Destruction of higher forms of life, i.e., beings with more than one sense organ, is forbidden to the lay votary. Therefore, there is no meat eating, alcohol, or honey. There are small vows (*anu-vratas*) for the house-holders and great vows (*maha-vratas*) for the monks.

The first great vow is *Pranatiyata virmana vrata* (the vow to be away from any killing) – promising never to intentionally destroy a *Jiva* (life) that has more than one sense. This vow would not prevent a king leading an army in defense of his kingdom, but would prevent one from the killing of

weak creatures like mosquitoes and any other troublesome insects. It also prohibits acting as ‘Agent Provocateur.’ The person who takes this vow must also avoid faults in the treatment of animals: (1) He must never tie an animal up too tightly; (2) Beat it mercilessly; (3) Cut its limbs; (4) Overload or overwork it; (5) Neglect to feed it properly. There are other major vows: the second vow (*Mrisavada viramana vrata*) “is directed against falsehood or exaggeration”; the third vow (*Adattadana viramana vrata*) prohibits stealing of various kinds; the vow of chastity (*Maithuna viramana vrata*); and the vow of limitation (*Parigraha viramana vrata*).⁶ The Jaina profess that certain penalties will be accumulated by acting contrary to these vows.

The five small vows (*Anuvratas*) (which resemble in their content, we see, the five great vows a monk takes), the three supplementary vows (*Guna vratas*), and the four disciplinary vows (*Siksha vratas*) constitute the twelve *vratas* or vows of a householder. The five small vows for house-holders are

1. *Ahimsa* (non-violence)
2. *Satya* (Truth)
3. *Asteya* (Non-stealing)
4. *Brahmacharya* (Chastity)
5. *Aparigraha* (Non-possession).

All these vows are to be observed by individuals, but they have social connotations. Jainism attaches great importance to universal tolerance, an active ingredient of the principle of *ahimsa*.⁷ There are supplementary vows

1. *Digvrata*: not going beyond the limits of space
 - a. either in upward direction in the vow
 - b. or in downward direction
 - c. or in any other direction etc.

2. *Anarthadanda Vrata*: i.e., taking a vow not to commit purposeless sinful actions or to abstain from wanton sinful activities.

- a. indulging in licentious speech,
- b. uttering obscene words, or
- c. prattling in a senseless manner, etc.

3. *Bhogopabhoga Parimana Vrata*: i.e., the vow of limiting one’s enjoyment of consumable and non-consumable things.⁸

- a. eating articles having life

⁶ This, here and below, draws very closely on Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism* (Oxford: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1915).

⁷ See Kamal Chand Sogani, *Ethical Doctrines in Jainism* (Sholapur: Lalchand Hira-chand Doshi, Jaina Samskriti Samraksaka Sangha, 2001). Much of what follows draws on this work.

⁸ This draws on, at length, Vilas Sangve, *Jaina Path of Ahimsa* (Solapur: Bhagwan Mahavir Research Centre, 1991).

- b. eating articles in contact with those having life
- c. eating articles mixed with those having life
- d. eating articles not well-cooked
- e. eating fermented and aphrodisiacal articles.

This vow forbids 15 cruel trades⁹

Livelihood from charcoal,
 Livelihood from wood,
 Livelihood from carts,
 Livelihood from transport fees,
 Livelihood from hewing (half cutting) trees etc.,
 Trade in animal by products,
 Trade in lac (insect resins),
 Trade in alcohol,
 Trade in human beings and animals,
 Trade in poisonous articles,
 Work involving milling,
 Work involving cutting wings/mutilation,
 Livelihood from setting fire to a forest and the like,
 Livelihood from drawing off the water from lakes, etc.,
 Livelihood from rearing anti-social elements.

If the supplementary vows (*gunavrata*s) strengthen the small vows (*anuvrata*s – the main body of the code of conduct for the house-holder), the disciplinary vows (*siksa-vrata*s) bring perfection in their observance through a disciplinary process. Non-violence is the fundamental one of all these virtues and the proper cultivation of it involves the cultivation of all other ones. The four disciplinary vows are:

1. *Desa Vrata*: Transgressing the limits by:
 - a. Sending an agent
 - b. Drawing attention by making sounds, etc.,
2. *Samayika*: The live transgressions, which should be avoided are, losing one's control over:
 - a. Mind
 - b. Body
 - c. Speech
3. *Paushadha-Upavasa Vrata*:
 - a. Handling of things without properly examining and sweeping
 - b. Making bed without properly examining and sweeping, etc.

⁹ This draws on, at length, Mohanlal Mehta, *Jaina Culture* (Varanasi: P. V. Research Institute, 2002).

4. *Atithi Samvibhaga Vrata*:

- a. Placing food on things having life
- b. Covering food with things having life, etc.

Spoken and Mental Non-Injury in Jainism

In the *Sutrakṛtāṅga Sutra*, it is said that there are three ways of committing sins: by one's own activity, by commission, and by approval (i.e., by body, speech, and mind).¹⁰ Sri Kundakunda Acharya explains carefulness in speech, *Bhasha Samiti*, in the following words: "He who having renounced backbiting, ridiculing, talking ill of others, self-praising and harsh words, speaks what is good for himself as well as for others (is said) to have carefulness in speech."¹¹

Ahimsa by commission and approval also comes into the category of vocal or mental *Ahimsa*. In a way, we can state that mental *Ahimsa* is a more extensive ethical principle than vocal *Ahimsa*, because the spoken word is only an expression of thought. Action is also an expression of thought. J. L. Jaini illustrates mental *Ahimsa* in the following way: "A true Jaina will do nothing to hurt the feelings of another person, man, woman or child nor will he violate the principles of Jainism."¹²

Material and Mental Violence

There are sixty words for *Ahimsa* in Jaina Scripture¹³ which emphasize different connotations of *Ahimsa*. Self is eternal, hence what we kill is *prāna* which consists of five sense organs, mind, speech, three powers of the body, breathing, and life-span. This is known as *dravya-himsa*. But *bhava-himsa* is mental which is due to lethargy (*Pramāda*). The basis of Non-violence is reverence for life. Non-violence does good to all.¹⁴ *Ahimsa* is pure and eternal Dharma.¹⁵ *Ahimsa* is compounded of 4 elements:

1. Friendliness (*Maitri*)
2. Feeling glad at the sight of the virtuous (*Pramod*)
3. Compassion for those who are in misery (*Karunā*)
4. Equanimity to those who are without virtue (*Mādhyastha*).¹⁶

¹⁰ *Sutrakṛtāṅga Sutra* 1-1-2-26

¹¹ Quoted by Unto Tahtinen, *Non-violence as an Ethical Principle* (Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 1964), 33.

¹² Jaini Jagminder Lal, *Outlines of Jainism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1916), 22.

¹³ *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sutra* 1-21

¹⁴ *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sutra* I-II

¹⁵ *Ācāraṅga Sutra* 1.4.1

¹⁶ *Tattvārthasutra* VII.6.

“That which includes kindness to all creatures is Religion.” Religion is that which sustains and preserves life. *Ahimsa* implies purity of thought, word, and deed. *Mahavira* proclaimed “There is no quality of soul more subtle than non-violence and no virtue of spirit greater than reverence for life.” Absolute non-injury to all forms of life is not possible. Jainism distinguishes various kinds of injury according to the mental attitude of the person committing it, for it is the intention that causes sin. It is conceded that a good deal of injury to life is involved even in the daily duties of an ordinary man, such as walking, cooking, washing, and similar pursuits. The various operations of agriculture and industry also cause the destruction of life. Again, life may have to be injured and even destroyed in the act of defending one’s own life and property. With the catholicity which characterizes all its rules, Jainism does not prohibit a householder from committing these three kinds of violence which may be called accidental, occupational, and protective. Shirking from them would be considered a dereliction of duty.

Mahavira has spoken of two kinds of violence: *Artha himsa* and *Anartha himsa*, i.e., necessary and unnecessary violence. We cannot give up certain violence like breathing, when we kill bacteria. While taking water bacteria are killed and, even in vegetarian food, there is some violence. According to Jainism, water in itself is animate. Moreover, there are many *Apakaya jivas*, i.e., living beings, in water. Many mobile and immobile bacteria are grown when water is used for plants. A man can certainly give up unnecessary violence. Today, industrialization and consumerism motivate us to increase our wants, and the result is that unnecessary violence is increased. Non-violence stands for environmental protection, vegetarianism, sympathetic understanding, and peaceful co-existence.

Mindfulness, an Important Virtue

An important virtue in Jainism is mindfulness. In Jainism, it is said that one should remain fully aware while lifting things or putting them down; while sitting, walking, etc. Only such a person can observe the vow of non-violence. One should be aware of even thoughts. Michael Tobias, author of “Life Force,” declares the Jain ethics of non-violence to be ‘Spiritual Ecology’ and ‘Biological Ethics.’ Thus, it indicates that Jains have not only thought of human beings alone, but of all species of the universe. Jain ethics teaches a ‘Give and Take’ balance for the benefit, of not only humans, but also of all living beings.

Non-Violence and Environmental Concern

What does Jainism have to say about environmental concern? There is a story in Jain literature. Six travelers are lost in the central part of the forest. Seeing a fruit laden tree, they think of eating the fruit.

The first person, actuated by black thought-point (*Krishna Leshya*), wanted to uproot the whole tree.

The second person, actuated by blue thought-point (*Nila Leshya*), wanted to preserve the roots but cut down the trunk.

The third person, actuated by grey thought-point (*Kapot Leshya*), wanted to cut only larger branches.

The fourth person, actuated by yellow thought-point (*Tejo Leshya*), wanted to cut only the minor branches with fruits to avoid unnecessary damage.

The fifth person, actuated by pink thought-point (*Padma Leshya*), wanted to pluck only the fruits.

The sixth one, actuated by white thought-point (*Shukla Leshya*), suggested to pick up the fallen fruits on the ground.

One must avoid the first three thoughts absolutely. The fourth and the fifth are respectful towards the tree, but the best among them all is the sixth person's thoughts. This story indicates the care a Jain must take in his behavior. The non-violence towards all creatures, the friendship towards all beings, shows the concern and care Jains take towards each species of the universe and towards the environment.

(1) It is no exaggeration to say that the Jain ecological philosophy is virtually synonymous with the principle of non-violence which runs through the Jain tradition like a golden thread. It is the concept which is at once ancient and refreshingly modern.

(2) Jainism offers an environmental ethics which can ensure sustainability. It refers to enlightened spirituality that is, change in the attitudes of man through religion and spirituality. Jainism believes that, "Our spirituality should not permit us to exploit nature for our self-chosen purposes."

(3) It is clear that the quintessence of Lord Mahavira's teachings is that religion sustains the world and "non-violence, self-restraint and penance constitute religion."¹⁷ Lord Mahavira not only pointed out but demonstrated that real philosophy is practical, because it is a way of living in our daily life on earth. The Jain world view has implications for the emergence of a non-violent culture necessary for environmental preservation.

(4) Non-violence can be broadly interpreted to mean 'harmlessness.' The doctrine of non-violence has been universally accepted by all religions. It is the first and foremost tenet of Jainism. It is an essential precondition for environmental protection. Perhaps, "Jainism is the only tradition which has consistently allowed this tenet to soak into the very essentials of its teaching and practices." *Tirthanakaras* have recognized non-violence as duty, knowing the suffering of all beings."¹⁸

(5) Lord Mahavira taught the lesson of non-violence 2500 years ago. He said, "There is nothing in this world higher than Mount Meru or anything more expansive than the sky. Likewise know that no religion is greater

¹⁷ *Daśvaikālika Sutra* 1.1.

¹⁸ *Ācāranga Sutra* 1.17.

than non-violence.”¹⁹ It is implied that one has to consider all living things to be as precious as one’s own self. In an interview, Dalai Lama made it clear that Jains first conveyed to the Buddhists the true meaning of ‘Love of Life and respect for all sentient beings.’

Environmental Ethics

Nature is treated reverentially in Jainism. It asks us to shape our actions with great care for their environmental consequences. In Jainism, non-violence is not merely a ritual but a discipline for all, at all times. It provides us with environmental ethics. It would help humanity to live in harmony with nature. Jainism teaches not to exploit nature in our greed for wealth and power. If we practice non-violence and are a little cautious, perhaps, we can prevent disturbing ecology. All our selfish pursuits amount to violence. Non-violence implies the restricted consumption of natural resources. In our social context, it implies practices of restraint in all activities. Do not harm others. Consume energy only to the extent that is minimally essential. No extravagance or waste should be due to neglect and carelessness. Lord Mahavira rightly observed that non-violence is wholesome for all living beings. Positively, it implies universal friendliness. It is abundantly clear that a non-violent lifestyle is imperative to save mankind. A careful study of Jain scriptures reveals evidence for the concern of Jainism for the environment.

Non-violence has a very wide connotation. It means cessation of all violence, love, compassion, not to wish evil of anybody, and not to kill. Non-violence is “Observance of mindfulness and self-control while behaving towards all living beings....”²⁰ There is the same Self everywhere. It is said in the *Acaranga Sutra* that “One who kills other living beings, kills oneself.” It is said, “One whom you intend to kill, is yourself only.”²¹ Jainism is not an abstract philosophy, but a complete life-style, a way of life. It offers physical, moral, and spiritual rules of healthy living. The latest techniques and the best of science can be incorporated in the Jaina model while reviving the old tradition. It establishes harmony between religious, scientific, spiritual, and physical aspects, between personal independence and ecological interdependence. It is the path of purification the basis of which is the principle of non-violence which is the principle pertaining to the environment.

Aparigraha: Non-Attachment to Possessions

In the *Dasavaikalika Sutra* it is said: “As the bee that sucks honey in the blossoms of a tree without hurting the blossom and strengthening itself,

¹⁹ *Saman Suttam*, Gatha 158.

²⁰ *Dasavaikalika Sutra* 6-8

²¹ *Ācāranga Sutra* 1.5.5

the monks take food from lay people such that they do not disturb them.”²² Jainism teaches restraint in the consumption of material things, the regulation of desires, and the simplification of lifestyle; indulgent and profligate use of natural resources is seen as a form of theft and violence. *Aparigraha* is not an abstract philosophy but a vision of life. Man’s insatiable greed is the main factor in damaging the environment. Interestingly, the important ecology basics, environmental preservation and protection, are inherent in basic Jain doctrine, which is realistic, practical, and rational. In Jainism, we find a coordination of science and spirituality.

The Jain principle is to enhance the quality of life and not merely increase the quantity of consumption. Attachment to possessions reflects our greedy attitude. The Jaina emphasis on non-attachment to possessions is significant from a social and human point view. The physical rules for controlling greed include: A monk should not have any belongings as their own except a whisk with which to gently brush insects out of the way so as to not tread on them while walking. Householders should decide about the length and width of the area beyond which they will not travel for their business, so that their greed will be controlled. The four passions discarded by Jainism are greed, anger, pride, and deceit, which bring inequality in society.

Ecological Lifestyle in Jainism

Jain Acharyas say that if we disregard the existence of earth, fire, water, and vegetation, then our own existence will be destroyed. Jains point out that environmental concerns require a specific non-violent lifestyle which has an aesthetic dimension and a practical concept of spiritual concord. Changing our lifestyle to a spiritual ecology and environmental concern is not very difficult if we bear the following aims in mind:

- (1) Cultivation of a helping attitude, detachment, and universal friendship;
- (2) Cultivation of an attitude of restraint and minimal use of natural resources and consumables;
- (3) Cultivation of the habit of carefulness in all activities;
- (4) Daily penitential retreat and prayer for the welfare of all living beings and for universal peace;
- (5) Cultivation of satisfaction and tolerance;
- (6) Cultivation of a non-violent lifestyle.

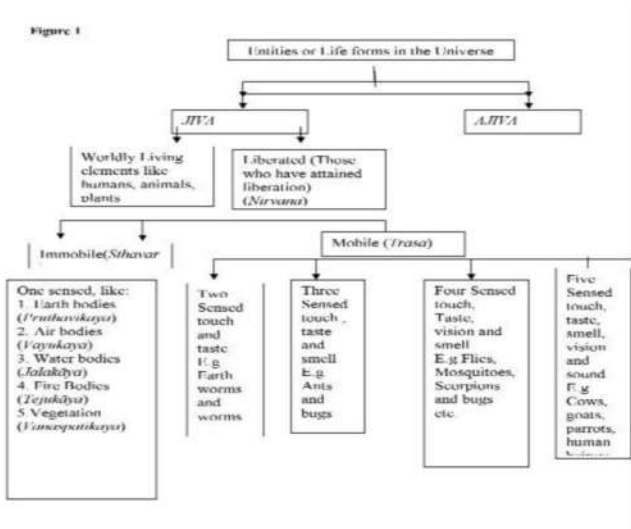
The ecological sensitivity of Jain seers is reflected in the concept of non-violence as the supreme religion. It is more than a moral precept. It is equated with deity and described as the protector of the whole universe. Practically, it is the observance of mindfulness and self-control in our be-

²² *Daśavaikālika Sutra* 1.1.2

havior to others. Mahavira, a great environmental scientist and a supreme visionary, preached non-violence, not merely for the salvation of some individuals, but for survival and welfare of the whole universe. There is the ‘way’ of the world which is manifested at once in the natural and moral law.

Six Life Forms in the Universe

In its global perspective, Jain philosophy postulates six substances (*Dravyas*) in the universe. *Jiva* (Soul) is the animate substance (*Jivastikāya*). It includes (apart from human beings and animals) the entire range of living beings and life forms and entities, ranging from plants, vegetables, and trees, to the minutest insects and birds.



Jainism stands unique in expounding the doctrine of six life forms. The doctrine of six life forms imparts an important message. Jainism has made classifications of living beings from one-sensed to five-sensed creatures. It is said, “The earth, water, fire, air, and plants are various kinds of immobile beings with one sense organ. The mobile beings like conches etc. are possessed of two, three, four and five sense organs.”²³ The other five are inanimate (*ajivastikaya*) (non-soul), viz. *Pudgal* (matter), *Dharma* (Motion), *Adharma* (rest), *Akasha* (space), and *Kala* (time). The Jain concept of the universe is that the elements of nature – the earth, the sky, air, water, and fire – as well as forms of life are all bound to each other. Life cannot exist without mutual support and respect.

Those who know about the six forms of life know that everybody wants to live; none has to be killed. Mahavira has said, “Violence is due to attachment, it is death. If there is no self-control, we shall add to violence.”

²³ *Dravya Sangraha* 11.

Those who take care of mobile and immobile life, visible and invisible life, believe in ecology. Those who accept existence, creation, the protection, and the sanctity of other beings, can bring about ecology in the world. Ecology, science, and non-violence are inseparable. To be a human being is a gift in the evolution of life, as it enables one to bring out one's humanity towards the achievement of oneness with all life. It is human being, alone endowed with all the six senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, and thinking, who can utilize his rationality and power of reasoning (*Viveka*) to be compassionate, loving, friendly, forgiving, tolerant, and broad minded to the universe around him.

Man must show reverence for all living organisms and thus achieve harmonious co-existence. Each organism depends on another, and this is the way the survival of each can be ensured and the existence of each be respected. The stress is upon the indisputable principle of mutual harmony, i.e., symbiosis-mutualism which emphasizes the basic unity of nature. "Underlying the Jaina code of conduct is an emphatic assertion of the individual's responsibility towards one and all. The code is profoundly ecological in its practical consequences."²⁴ The directive principle of living is not 'Living on others' but 'Living with others.' Jainism asks us to recognize biodiversity. Our existence is intrinsically bound up with existence of other living beings. Hence the killing of them is prohibited.

Human Concern, so Non-violence

Jainism offers physical, moral, and spiritual rules of healthy living. The latest technology and the best of science can be incorporated in the Jaina model, while reviving the old tradition. It establishes harmony between religious and scientific, spiritual and physical aspects, and between personal independence and ecological interdependence. It is the path of purification, the basis of which is the principle of non-violence which is the principle pertaining to the environment. Though the emphasis is on personal liberation, the Jain ethic makes that goal attainable only through consideration for others. According to Umasvati, the author of the *Tatvartha sutra*, "non-violence is unlimited tolerance, unconditional and reverence for life supreme." There is no question of just war.²⁵ Padmanabh Jaini has observed that there is a "preoccupation with *ahimsa* within Jainism, for no other religious tradition has carried *ahimsa* to the extreme of Jainas. For them it is not simply the first among virtues but the virtue."²⁶

Jaina *Dharma* is identical with *Ahimsa Dharma*. *Ahimsa* is so central in Jainism that it may be incontrovertibly called the beginning and end of

²⁴ L. M. Sangvi, "Jain Declaration on Nature," in *Jainism and Ecology*, ed. Christopher Key Chapple (Ahmedabad: J. S. Trust, 2006), 220.

²⁵ Translator's introduction to *Tatvartha Sutra* in *That which is*, ed. Nathmal Tatia (San Francisco, CA and London: Harper Collins, 1994), xxi.

²⁶ Padmanabh S. Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979), 167.

that religion. *Ahimsa*, according to Jaina teachers, is not something negative but another aspect of *daya* (compassion), a counterpart of Buddhist *Karuna*. The positive *Ahimsa* is expressed in the form of *Karuna-dana* or *abhaya-dana*, giving protection to all living creatures.²⁷

Mahatma Gandhi on Jainism

In the words of Gandhi, “No religion of the world has explained the principle of *Ahimsa* so deeply and scientifically as is discussed with its applicability in every human life in Jainism. As and when the benevolent principle of *Ahimsa* or non-violence will be ascribed for practice by the people of the world to achieve their end of life in this world and beyond, Jainism is sure to have the uppermost status and Lord Mahavira is sure to be respected as the greatest authority on *Ahimsa*.”²⁸

Ahimsa and Anekanta

Ahimsa is the origin (root) of Jaina practice. *Ahimsa* cannot be practised without the *Anekanta* (“many-sidedness” or “multiple vision”) point of view. Violence or non-violence depends upon the attitude of the doer. One who is alert has *Ahimsa* in one’s nature and one who is not alert, has *himsa* in his nature. This analysis is not possible without the *Anekanta* viewpoint. Therefore, one who has the *Anekanta* viewpoint is a balanced-vision (*samyak-drusti*) person, and only one who has balanced vision can have balanced knowledge (*samyak-jnana*) and balanced character (*samyak-charitra*). A necessary corollary of *Anekantavada* is non-violence in speech and thought. One must respect others’ points of view. If we insist on truth we must understand the beauty of compromise. This is the philosophy of relativism. What is required is that we should be flexible. Intellectual fanaticism is dangerous and, therefore, liberalism in thought is advocated. We have to develop a non-absolutistic standpoint on almost all problems. It helps us to understand the viewpoints of others and to reconcile ourselves with the thoughts of others. It helps also to cultivate a spirit of tolerance and understanding. This will increase goodwill and harmony. One has to practise generosity of spirit and avoid fundamentalism.

Thus, antagonism can be resolved, not by quarrels, but by communication and understanding. It is the principle of cooperation and co-existence. The result is the establishment of a liberal attitude in our dealings. *Anekantavada* leads to relativity, which states that, since truth is relative to different standpoints, one has to consider different aspects of it. Intolerance arises

²⁷ In the preceding paragraph, I draw closely on R. C. Dwivedi, *The Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture* (Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1975).

²⁸ Janardan Pandey, *Gandhi and 21st Century* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1998), 50.

because of the unwillingness to accept difference. But, according to this doctrine, “he is right, but I am also right.”

The basis of this theory is not merely that reality can be viewed from many angles but also that all views of reality must be equally honoured. All views have equal significance. From the viewpoint of *Anekanta* the permanent is real, but so is the impermanent or the changeable. Being can be explained in terms of the permanent for it is unchangeable. One of the intrinsic parts of the unchangeable is change, for change and changelessness are not two different things. Both co-exist. Since change is possible, the vision of a new man, a new society, and a new world is not unattainable or impossible. *Anekanta* has two basic viewpoints: absolute and non-absolute or relative. For determining the absolute, one should use the absolute viewpoint; for determining relations one should use the non-absolute viewpoint.

Non-Absolutism: Doctrine of Multiple Vision

Many kinds of differences exist between man and man:

1. Differences of concept or belief
2. Ideological differences
3. Different interests
4. Temperamental differences
5. Differences in emotional make-up²⁹

According to this doctrine an object has an infinite number of characteristics. One cannot grasp all of them. From one point of view, a thing is; from another, it is not. Someone is an uncle in relation to his nephew, but also a father in relation to his son. Truth is relative – relative to our standpoints. Hence, according to the doctrine of non-absolutism, to understand truth completely, one must consider all its aspects. A necessary corollary of this view is non-violence in speech and thought. One must respect others’ points of view. If we insist on truth, we must understand the beauty of compromise. This is the philosophy of relativism. We have to develop a non-absolutistic standpoint on almost all problems. One has to adopt this kind of outlook to realize truth in its varied aspect. It helps us to understand the viewpoints of others. It helps also to cultivate a spirit of tolerance and understanding. This will increase goodwill and harmony. One has to practise generosity of spirit and avoid fundamentalism. Thus, antagonism can be resolved, not by quarrels, but by communication and understanding. It is the principle of co-operation and co-existence. This means toleration, which is characteristic of Jaina belief. It is an ideal for successfully managing conflicts – personal or interpersonal, national or international. It is the doctrine of open-mindedness, which is the expression of a fundamentally non-violent

²⁹ Acharya Mahaprajna, *Democracy: Social Revolution through Individual Transformation* (Ladnun: Jain Vishwa Bharati, 1994), 102.

attitude. It has a wonderful power of assimilation. "Jainism with its theory of multiple-vision provides a framework through which qualities like tolerance, understanding, etc., can be developed."³⁰ If we accept this synoptic outlook in life, all quarrels will vanish. A nation's foreign policy should be influenced by such understanding. The real threat to world peace comes from ideological conflicts which can be avoided.

Therefore, the theory of multiple visions stands for open mindedness and reconciliation. It has a power of assimilation; the conflicting views are harmonized. Conflicts can be managed at any level by harmonious reconciliation. Qualities like tolerance, self-control, broadmindedness and understanding can be developed on the basis of it.

Fundamental Principles of Anekanta³¹

Anekanta is an exercise for getting rid of prejudice and pseudo-resolution. It has five basic principles:

1. Identity of the opposites
2. Co-existence
3. Freedom
4. Interdependence
5. Synthesis
6. Co-ordination

Identity of the Opposites

The philosophical implication of this principle is that, in this world, all entities have their opposites. There is no being without an opposite. The behavioural implication of this principle is that, the opposite forms an essential part of a being; it is what complements an entity. Therefore, it must not be treated as a hostile element. The contemplation of harmonious co-ordination is practised in order to change an antagonistic outlook.³²

Co-existence

The philosophical aspect of co-existence is that every object contains innumerable pairs of opposites. They exist together. The behavioral aspect of it is: two persons subscribing to conflicting ideologies can yet live together.³³ Anything or anybody existent must have their opposite – *yat sat tat sapratipaksam*. Without the opposite, naming is redundant and so is charac-

³⁰ B. K. Motilal *The Central Philosophy of Jainism* (Ahmedabad: L.D. Institute of Indology, 1981), 2.

³¹ Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 104-105.

³² Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 105.

³³ Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 106-107.

terization. The animate and the inanimate are two extremes, yet they co-exist. The body is inanimate, the soul is animate. They co-exist. The permanent and the impermanent, the similar and dissimilar, the identical and the different – all these are mutually contradictory, yet they co-exist. They co-exist in an object.

Freedom

Co-existence implies tolerance and freedom of thought. Both tolerance and freedom of thought are meaningless if we try to enforce our likes, ideas, lifestyle, and principles on all others. Nature has infinite variety, which lends it splendor. Beauty will lose all its charms and meaning if all plants, trees, and flowers look alike. Harmony is a principle of the search for unity, but it does not negate the pre-existent diversity. It is only in this way that we can explain an individual as well as society.

There are situations in which the individual interests are secondary and social interests are primary, even as there are situations in which social interests are secondary and individual interests are primary. This principle of differentiation between what is primary and what is secondary in a given situation is very useful for a wholesome order. Society cannot be built unless difference or distinction is considered secondary, and the freedom of the individual suffers unless sameness or oneness is subordinated. This principle of *Anekānta*, relating to primary versus secondary, is extremely useful for a successful organization of society. A philosophical implication of the principle is that every object constitutes an independent entity. No object interferes with another's existence. A behavioral implication of the principle is that no society can remain healthy without considering man's independence or individual freedom.³⁴

Interdependence

A philosophical aspect of this principle is that our existence is free and absolute, but our individuality is relative. Within the bounds of individuality, freedom, too, is relative. Therefore, no individual can be said to be absolutely free, and, because he is not absolutely free, he is relatively dependent. According to the absolutely free, he is relatively dependent. According to the theory of evolution, struggle is the basis of life. However, the *Anekānti-an* maxim is "The fundamental basis of life is interdependence." One man is dependent upon another.

The behavioural aspect of the principle is that, one thinker subscribing to a partial view, looks upon the individual and society as being repudiative of each other. This is also an aspect of spiritual practice: To change the one-sided or absolutist approach, the practice of interdependence is necessary. Change is not wrought by merely knowing; it requires long and continuous

³⁴ Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 106.

practice. To develop a comprehensive and relative point of view, the contemplation of interdependence is necessary.³⁵

Synthesis

A philosophical aspect of the principle is: No idea contains the whole truth. Every idea has in it an element of truth. Just as we look upon our idea as true, we must seek the element of truth in another person's thought. This is also an aspect of spiritual practice; for the evolution of a consciousness of synthesis and cooperation, the contemplation of synthesis and coordination is very useful.³⁶

Unity can be strengthened on the basis of identity. Disparateness can be used to utilize an individual's specific qualities. Therefore, it is necessary to know the limitations of both identity and disparateness. A mechanical insistence on identity robs a nation of its meritorious and talented people. An absolute insistence on disparateness becomes a cause of a nation's disintegration. Therefore, there is need to develop a philosophy which balances and harmonizes identity and disparateness. Unity involves belonging to a common geographic region. No one who lives within that region can be discriminated against in terms of their need (e.g., food, clothing, housing etc). Everyone enjoys an equal opportunity to develop.

Non-absolutism signifies open mindedness. It has been rightly observed that if we accept non-violence as the regulative principle of conduct, and the manifoldness of reality as the basis of our outlook, barbarism, exploitation and war, in any form, can come to an end. Non-violence is not only for an individual's personal salvation but it can be used as an instrument of socio-cultural revolution.

Co-ordination

The final principle of *Anekānta* is co-ordination. It is a principle of the quest for unity between two apparently different characteristics of a substance. The principle of ecology is one of reconciliation and of interrelationship between different substances. Balance in the universe cannot be established on basis of the premise, "I alone exist." We survive only by adhering to the principle that "besides me, the other also exists and we are interrelated." The balance in the universe can be explained on the basis of the above concept of interrelatedness.³⁷

³⁵ Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 106-107.

³⁶ Mahaprajna, *Democracy*, 107-108.

³⁷ Achaya Mahapragya, *Anekanta: Philosophy of Co-existence* (Ladnun: Jain Vishwa Bharati, 2010), 157-158.

The Influence of Anekantavada on Jaina Life

The Jains have rarely fought against any community. In the times of calamity, they do not differentiate between any communities and try to help those in difficulties. Due to their vegetarianism, they may not have mixed with non-vegetarians; otherwise, there is no rigidity. Marriages irrespective of caste and community are welcome among them. They may rigidly follow the practices of their religion, but they do not condemn the practices of other religions. They try to understand the practices of other religions and, therefore, they have spread all over the world as businessmen without having controversies with any other community. Dr. Annie Besant has described the Jaina householder as “quiet, self-controlled, dignified, rather silent, rather reserved.”³⁸

Conclusion: The Door of Liberation Open to All

Jainism holds that the followers of other sects “can also achieve emancipation or perfection, if they are able to destroy attachment and aversion.” They do not believe in the narrow outlook that “only the followers of Jainism can achieve emancipation, others will not.”³⁹ *Haribhadrasuri* writes, “one, who can attain equanimity of mind, will for certain get emancipation whether he may be a *Svetambara* or a *Digambara* or a Buddhist or anyone else” (*Seyambaro Va asambaro va, Buddho taheva anno Samabhavabhaviyappa lahisi mukkhamm na samdehova*).⁴⁰ The way for liberation is through right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. Right conduct includes social service. Hence, giving food, clothes, and shelter are priorities in Jainism. It is said in Jainism that not to speak bitter speech is also a kind of social service. The word *Sarvodaya*, i.e., “welfare of all,” was used for the first time by Jain Acharya *Samantbhadra*. It was adapted later as a philosophical theory by Mahatma Gandhi.

Non-violence is the foundation of all these virtues, and the proper cultivation of it involves the cultivation of all other ones. The virtue of limited attachment to worldly possessions is but a specialized application to man’s socio-economic field of life. The non-absolutistic approach is a wisely made extension of *Ahimsa* to the sphere of human thought, deliberation, and discussion. *Ahimsa*, *Aprigraha*, and *Anekanta* have to be marked as relevant in the present times to the alleviation and elimination of the manifold maladies of today’s world.

³⁸ B. K. Khadabadi, *Shravkachara: Significance and Relevance to Present Times*, Shri. R. K. Jain Memorial Lectures, University of Delhi (New Delhi: Shri Raj Krishna Jain Charitable Trust, 1992), ref 310.

³⁹ See Sagarmal Jain, *Jaina Literature and Philosophy A Critical Approach* (Varanasi: Parsvanatha Vidyapitha, 1999), 79.

⁴⁰ Haribhadra, quoted in Sagarmal Jain, *Jain Bauddh aur Gita ke Achar Darshano* (in Hindi), 1st ed. vol. II (Rajasthan: Prakrit Bharti Sansthan Jaipur, 1982), 5.

The Practice of *laku* in Javanese Culture: A Southeast Asian Way of Life in Times of Global Crisis

Alois Agus Nugroho

As Plato's Socrates teaches us, ordinary people can be compared to prisoners detained in a cave, for whom the knowledge of reality is limited to the play of shadows on a wall. By contrast, a philosopher can be compared to a prisoner who escapes their detention in the cave, and sees things as what they are, under the bright light of the sun.

Michael Sandel, in his *Justice, What's the Right Thing to Do?*, has his own interpretation of the cave allegory. The prisoners in the cave are those who are busy with and occupied by the concrete problems of everyday life, whereas the philosophers are those who can transcend the prejudices and routines of daily life. While the concern of ordinary people is how to do things rightly according to existing standard procedures, philosophers should bravely ask about the right things to do. However, Sandel takes the point of Plato's Socrates only in part. For Sandel, "a philosophy untouched by the shadows on the wall can only yield a sterile utopia."¹ In other words, philosophy should not avoid the problems with the concrete realities of everyday life. In Whitehead's metaphysics, philosophy can be compared to the flight of an airplane.² It starts from the ground of concrete issues, takes flight in the air of philosophical principles and abstractions, and then it again lands for its application amidst the concrete reality.

The Time of Global Crises

Two concrete issues of global scope are attracting the concern of many people from various walks of life. As Holmes Rolston III points out, the most serious problems facing the world today are, firstly, the global financial crisis or, in Rolston's own words, "the current economic down turn" and, secondly, the so-called "global warming." Philosophy should tackle these issues, at least at the starting points of their train of thought. This is because these crises are basically rooted in the human mind and human character. As to the financial crisis, Skidelsky and Skidelsky state that we are now facing an economic situation which is "the worst since the Great

¹ Michael Sandel, *Justice, What's the Right Thing to Do?* (London and New York: Penguin, 2010), 29.

² A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, corrected by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 5.

Depression of 1929-1932.”³ But a great crisis is also an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the system upon which our economic conduct is based, that is, free-market capitalism. Skidelsky and Skidelsky claim that capitalism has moral defects, the first and foremost of which is that it “relies on motives of greed and acquisitiveness.”

The motives of greed and acquisitiveness lead to an obsession towards progress and growth, the consequence of which is the environmental disaster that is widely known as global warming. The term “global warming” refers to the fact that the global surface temperatures have increased in recent decades due to human activities, mostly market-driven, such as deforestation and the emission of greenhouse gasses. This trend “threatens the well-being of billions of people today and in the future.”⁴

Giddens’ Paradox

The free-market economy’s motives of greed and acquisitiveness is said to be the culprit of our two crises. Skidelsky and Skidelsky, Holmes Rolston III, and Michael Sandel, among others, as well as governments all over the world, have offered proposals and policies. Skidelsky and Skidelsky, for instance, turn to ancient wisdom, such as Aristotelian and medieval philosophy, the wisdom of the Dharmaśāstra, and the Chinese traditions of Confucianism and Daoism.⁵ But there is still a lingering problem to transcend, that is, the so-called Giddens’ Paradox.

In the Politics of Climate Change, Anthony Giddens complains about our present situation, where most people have enough knowledge about the environmental crisis, but only a few are ready to change their behaviours accordingly. Indeed, most people know that the global crisis threatens our very existence. Yet, it is perceived as an abstract knowledge, not as a threat or danger which is looming in the horizon of our everyday lives. In Giddens’s terminology, the threat of climate change lies at the back-of-the-mind. As topical an issue as it may be, it is not yet a problem of the front-of-the-mind, because many other issues are regarded more pressing and urgent.

The abyss that separates knowledge from action is called “Giddens’s Paradox,” which states that “since the dangers posed by global warming aren’t tangible, immediate or visible in the course of day to day life, however awesome they appear, many will sit on their hands and do nothing of a concrete nature about them.” There have been a lot of talks, discussions, seminars, and conferences concerning global warming and climate change,

³ Robert Skidelsky and Edward Skidelsky, *How Much is Enough? Money and the Good Life* (New York: Other Press, 2012), 5.

⁴ Holmes Rolston III, *A New Environmental Ethics. The Next Millennium for Life on Earth* (New York & London: Routledge, 2012), 5.

⁵ Another paper of mine, written for the Roundtable Discussion sponsored by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy at the 23rd World Congress of Philosophy, tried to add the Javanese wisdom of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to the list initiated by Skidelsky and Skidelsky.

yet little has been done in the direction of avoiding the disaster. Knowledgeable people are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with their knowledge. The more they know, the more they will should act. Paradoxically, the more they know, the less they act.

Giddens's Paradox is confirmed by research on tourists.⁶ This research confirms that there is a gap between ecological awareness and the willingness to act according to ecological awareness. This research concludes that, firstly, there is a positive correlation of ecological awareness with the frequency of travelling abroad; and, secondly, there is a negative correlation of the frequency of travelling abroad with the willingness to act according to ecological awareness. This amounts to saying that those who travel a lot will have a high awareness of climate change, but those who travel a lot will be less willing to change their conduct to conform with their high ecological awareness.

The *Wédhatama*: A Southeast Asian Way of Life

Knowing the roots of these crises is only one step, albeit an important one, in the process of their resolution. No less important, if not even more important, is the step of employing this knowledge to deal with the crises – and the lack of this application of knowledge called Giddens' Paradox, as we have seen. The two global crises should be responded to with knowledge, but this knowledge should be accompanied by the determination to deal with the crises. Knowledge will be fruitless without applying it, as underscored in the book of *Wédhatama*, meaning the book of "Noble Teaching," a product of Javanese literature.⁷ Stuart Robson, a philologist who translated the *Wédhatama* from Old Javanese into English, observes that "Javanese scholars of literature, if asked to mention the names of some of the highest products of their literature may well begin with the *Wédhatama*."⁸ The *Wédhatama* was written by Mangkunegara IV, the junior partner of Kasunanan Surakarta (The Kingdom of Surakarta in the present-day Solo, Central Java). As to the date of the *Wédhatama*, Robson says

⁶ Bob Mc Kercher, Bruce Prideaux, Catherine Cheung & Rob Law, "Achieving voluntary reductions in the carbon footprint of tourism and climate change, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 18:3 (2010): 297-317.

⁷ The Javanese are the largest ethnic group of Indonesia, native to the island of Java. At present, the Javanese people consist of approximately 100 million individuals. Elsewhere, I describe the Javanese culture as a "culture of translation," borrowing Paul Ricoeur's notion of "paradigm of translation," due to its having encountered various cultures over a long span of time – with Indian Hindu-Buddhist culture for more than a millennium, with Chinese culture since the 13th century, with Islam since the 14th century, with the West since the 16th century. See Alois A. Nugroho, "Human Intentionality towards Objective and Universal Values: A Study on the Perspectives of Rorty, Ricoeur, Whitehead and their Exemplification in Indonesian Culture," *Pan Pacific Journal of Philosophy, Education and Management* 1, no. 1 (January 2012).

⁸ Stuart Robson, *The Wédhatama: An English Translation* (Leiden: KITLV, 1990), 3.

that it “is not known with any certainty, but it can be placed in the late 1870s, toward the end of Mangkunegara IV’s reign.”⁹

Regarding the *Wédhatama*, the approach of this paper is rather different than that of Stuart Robson. In his translation, Robson tries to be faithful to the text itself, in the sense that he tries to be as close as possible to the purpose and the meaning as it was intended by the author in the time of the writing of the text. Seen from that perspective, he rightly writes that the moral teachings of the *Wédhatama* “[are] not intended for all young people, however. The *wong anom* (plural) in canto I.14g are the descendants of Sénapati, that large group including all the nobility of Central Java, members of the Kasunanan House of Surakarta, its junior partner the Mangkunagaran, the Sultanate of Yogyakarta and its offshoot the Pakualaman.”¹⁰

Be that as it may, the teachings of the *Wédhatama* have cultivated a larger audience over the years, through various media – *wayang* [shadow plays] among others¹¹ – but also in the formal education at schools as well as in the every day conversation between parents and their children at home. The audience of the *Wédhatama* has not been limited to the young nobility, let alone to the descendants of Sénapati. In the era following the Independence Day of August 17, 1945, more and more common people were able to enjoy the teaching by listening to the radio, while the influence of the nobility waned, if not totally disappeared, in present day Solo (formerly Surakarta Hadiningrat). Television, and then the internet, became new media through which the moral teachings of the *Wédhatama* reached its larger and common audience. In such a way, its teaching influences the Javanese people and becomes an important element of the Javanese way of life and Javanese identity. No longer can it be regarded as a moral teaching addressed to the young nobility only.

Consequently, the more updated interpretation of the *Wédhatama* are relevant and meaningful to its present audience, that is, people who do not belong to any noble house, let alone the noble houses of Surakarta and Yogyakarta (which in the days before Indonesian independence used to be called *Vorstenlanden*, meaning the lands of princes). Interpretation should be done in such a way that common people can access this wisdom, learning that the virtues cultivated by the *Wédhatama* are the virtues all Javanese people should pursue. For example, a school teacher who descended from a peasant family or a petty trader family can claim that the first stanza of the first canto of *Wédhatama* talks about herself or himself:

⁹ Robson, *The Wédhatama*, 6.

¹⁰ Robson, *The Wédhatama*, 6.

¹¹ *Wayang* (literally: “shadow”) is a particular kind of Javanese theatre. The stories of the wayang shadow theatre are usually taken from the Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. Its performance is always accompanied with gamelan (Javanese music). This character holds to *wayang wong* too, a wayang performance which is performed by persons (*wong*) and not by puppets.

II. Mingkar-mingkuring ukara
Akarana karenan mardī siwi
Sinawung resmining kidung
Sinuba sinukarta
Mrih kretarta pakartining ngèlmu luhung
Kang tumrap ing tanah Jawa
Agama ageming aji
 (Being busy with sentences
 As one is pleased to teach future generations
 It is cast in the form of a delightful song
 Finely finished and well tuned
 So that the knowledge of virtue will really be applied
 Because to the land of Java
 Virtues define human dignity)

Or, canto III, stanza 1, which is more directly related to the topic of “Giddens’ Paradox”:

III. Ngèlmu iku kelakoné kanthi laku
Lekasé lawan khas, tegesé khas nyantosani
Setya budya, pangekesé dur angkara
 (Knowledge can be only effective if it is followed by action
 It begins with determination, because determination gives strength
 Namely, determination to live virtuously, eradicating evil in our heart)

The wisdom of the Javanese culture collected in *Serat Wédhatama* maintains that *ngèlmu iku kalakoné kanthi laku*. If not implemented through actions, knowledge is simply nothing, that is, it will not make any difference at all. Knowledge can only be effective if it is followed by actions. The unity of knowledge and action is referred to in I.12 as “*rorong atunggil*” (two-in-one). Unfortunately, that is not always the case, because the young people of today more often neglect the two-in-one, as it is stated in II.18.

Ing jaman mengko pan ora
Arahé para taruni
Yèn éntuk tuduh kang nyata
Nora pisan dèn lakoni
 (Nowadays that is not
 The course followed by young people
 When they get clear directions
 They do not put them into practice at all¹²)

But wise and mature people will be able to focus themselves and direct their deeds in accordance with the moral awareness or the knowledge of

¹² The English translation is mostly in accordance with that of Stuart Robson, if there is no difference in interpreting the meaning of words.

virtues. They can avoid the temptation of boasting of their knowledge, as it is stated in I.4 and I.12.

I.4. *Si Pengung nora nglegéwa*
Sangsayarda dènira cacariwis
Ngandhar-andhar angendhukur
Kandhané nora kaprah
Saya élok alangka longkanganipun
Si wasis waskita ngalah
Ngalingi marang si Pengung
 (The Fool pays no attention [to the two-in-one]
 But prattles all the harder
 They boast on and on
 His story is not substantiated
 His charming claims are almost without proof
 The Wise Man finds it prudent to keep silent
 And thus he shields the Fool from losing face)

The Wise Man is capable of restraining his/her desire (*kawawa nahan hawa*, I.11), realizing what the true knowledge of virtues is (*weruh mungguh sanyataning ngèlmu*, I.11). He or she is skilled at grasping the ways of gathering up the scattered pieces of him- or herself (*Bangkit mikat réh mangukut, kukutaning jiwangga*, I.12). He or she exerts him- or herself to the utmost for true virtue (*Mesu rèh kasudarman*, II.3). Whoever strives through action sincerely will find it (*Sing sapa temen bakal tinemu*, IV.10).

Concluding Remarks

The wisdom of the Javanese culture collected in *Serat Wédhatama* (The Book of Noble Teachings) maintains that *ngèlmu iku kalakoné kanthi laku* (Knowledge means nothing without implementation). To overcome a crisis, such as that of the Asian financial crisis of 1997, Javanese people should practice the modern version of *laku* or *nglakoni*, avoiding the “Giddens’s Paradox,” that is, the gap between knowledge and action. Knowledge and action constitute a unity, a “*roroning atunggal*” (two-in-one). So does the knowledge of global crises, in the present case, the financial crisis and the environmental crisis. In order for the concept of “sustainable development” to succeed, people should put into practice the value and knowledge of harmonious living (*laras*) with fellow human beings, with nature and with him/herself. In their efforts to earn a living, people should implement the wisdom of “*tuna sathak, bathi sanak*” (excessive profit is not good, friendship is more valuable than profit).

The concern of “friendship is more valuable than profit” is also emphasized by Michael Sandel (in *What Money Can’t Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets*) and Robert and Edward Skidelsky (*How Much is Enough? Money and the Good Life*). But most importantly, the wisdom of “knowledge means nothing without implementation” reminds us of John

Henry Newman's distinction of "notional assent" and "real assent" in the *Grammar of Assent*. This amounts to saying that the success of coping with global crises does not only depend on the "notional assent," but mostly on "real assent." This is in line with the Javanese wisdom of *ngèlmu iku kala-koné kanthi laku*.

Philosophy and Culture: Thinking about Global Crises

Jānis (John) Tāivaldis Ozoliņš

Globalisation and Global Crises

Globalisation is becoming increasingly seen as the recognition that many of the problems faced by the world today are not simply the problems of individual nations. Globalisation may be defined as the multidimensional and interactive processes of political, economic, and cultural change across the world, resulting in increased social interconnectedness among different peoples.¹ It can also be taken to mean an increased awareness that all human beings and their activities, do not exist in isolation, but rather have effects on those who live around them, both human and animal. Globalisation therefore extends beyond political, economic, and cultural processes, but includes broader social, ethical, and environmental processes that impinge on the way in which human beings interact with one another, the environment and the impact that human activity has on the future well-being of humankind and the planet on which they live. The global crises briefly catalogued here are indicative of the kinds of issues that no individual nation is able to tackle alone.

Changes in weather patterns around the world can be attributed to global warming and climate change, and these, in turn, have been blamed on the activities of human beings. If this is so, then it is not an individual nation that will be responsible for reversing the effects of increased pollution in the atmosphere, the overfishing of oceans and seas, the destruction of the ozone layer, the destruction of rain forests, and the depletion of natural resources, but, rather, all nations. Many of these problems are due not only to the short-sighted pursuit of profit, but also a blindness to the damage being done to the environment, and so to the places that human beings and animals have to live. In some cases, the destruction of the environment can develop from extreme poverty and the failure of developed nations to support those struggling to support themselves in an unforgiving environment. If the only source of fodder for one's sheep and goats is already degraded and marginalised land, it is not surprising that it degrades even further and makes survival in that environment impossible.

Added to these problems are droughts, natural disasters, wars, and other conflicts that have given rise to the number of people displaced from their homes, who are forced to find somewhere else to live. The mass movement

¹ S. B. Twiss, "History, Human Rights and Globalisation," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32, no. 1 (2004): 39-70.

of people around the globe who seek asylum and refuge in other countries is an increasing problem.² Apart from outright conflicts there is also mass migration of people, which is because of governments oppressing their people and also because they come from what are called ‘failed states’ – is, places where the government has become so corrupt or so incompetent that the State can no longer sustain its people. Immigration and the attendant problems of resettlement and integration into a host community are problems for all international communities.³

Pandemics and epidemics, such as bird flu and AIDS, never restrict themselves to national boundaries, but are increasingly problems for the whole world to solve. Outbreaks of foot and mouth disease, such as in Europe in 2001, as well as a more recent occurrence in Britain in 2007, affect markets for fresh meat internationally, and the containment of such diseases is never just the responsibility of one nation, but the international community. An outbreak of bird flu in China in 2013, fortunately contained because of what was learned in previous outbreaks, provided a salutary reminder of the irrelevance of borders to pandemics and epidemics.⁴ Although wealthier countries are able to stockpile vaccines to prevent disease from spreading, it is not so easy for poorer countries. This also can mean that pandemics can enter a country from a poorer neighbour, and hence it is clear that these problems are not restricted to particular nations.

Crime has become multinational, with opium grown in Afghanistan, for example, finding its way through various intermediaries to the streets of many other countries. The trafficking of human beings as well as their organs has also become a lucrative trade.⁵ Illegal fishing and the ignoring of bans on fishing protected and endangered species have led to the collapse of fisheries worldwide, and have the prospect of causing serious damage to communities worldwide.⁶ The poaching of endangered species is also a significant problem, and illegal logging is leading to the destruction of forests and the despoliation of land through erosion and the pollution of rivers.

² The UNHCR Report for 2011 indicates that some 42.5 million people have been forcibly displaced, of whom 15.2 were refugees under UN protection. See UNHCR, *A Year of Crises: UNHCR Global Trends 2011* (2012), accessed May 20, 2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/4fd6f87f9.html>.

³ Europe, in particular those nations that have accepted large numbers of immigrants from Muslim countries now face real difficulties in integrating these groups into the general community. There is no coincidence that the rise of right wing xenophobic political parties has occurred at the same time as a growth in immigration from very different cultural groups to the host nations.

⁴ See the newspaper article in *The Guardian*, which reported that 24 people had died in the recent outbreak, accessed May 20, 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/01/scientists-concerned-h7n9-bird-flu-outbreak>.

⁵ See J. Ozoliņš, “Human Beings as Resources: The Ethics of Buying and Selling Human Tissues and Organs,” *Ethics Education* 15, no. 1 (2009): 5-19.

⁶ See *ABC Science*, accessed April 2, 2011, <http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2010/09/09/3003951.htm>.

Acts of terrorism are not restricted by national boundaries, and government intelligence agencies are under considerable pressure to detect and prevent the mass murder of innocent people. Terrorists may be trained in one country but carry out their acts in another. International cooperation is, therefore, required in order to apprehend such individuals before they can carry out their deeds. Terrorism has become commonplace throughout the world and is not only directed at Western nations.⁷ It is, therefore, a global problem and not just one for individual countries.

Arms trafficking continues to be a scandalous problem internationally. The amount of money spent on armaments each year would be more than sufficient to alleviate world poverty, yet only a fraction of this amount is spent on aid. Some of the largest multinational corporations in the world are arms manufacturers, and their profits depend on the involvement of combatants in conflicts and wars – otherwise there would be no one to buy their weapons. Conflicts could not be sustained if there were no weapons to be bought. The connections between governments and arms dealers is also problematic, since most weapons are not manufactured by government owned companies, but by big corporations. The danger of corruption in the award of contracts is an ever present problem.⁸

Differences in national laws governing medical research have also been exploited by medical researchers and by large pharmaceutical companies. This raises the question of whether a researcher should be obliged to follow the moral norms and practices of his own country or the norms operating in the country in which he hopes to conduct his research. One response is that there are universal moral values that should apply in all situations and in all cultures. In any case, minimally, it can be expected that he should follow his informed conscience about how to act. There are significant concerns when large pharmaceutical companies conduct clinical trials of drugs, that might not be approved in their own countries, in developing countries where there may not be the same controls. This is, of course, only one of many possible cases of exploitation.⁹ There is a practice by drug companies of giving very expensive, but efficacious drugs to governments in poor countries at a discount price (or even free of charge) for a trial peri-

⁷ See L. Pettiford and D. Harding, *Terrorism: The New World War* (Slough: Arcturus, 2003); J. D. Freilich and R. T. Guerette, eds., *Culture, Conflict, Crime and Terrorism* (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2006); E. Zimmerman, "Globalisation and Terrorism," *European Journal of Political Economy* 27 (2011): S152-S161.

⁸ The United States is by far the largest supplier of arms, accounting for 78% of the world's total trade in military hardware. D. Horner, "U.S. Dominated Global Arms Trade in 2011," *Arms Control Today* (October 2012): 36-38.

⁹ See Sonia Shah, "Globalizing Clinical Research: Big Pharma Tries Out First World Drugs on Unsuspecting Third World Patients," *The Nation* 275, no. 1 (2002): 23-28; L. Treadaway, "Big Pharma's Heart of Darkness: The Alien Tort Statute and Preventing Clinical Trial Colonisation," *The Georgetown Journal of International Law* 43, no. 4 (2012): 1419-1456; E. Bicudo, "'Geographical randomization' and 'Social exploitation' in clinical research: World trials in Santiago, Chile," *Health and Place* 17 (2011): 807-813.

od, but withdrawing the subsidy and forcing the governments to spend scarce resources on it if they wish to continue to make the drug available. When the drug is being used to help to save children with a specific and possibly fatal conditions, it is extremely difficult to deny parents access to the drug. There are significant resource allocation issues which need to be addressed, not just in relation to developing nations and the provision of adequate health care, but also for developed nations.

Just like big pharmaceutical companies, transnational corporations and big businesses, which have annual turnovers that exceed the GDP of many small countries, can operate outside a country's jurisdiction and have the power to influence world markets in ways that governments are completely powerless to do. Corporations do not operate like democracies, and are generally single-minded about their purposes: namely, to return a dividend to their shareholders. Various scandals in recent years involving large transnational corporations provide us with examples of the lack of concern for the local populations where such corporations operate. Some examples of such a lack of responsibility include the failure of Union Carbide to prevent the gas disaster in Bhopal, India,¹⁰ the contamination of the environment by Broken Hill in Ok Tedi, Papua New Guinea¹¹ and the destruction of the farming land of the Ogoni people in Nigeria by Shell.¹²

These are all problems that are not merely national concerns nor challenges for particular regions of the world, but are problems for the whole world. As nations such as China and India, the two most populous nations of the world, push forward with economic development, their desire for non-renewable resources grows, and there are serious questions to be raised about the sustainability of continued economic growth. The prevailing wisdom in the Reagan and Thatcher years through the 1980s was that economic prosperity could be maintained by continuous economic growth, so that, as an economy grew, through a trickle-down effect, even the poorest would come to share in the wealth that was being created. Such economic models are still with us, with the world economy dependent on continued economic growth. China, with its vast population, is expanding its economy at a rapid rate, but it is unclear whether the results of this economic growth are being equally shared. The same may be said for countries such as Russia, with its huge reserve of resources, which has adopted a market economy model and has seen enormous wealth being gained by relatively few, with many Russians sinking deeper into poverty and despair. In Western countries, a simi-

¹⁰ E. Broughton, "The Bhopal Disaster and its Aftermath: A Review," *Environmental Health: A Global Access Source* 4, no. 6 (2005): 6, accessed October 29, 2013, <http://www.ehjournal.net/content/4/1/6>.

¹¹ G. Banks, and C. Ballard, eds., *The Ok Tedi Settlement: Issues, Outcomes and Implications*, Pacific Policy Paper 27 (Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies and Resource Management in Asia-Pacific, Research School for Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1997).

¹² J. G. Frynas, "Political Instability and Business: Focus on Shell in Nigeria," *Third World Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (1998): 457-478.

lar story can be told, with countless millions having to struggle on meagre wages, if they have a job at all, while Chief Executive Officers of big corporations enjoy exorbitant salaries and bonuses. An unregulated market and the ascendancy of libertarian conceptions of society have seen the disparity between rich and poor grow considerably throughout the world. Meanwhile, supine governments stand idly by and fail to ensure that all citizens are able to share in wealth being generated.

The Global Financial Crisis, which some claim is over as markets return to apparent normality, nevertheless continues to reverberate throughout the world. It is evident that there are still considerable problems remaining for the world as governments in various countries struggle with the destruction wrought by an essentially unregulated market. The development of financial products with little connection to classical economic activity, represented by traditional trade in manufactured goods and commodities and their lack of regulation, is one of the reasons that the financial collapse occurred. Although undoubtedly the lending of money to those with little capacity to pay was one of the reasons for the collapse of the sub-prime market, a more serious issue concerned those who not only lent money to people with poor credit records, but also with those who invented various products that had little connection to anything tangible. For example, Collateralised Debt Obligations (CDOs), squared and even cubed, are far removed from the Mortgage Backed Securities (MBSs) which are the base from which these further financial instruments spring. Add to these various hedge funds, for example, Collateralised Debt Securities (CDSs), designed to insure against loss, but which unscrupulous speculators exploited, there is little connection to any tangible goods or services in the series of buying and selling of these financial products.¹³ Though it is the case that financial brokers and speculators invented new financial products, none of the desire to make money from money is new. Aristotle remarks that there is no limit to the riches which spring from the art of acquiring wealth. Those who are engaged in the accumulation of wealth know no limit to its acquisition. Aristotle observes that some human beings will stop at nothing in order to accumulate wealth, since they desire pleasure without limit. They will subordinate every quality they can to the pursuit of pleasure: “as their desires are unlimited, they also desire that the means of gratifying them should be without limit.”¹⁴ The practices of speculators and so-called entrepreneurs have been little diminished by the Global Financial Crisis, and the U.S. government, which presides over the largest economy in the world, has done little to introduce new regulations.

Although governments around the world took immediate action to limit the Global Financial Crisis by injecting funds into the market, it is by no

¹³ G. Turner, *The Credit Crunch: Housing Bubbles, Globalisation and the Worldwide Economic Crisis* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).

¹⁴ Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. T. A. Sinclair (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), bk. I, chap. 9, 1258a.

means self-evident that it was the only action that needed to be taken. As a result of the levels of debt to which banks and investment banks were exposed, governments, which is to say, tax payers, were forced to bail out those who ought to have been allowed to collapse. They should have been allowed to collapse and to have borne the consequences of their actions. It is understandable, nevertheless, why such a course of action was not taken. One of the motivations for governments in propping up such banks was the fear of what such a collapse would mean for the national economy: the possibility of political unrest because of the human cost of so many losing their savings and superannuation, and, purely from self-interest, the wrath of the electorate. As already intimated, the worst situation seems to exist in the United States, where there continues to be little regulation, and no action appears to have been taken against those who were responsible for the collapse in the first place, as many of them appear to be back trading as usual.

Some governments, of course, care little for the people whom they govern, and many regimes exist simply to line their own pockets. Some, having attained power, allow themselves to be corrupted by it and become oppressors of their own people. In some cases, this has resulted in military action by neighbouring countries, but this may not have been for the altruistic reason of liberating an oppressed people, but in order to secure long term access to valuable resources. Although the United States has claimed that the war in Iraq was to rid the Iraqi people of a tyrant, many commentators continue to believe that it was to secure Middle East oil.

The regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe is an example of a corrupt regime which stops at nothing to maintain its power, even at the cost of ruining the country and destroying the lives of countless citizens. Unfortunately, the United Nations and the countries neighbouring Zimbabwe have done nothing to alleviate the suffering of the people of Zimbabwe. Of course, it is not just Zimbabwe which is affected by the Mugabe's corrupt and murderous regime, but the nations surrounding Zimbabwe who have had to bear the brunt of the millions of refugees who are leaving their country in search of food and employment. The actions of Mugabe's regime affect the international community as well as the people of Zimbabwe, though for the latter it is of utmost seriousness since their lives are at stake. The country remains in dire circumstances. Similarly, the civil war in Syria not only has resulted in many civilian deaths, but also threatens to destabilise the Middle East. The Assad regime's willingness to sacrifice innocent lives in order to remain in power is a crime against humanity.

Both the situation in Syria and in Zimbabwe raise questions about what actions the international community ought to take in dealing with governments that are oppressing, torturing, and killing their own people and so destroying those whom they are obligated to protect. The recent upheavals in the Middle East illustrate well that the situations in Syria and Zimbabwe are not unique, and that there are numerous conflicts around the world that require the attention of the international community. The Syrian situation, at the present time, is parlous and it is evident that Assad is intent on remain-

ing in power at all costs, even if it means the destruction of his country. That the conflict has been allowed to drag on is at least partly due to the jockeying for control and influence in the region by the major powers, who are seemingly unwilling to find a peaceful solution to the war. What is extraordinary about the situation in Syria, as it was in other countries in the Middle East, is the number of ordinary people who decided that they were not prepared to live under a tyrant anymore. The need for a global peace-keeping force, independent of national governments, has never been more apparent.

The Role of Philosophy and Culture

At first glance, it does not seem that philosophy has much relevance in the various global problems that we have outlined. These seem to require political and economic solutions that have little to do with philosophy. It is certainly true that some of the most important problems to be considered require politicians, corporations, scientists, and public servants to work together to solve the myriad global crises facing the world. Crises such as that occurring in Syria require extensive political skills and negotiating ability to effect a solution, global financial problems require economists and financial advisors to find ways of stabilising markets, scientists are needed to predict the possible consequences of the changing climate, and public servants are needed to implement the policies of governments in relation to all these crises. Thus, philosophers do not seem to have any significant part to play.

But to conclude that philosophy and philosophers have little or no role to play in the tackling of global crises would be a mistake. It is a mistake because none of the major problems that constitute global crises can be addressed without analysis and, moreover, without some evaluation of the beliefs and values which are foundational to the assessment of the means used to tackle these problems. For example, in considering the civil war in Syria, there is the question of the obligations of neighbouring states to intervene to save innocent lives. This requires, for instance, consideration of the limits of sovereignty and the application of just war theory, which are both philosophical concerns. In considering issues related to the financial crises besetting the world, questions about the aims of business arise and whether profit should be the sole motivation for economic activity. This, too, is a philosophical question about the kinds of beliefs and values that underpin the principles on which a particular conception of society is founded. Likewise, discussion of what ought to be done in relation to climate change and other environmental matters does not take place in a vacuum, but within a particular value and belief system. Thus, those who do not believe that there is any significant climate change reject any action to alter the use of fossil fuels, while those who do, make every effort to use alternative energy sources. These differences are not based on scientific evidence, but on particular belief and value systems. Philosophers have a role to play in philosophical questions about the conceptual frameworks in which questions about cli-

mate change are considered. For example, what is meant by climate change is a significant question, as it is apparent that the climate changes on a daily basis. Sharpening such conceptions is very much a task of philosophy. Finally, it is also clear that the policies devised by governments are also subject to political beliefs and values, and therefore involve philosophical views. A government inclined towards libertarianism, for example, will devise policies that interfere minimally in the lives of its citizens by outsourcing as many functions as it can to the private sector. A more communitarian government will see its role differently and take responsibility for providing services itself. The roles of public servants will, correspondingly, be different. Philosophy and philosophers, whether this is recognised formally or not, play a significant role in the clarification of each of the philosophical positions that is adopted.

Neither are the various global crises that we have considered disconnected from culture, since not only does culture influence the way particular issues are viewed, but also how they are addressed. Culture is not disconnected from philosophy in this respect, since broad divisions can be recognised between different philosophical approaches that arise in different cultures. This is not altogether surprising, since we would expect that different environments and experiences will create different outlooks on the world. A maritime culture, for example, will have different ways of viewing the world than a land-locked community high in a mountain range and remote from the sea. A desert community will have a very different attitude to water, for instance, than one in which flooding is a regular occurrence. Experiences of diverse kinds affect the ways in which different crises are viewed, since these will be reflected in particular cultures. Philosophers are not immune to cultural influence, since their philosophising also takes place within a framework of their own experience and those aspects of culture that they have absorbed, perhaps unconsciously.

Recognising the culturally-bound nature of philosophical thought, if we want to understand, say, Chinese culture in any profound way, will not be particularly useful if the only standpoint by which we appreciate another culture is from that of our own culture. This is the important lesson that both Thomas Nagel and Alasdair MacIntyre aimed to teach us, albeit in different ways. Nagel, in discussing objectivity and subjectivity, observes that there is no view from nowhere, that our assessments of various problems and issues are never divorced from our own cultural backgrounds, and our philosophising is never from a God's eye point of view, but always immersed in a particular time and culture. If we want to obtain as objective a view as we can, we need to step back from our own prejudices and preconceptions, but Nagel notes that in ethics it is never possible to eliminate the subjective.¹⁵

¹⁵ T. Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 8-9.

MacIntyre also reminds us that our thinking always takes place from within a particular tradition, and this is informed by our cultural practices.¹⁶

To illustrate these differences, we need to consider how culture affects the way in which philosophy is practised. This is not always easy, as philosophy crosses many cultural boundaries, yet it is possible to see the effects of culture. Because culture includes language, philosophical perspectives will be affected by the language of discourse. Quine reminds us of the difficulty of translating a discourse carried on in one language into another, arguing for the inscrutability of reference and indeterminacy of translation.¹⁷ Gadamer also insists that the achievement of thought takes place within something which is firm, that is, morals, law and religion, which is to say within a cultural tradition which acts as the bedrock for thought.¹⁸ Wittgenstein notes that how the world is viewed is determined to a large extent by the way it is described by language, since it expresses a form of life.¹⁹ It can be concluded that by paying attention to the way in which ideas are expressed in language will provide a means of illuminating how different philosophical concepts are understood.

But the culturally-affected nature of philosophy does not mean that there are no commonalities to be found between different ways of thinking, nor that there are no universal beliefs and values. These, however, will be expressed in different ways, and will almost certainly begin from different starting points. For some philosophers, irrespective of their cultural background – and here we can point to Aquinas and Mengzi, as representatives of very different cultures, eras, and traditions – an understanding of virtue, for example, will depend on an understanding of human nature and what is thought to be best for human beings. If there is a common human nature (and there are good grounds for thinking that there is), then, though there will be different starting points for conceiving of virtue, what is considered to be good for human beings will essentially be the same. A study of these two philosophers, much beyond our scope here, will show some surprising agreement about what is the good for human beings.

There will, however, be significant differences in the elaboration of the virtues, and the underlying principles supporting each conception of the virtues will be quite different. Aquinas, for example, starts from an Aristotelian and Christian perspective, adding to the cardinal virtues of Aristotle the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity.²⁰ Mengzi, on the other hand, begins with the idea that human nature is good and that the sprouts of the

¹⁶ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2007).

¹⁷ W. V. O. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1960).

¹⁸ See H-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. and rev. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (London: Sheed and Ward, 1989), 235-236.

¹⁹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), para. 19.

²⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Bros., 1948).

virtues have been given to human beings by Heaven.²¹ That both Aquinas and Mengzi arrive at the conclusion that what is good for human beings is the virtuous life is not that surprising, since both assume the essential goodness of human nature and that human fulfilment demands its continued development. The essential virtues elaborated by each, however, divide up the overall notion of virtue or moral goodness in quite different ways. Setting aside the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity, Aquinas's cardinal virtues are courage, temperance, justice and prudence, while Mengzi's are humaneness, rightness, propriety and practical wisdom. These have similarities to one another, but are still different ways of conceiving of virtue in general. Once these virtues are detailed, however, it is clear that the end of the cultivation of virtue for both is human fulfilment, and this is union with God or Heaven.²²

Though the end of the cultivation of moral virtue is moral goodness, the path to this endpoint is not necessarily the same for everyone and for every culture. The contours of what the good life consists in will essentially be the same, but possibly quite different in its realisation. In considering the prospect of a global ethics, we should be cautious, since if the argument we have presented is plausible, then the domain of the virtues will be carved differently, and this will imply that there are different approaches to how virtue is to be realised. Awareness of this is helpful in the consideration of what brings us together in thinking about the values that underpin approaches to global problems. Moreover, diversity of views about virtue and perspectives on values need not undermine the prospects of agreements about common values and, to that extent, can support a global ethics. What should be resisted, however, is the idea that there can be a global ethics that consists of the virtues understood in the same way.

Global Ethics

Normative ethical theories all purport to be universally applicable, so to speak of global ethics or globalised ethics seems to be redundant. Hans Küng, however, points out that the intent of global ethics is the acceptance of a certain minimum of common values, standards, and basic attitudes. Küng says global ethics is:

[A] minimal basic consensus relating to binding values, irrevocable standards and moral attitudes, which can be affirmed by all religions despite their undeniable dogmatic or theological differences and should also be supported by non-believers.²³

²¹ *Mencius*, trans. D. C. Lau (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).

²² How God and Heaven are to be understood is another issue. It suffices to say here that what both agree about is that human fulfilment has a goal.

²³ Hans Küng, "Global Ethic and Human Responsibilities" (2005), accessed May 27, 2013, http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/global_ethics/laughlin-lectures/global-ethic-human-responsibility.html.

More broadly, we can re-express K ung's definition of global ethics as a minimal basic consensus to values, irrevocable standards, and moral attitudes, which can be affirmed by all cultures despite their differences. The difficulty, however, is whether the principles of global ethics, to which everyone can assent, would be robust enough to enable agreed ethical decisions to be made in a variety of areas, as all that is demanded is a minimal basic consensus. If the path to virtue, understood as human fulfilment, allows for different understandings of virtues, then it follows that there will be different perspectives on what the minimal consensus is about. The right to education, for example, even if it is affirmed by everyone, will not be understood by every nation and culture as demanding the same access to education. In some cultures, the idea that there should be universal access to tertiary education, for instance, is not considered as having the same level of importance as primary and secondary education. Given the seriousness of many global questions, minimal consensus will not be sufficient for agreement on how to tackle these issues. The lack of consensus on market regulation, for example, shows how unrealistic the demand for consensus is.

In order to make any headway with global problems, several conditions need to be met. In general, among other things, there needs to be agreement: (i) about the nature of the problem itself; (ii) about its urgency; (iii) its priority amongst other problems; (iv) who is to take responsibility for tackling the problem; (v) how it is to be tackled; (vi) what resources are needed. Each of these conditions will involve value judgements and, while some minimal consensus is helpful, recognition that a particular problem is a common global problem is the most important condition.

While it is unclear whether a sufficiently robust global ethics can be established, philosophy is crucial in providing the reflection that is necessary for thinking about the values that underpin the different perspectives on global issues. Though science can be expected to provide empirical evidence for climate change, for example, it is philosophy which asks for clarification about what is meant by climate change, and which establishes the independent rules of evidence that helps in the assessment of the evidence. In relation to its urgency, although it is a political and economic question, it is also a philosophical question, since the extent to which a nation is able to address a problem will depend on other competing problems. The alleviation of poverty, for example, may demand acceptance of a higher level of pollution since the cost of cheap energy from coal is considered less than that from green energy. A country with fewer options in relation to energy may be forced to continue to use sources of energy that it knows are polluting. Philosophy provides the critical reflective resources to enable competing positions and competing values to be evaluated.

Another example that reinforces the importance of philosophy in providing the critical resources to evaluate competing positions is provided by the recent disaster in Fukushima, Japan. Aside from the terrible cost of human life, the catastrophe, caused by the earthquake and tsunami to the nuclear power plant at Fukushima, has resulted in some rethinking of the

merits of nuclear power. The fear is no longer of world destruction by nuclear weapons, though some fear of this remains, but instead the possibility of a nuclear disaster which affects the global community. The escape of nuclear waste materials into groundwater not only affects the water, but all the life that depends on that water. Airborne radiation does not respect national boundaries either.²⁴ Exposure to radiation may not have immediate effects, but there are considerable long term health risks. Science provides the data about levels of risk and the actions that need to be taken to limit these risks, but it will be philosophy that is required to evaluate these. A global ethics that remains at a general consensual level will not be enough, but a philosophical analysis that takes into account not only diverse normative ethical theories in its evaluation, but also the effects of culture, will provide a better basis for decision-making, as well as an understanding of the diverse contributions that are made in the making of those decisions.

Although there is a diversity of cultures and values, the global crises that we face threaten all human beings, and hence problems are not a matter of choice. For instance, the risks posed by the contamination of the atmosphere by nuclear waste from nuclear power plants are common problems, not simply Japanese ones that occurred as a result of the tsunami that was experienced. The idea of global ethics is predicated on the view that there are common aspirations that human beings share and that there is a common good that all hope for. More importantly, human beings share a common human nature which is affected by the same kinds of physical events, such as nuclear radiation. There is no escaping the fact that human beings all need food, shelter, clean water, and clean air. A case can also be made for human beings sharing other kinds of needs, such as a need for peace of mind, need for friends, for freedom of expression, and security. These commonalities, arguably, provide the reasons for thinking that, though there are diverse perspectives on values and virtues, they converge on the same kind of good for human beings.²⁵ It is self-evident, after all, that it is in no one's interest that airborne nuclear radiation should be allowed to circulate in the atmosphere. The need for the understanding of diverse values is urgent, as well as a sense of the common good in relation to common global problems, and the movement towards elaborating a global ethics is a recognition of this.

²⁴ See, for example, the report by Brumfiel which suggests that the extent of the spread of radiation is greater than admitted. D. Brumfiel, "Fallout Forensics Hike Radiation Toll: Global Data on Fukushima Challenge Japanese Estimates," *Nature* 478 (October 27, 2011): 435-436.

²⁵ Not everyone agrees with this. Some philosophers, such as Richard Rorty, argue that there is no common human nature, though what exactly he means by this is not clearly explicated by him. See R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

As a document that recognises the urgency of consensual approaches to common human problems, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a useful starting point, though it is largely a Western document. Despite this, although it is more than 60 years since the Declaration, it remains one of the most significant statements on the principles that should govern the ethical decision-making of all human beings, and, one might add, the leaders of nations, states and corporations who have the power to affect many lives. The Declaration is not without controversy and many of its principles remain to be implemented in various corners of the world. Nonetheless, it has guided the decision-making of the United Nations and the development of its aid programs throughout the world. It remains one of the few documents in which there is some common agreement. More recently, and significantly in the light of what we have been discussing, the rise of globalisation, the UN warns, has the potential to erode human rights even further.

The UN Statement on globalisation and economic, social, and cultural rights notes the growth of globalisation and warns that market economies and the growth of international financial markets have the potential to influence national policies and affect the livelihoods of a great many people. We have already noted the effect of the Global Financial Crisis on the lives of many people. The statement in relation to human rights says:

[G]lobalization risks downgrading the central place accorded to human rights by the United Nations Charter in general and the International Bill of Human Rights in particular. This is especially the case in relation to economic, social and cultural rights. Thus, for example, respect for the right to work and the right to just and favorable conditions of work is threatened where there is an excessive emphasis upon competitiveness to the detriment of respect for the labor rights contained in the Covenant. The right to form and join trade unions may be threatened by restrictions upon freedom of association, restrictions claimed to be “necessary” in a global economy, or by the effective exclusion of possibilities for collective bargaining, or by the closing off of the right to strike for various occupational and other groups. The right of everyone to social security might not be ensured by arrangements which rely entirely upon private contributions and private schemes. Respect for the family and for the rights of mothers and children in an era of expanded global labor markets for certain individual occupations might require new and innovative policies rather than a mere *laissez-faire* approach. If not supplemented by necessary safeguards, the introduction of user fees, or cost recovery policies, when applied to basic health and educational services for the poor can easily result in significantly reduced access to services which are essential for the enjoyment of the rights recognized in the Covenant. An insistence upon higher and higher levels of payment for access to artistic, cultural and heritage-related activities risks un-

dermining the right to participate in cultural life for a significant proportion of any community.²⁶

The continued growth of market economies around the world and the erosion of basic services are evident throughout the developed world. For example, though indicators in relation to employment in Western nations are mixed, with some boasting of falling unemployment rates and rising wages, others have seen rising unemployment, especially among the young, and falling wages. In both situations, basic housing is becoming increasingly out of reach of average wage earners, and is obviously not accessible to the unemployed.²⁷ Health, welfare, and education services are also becoming significantly out of reach of the poor. The middle class is also shrinking as a result of the redistribution of wealth to the very rich. The situation in the developing world is substantially worse. The problems to which we have already alluded are the result of unregulated markets and a lack of consensus over the common good which should ultimately be the aim of human activity. We all have to live together on the same planet, and must recognize that what one person does affects others. Similarly, what one nation, one corporation, or one entrepreneur does affects others.

Mass communication, travel, and the growing realisation of the interconnectedness of all peoples at the global level have increased the need for human beings to find practical ways to work together to secure the future of the world. One way that this has been proposed is the design of a global ethic which will encapsulate those values on which all people can agree. The problem is that, if there are fundamental differences about the nature of the common good, then this will prove to be difficult. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a beacon which provides some optimism that, though there may be difficulties in gaining consensus on common values, respect for one another may enable creative solutions to emerge from a common desire to find practical solutions to global problems.

Philosophy has a crucial role to play in deliberations about the nature of the common good, about the understanding of values in different cultures, and in explicating their foundations. Importantly, even as we seek common ground or a global ethics, based perhaps on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, cultural and language differences cannot be ignored, since different perspectives from diverse cultures can illuminate various problems. Global crises require not so much agreement about values, but about common aspirations and about what fulfils human beings. Global ethics, despite providing ethical principles that are unlikely to be ever fully

²⁶ United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *Statement on Globalization and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, (Geneva: Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, 1998).

²⁷ “The Quest for Jobs; Unemployment in the West,” *The Economist*, Sept. 10, 2011, 11(US), accessed October 30, 2013, <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA266486776&v=2.1&u=acumi&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&asid=a0d66ce64228fbc2194d34c88df42aed>.

agreed upon, does imply that there are common problems that a common approach might have help to resolve. Philosophy, because it seeks the truth, provides the resources for deliberations about global crises.

Conclusion

It is evident that there are many problems of a global nature, and we have provided some examples of these. Moreover, it is plain that they require our serious attention, and that finding solutions to them will not prove easy. Although the sources of these problems are as varied as they are many, they will not be solved by technological or scientific advances alone, nor by better social welfare policies. A prerequisite, it has been argued, is to understand the competing values and beliefs that frame different perspectives on the issues. A country, as we argued, whose people are fighting for their survival in an impoverished environment has a very different perspective on the use of resources than one where they are in abundance. Cultures and traditions also frame worldviews, and while it is arguably self-evident that this is so, what is not is how different outlooks can be accommodated in a framework of action to which all can commit. We have argued that philosophy can provide the common structure within which the understanding of different viewpoints can begin, and from which a sense of how the pressing problems of the world can be addressed.

It remains to be seen how this can be done. Küng's quest for a global ethics is most likely quixotic, but what is not is the recognition of the urgency with which we need to find solutions to global problems. Failure to do this will be likely catastrophic for the whole planet.

Democratic Criticism of Philosophy, Humanities, and the Arts

Héctor Muzzopappa

Does democracy need philosophy, humanities, and the arts? An attempt to answer this question leads us to a further question: do philosophy, humanities, and the arts need democracy? The first question is necessary for us to critically reflect on the historical conditions under which these concepts were founded; and, in the absence of the second question, an attempt to answer the first would be only unilaterally formulated.

We may start by saying that democracy needs philosophy, humanities, and the arts, if we have previously-developed critical thinking on current and predominant conceptions regarding these disciplines, such conceptions having arisen from a perspective where democracy was non-existent. We believe that expressing these non-democratic hypotheses would help to discern what democracy needs from philosophy, humanities, and the arts. We must also put forward what we understand by democracy: whether its definition is based on sociohistorical premises of the traditional world, that is, within a conception of the political defined by the functions of coercion, law, and morality, which establish a specific concept of praxis, (and which is synthesized by the modern word State), or, if we define it within the modern world, where democracy falls within a concept of the political which is mediated by civil society, that is, by the functions of labor, production, and social interaction, out of which arise a set of values that constitute an alternative model to the State-based model.

The first case is associated with political democracy, which is characterized by the right to vote, periodic elections, freedom of speech, political parties, and universal access to state employment, i.e., an exclusively State-oriented political system. In the second case, democracy is defined as *social* democracy, that is, a system mediated by the determinations that arise from the functions of labor, production, and social interaction. Based on these principles, we hold that a democratic political system may exist without a democratic society. And the question lies precisely in that democracy in a modern world is built on the foundations of a *civil society*, which essentially means a democratic society. From these principles, we will try to raise the question of what democracy may need from philosophy, humanities, and the arts, that is, what the conditions would be to allow them to make contributions to democracy. We can approach the role of philosophy through three ‘traditional’ conceptions that still apply.

The first is the conception that Plato set out in the *Republic*. There, he argues that the production of knowledge within a politically organized community is a function that, like every essential function, should be en-

trusted to philosophers. Knowledge should not be cultivated for its own sake; rather, its objective is the production of social truth, which will legitimize domination over the whole. This will enable justice to rule in the *polis*. In order to accomplish this goal, the *polis* should be organized by taking nature and the capacities of the men who make it up into account. Thus, he proposes a tripartite societal scheme that involves the producers (craftsmen and peasants), the warriors, and the philosophers. The warriors and philosophers belong to the leading class and are differentiated by their disposition: warriors are characterized by bravery, whereas philosophers are characterized by wisdom. The essential condition for the system to work is that each class should perform its own responsibilities; that is, each of them should do its part, without interfering with the others, since such interference would cause the disintegration of the *polis*, leading it towards decadent systems, such as democracy.

This conception expresses two essential ideas for political thinking: the tripartite model of traditional society, organized around war, the devaluation of labor, and the aristocratic model of knowledge production entrusted to a class of priests who will determine what belongs to the world of truth, thus imposing a hierarchy that will send opinions to the dimension of mistake. Plato's model has a second extension in medieval Christianity. Nietzsche's assertion is worth noting: Christianity is "Platonism for the people," which at this stage acquires real characteristics. The world of ideas takes place in heaven, relegating uncertainty and contingency to the terrestrial world. However, the theoretical construction related to the celestial world came to an end at the dawn of the modern world, with the establishment of science. The perspective of the old world order thus seems to have collapsed. Nevertheless, some characteristics, certainly not unessential ones, have prevailed. Deprived of the weight of reality, philosophy drifted towards the criticism of knowledge, where epistemology became the guiding axis of its productions. Even though this implies that philosophy has assumed a new paradigm, it is also evident that no remarkable change has occurred regarding our attitudes toward democracy. Furthermore, the imaginary place where democracy placed itself is essentially the same. Saint Simon's assertion, passed on by Augusto Comte, his disciple, is worth recalling: modern thinking (that is, the thinking of French Enlightenment which he paradoxically continues) is nothing but the secularized transposition of the philosophies of medieval theology. This was expressed in scientific orientations of politics – to which Saint Simon suggests that, someday in the future, politics will be applied sociology. Plato's philosopher king remains and stands victorious among the apparent ruins of the traditional world.

Let us focus now on the humanities. The humanities as a discipline began with the humanism of the Renaissance. As opposed to the theological spirit of medieval thinking, humanism is the atmosphere in which all other types of knowledge considering man as the terrestrial maker unfold. However, not all the types of knowledge that the Renaissance movement liberated were legitimated as such types of knowledge. The humanities were ob-

jectivized in the *studia humanitatis*, in the study of languages and classical authors, restricting the humane to the field of literature, since, by following the classical tradition, the inner self of man lies within the logos. And, since the logos is governed by the clergy, then the humane factor is restricted to the values and doings of that institution.

This perspective has historically determined the hegemonic foundation on which the humanities have been conceived, since, especially from Erasmus's work, they have been conceived as the nobility's model of education. We then see that, when faced with the question related to the possible contribution of the humanities to democracy, it is necessary to prioritize the historical reflection regarding their development, i.e., regarding the liberating trend of all the potential contained within man, which are present from the time of the origins of humanism and its reduction of the humane to the literary. However, this assertion may be useful for dealing with the question of art. Regarding the translation of the Latin term *ars* and the Greek term τέχνη, the concept covers a spectrum ranging from the broad meaning of a capacity to do something (the art of living, the art of cooking, the art of loving) to the restricted meaning of aesthetic expressiveness. As per the original definition provided by Aristotle, man unfolds an essential capacity in art, that of creating, the transition of not being into being. Art, then, is the activity in which man replicates God's activity – through God, he creates a world, containing everything that that world involves.

But in the course of the modern world, even though the creative aspect of art has been emphasized, it has been especially conceived as an activity resulting from the superior capacities of a superior being, the artist, the genius, who produces superior works by using his gifted capacity. Thus, despite carrying out the same productive activity, a difference established itself between the artist (considered a superior being) and the craftsman (a being who does not deserve conceptual consideration and who represents the socially productive work of a great part of society). Despite this, Rousseau accurately stated that this difference is not a difference related to the essence of the activity or to the possible quality of the work, but to a specific social order which has anticipated the hierarchies extrinsic to the productive question:

...those great people who are called artists, not artisans, who labor only for the rich and idle, put a fancy price on their trifles; and as the real value of this vain labor is purely imaginary, the price itself adds to their market value, and they are valued according to their costliness. The rich think so much of these things, not because they are useful, but because they are beyond the reach of the poor.¹

¹ Rousseau, *Émile ou De l'éducation*, 1762 [*Émile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979)], III.

Thus, the most socially useful arts, the mechanical arts, are the least valued, and the “aesthetic consideration” attributed to “art” by calling it “fine art” does not come from its excellence but from its relationship with the luxury consumption of the upper classes. Therefore, art suffers a conceptualization that has not been built on the foundations of a democratic society, but on those of an aristocratic society.

We have tried to question these conceptions of philosophy, the humanities, and the arts, because we believe that such characterizations are still considered the basis of beliefs on which current conceptual constructions, unconnected to a democratic society, are set up, since they fall within the historical horizon of traditional society, that is, of a hierarchical society in which the echoes of Platonism still resound. If we try to approach democracy from this perspective, our answer is that democracy needs nothing from them, because they are established and constituted from foundations which are completely unconnected to it. Therefore, they refuse to recognize it, they ignore it, and they deny it.

A democratic society cannot operate from a conception that holds that the institution of social values is the exclusive task of philosophers who conceive of philosophy as independent from the real world, to which only they have access, and whose study is the road to truth. Neither can it operate from a conception of the humanities that does not comply with the Renaissance principle of understanding man as a thinker, a doer, and a producer, as epitomized in the figure of Leonardo Da Vinci, and reduces the humanities to the literary world. Even less can an art built on the aristocratic-bourgeois world contribute to a democratic society, since this world ignores its origin and its belonging to the poetic world, i.e., the traditionally underappreciated world of the mechanical arts.

We have already mentioned the aspects which cannot contribute to democracy, so we will now try to determine on which foundations it is possible for it to flourish. To that end we will resort to a conceptualization that may seem questionable, since as Ortega y Gasset stated, to conceptualize is to exaggerate. From the philosophical point of view, the history of the Western world could be characterized according to three essential principles: the first is the principle of logos. The scholarly tradition places the origin of the concept of logos in the Greek world. However, we know that history is written from the present to the past, and that the pre-eminence and “notoriety” of logos as an ordering principle of the world is the work of Christianity. The task of approaching the logos is nothing but the attempt of having access to God’s Word, of interpreting his mandate and understanding his message in Christ. Given the essential nature of the celestial world, nothing is more important than his Word.

The birth of the modern world, mainly as a result of research and theological constructions, will choose the way to His knowledge, not only in His word but also in His work, creation, which will lead to his understanding as Nature. It is thus that the world of science unfolds. However, this will bring with it new methodological principles: it replaced the logos with mathemat-

ics. Understanding the essence of the world as being mathematically constituted is the second essential principle.

However, the modern world went beyond conceptual expressiveness. The world of the producers, those artisans whose work dealt with the undervalued mechanical arts, were progressively ascribed value. Both from the current of thought of Herder's romanticism and the Sturm und Drang movement, or the Scottish Enlightenment, from which the "French Illustration" derives, labor, the principle of its doing, acquired conceptual acknowledgement. Man is not only the bearer of the logos and the calculus but also a producer; this concept being understood from a broader understanding of creativity. As regards this task, man is a being who is able to build a world; and it is here where secularization reaches its highest point: man pairs with God; God is understood as the *optimus artifex*, the excellent artisan, as some Renaissance authors called him when trying to express the essence of His Being, the Creator.

The third principle refers to the concept of the poietic, which was basically reformulated by Hegel and then by Marx. The idea of man's freedom acquires a novel and positive meaning in the light of this concept. Freedom is no longer the absence of external impediments, or an acknowledgement of rights by the Prince or the State. Freedom is embedded in creation, whose essence is labor, and through creation, man frees himself from the ties of domination and need. This is clearly stated in Hegel's famous dialectic of master and slave, which illustrates an aspect not highlighted enough: the slave's emancipation occurs within the dimension of poiesis; it is labor that enables the slave to free himself. Labor is no longer considered an energetic loss but a formative power of man, consequently, a principle of recognition and liberation of men, both in their social relationship (liberation from domination), and in their relationship with nature.²

And thus, within this principle, there is a noteworthy contrast between the idea of art founded on the essential poietic power of man, which all men have access to because they are producers, and the idea of art reduced to aesthetic expressiveness related to the aristocratic-bourgeois consumption represented by genius. The contrast of the humanities, conceived on the one hand by a man who is reduced to one of his functions and, on the other, by a man who expresses all of his abilities, is also remarkable because the first case is restricted to a minority, which is qualified to carry out activities just for the sake of belonging to it, while the second case includes all men just because they are men. Finally, philosophy, once liberated from its hierarchical reclusion, may carry out its tasks in the interpretation and configuration of a world which has freed itself from traditional limitations. We believe that, by assuming these conditions, based on the principles of a democratic society, philosophy, the humanities, and the arts can contribute to democracy.

² Cf. Marx, *Capital*, I. His conception of work is totally *poietic*. Contrary to what happens with animals, labor implies the project, a prior representation of the end of the task.

Changes in the Contemporary Character of Lithuanian Society and Paradigmatic Developments in Contemporary Philosophy¹

Jurate Morkuniene

Changes in the Character of Society

The current character of Lithuanian society is in transition and this is primarily related to the understanding of social and national identity. The question of to what degree Lithuanian society and its citizens are European immediately leads to the question of whether their identity – human, social, individual, and national – can be preserved. There is, then, an urgent need to perceive the challenges and the threats to the nation’s social and cultural identity. In speaking of European identity, one refers to historical (and emerging) values, historical memory, and historical consciousness. The European mentality has always been under constant tension between the pursuit of freedom and reconciliation, doubt and self-determination, self-criticism and self-satisfaction, self-esteem and reverence, unity and diversity, openness and insularity, and union and independence. We might say that Europe is still looking for its identity and is serious in creating it.

However, due to the chaos of globalization, humanity is entering the unpredictable present and, even more so, an even more unpredictable future. Consequently, nation states, even inside the European Union, must, of necessity, contest for their culture, language, values, and identity. The development and preservation of a society’s identity requires high-quality members of society and a high level of mentality in society. It also needs sustained effort, and is a history-making permanent process. These efforts still remain a daily challenge.

Quality of human life is the multipartite concept: it means the elimination of poverty; the creation of equal living chances for every citizen; a recognition of the rights of every citizen; ensuring education and health care for all; and ensuring a rising quality of life for everyone. It sounds like bliss. However, so far as we fail to achieve this, thinking remains at the level of barbarity. It is a commonplace that a good education is one of the backbones of identity, due to the fact that education fulfils its true purpose by allowing individuals to make their own decisions and take control of their own lives; this assists in creating a person’s identity – the responsible and creative individual – a “product” that is the most important strategic re-

¹ This research was funded by the European Social Fund under the Global Grant measure.

source of the state. Without this, we cannot maintain the balance between global and local, between tradition and innovation.

The use of ideological notions and euphemisms leads to society's tolerance of incomplete truth and intentional distortions of the truth. The social sciences alone are unable to eradicate such violations of societal thinking. We may raise questions about the causes of the current unorganized and vague way of thinking, including whether the impact of the virtual world on social consciousness and self-awareness and the increase in consumerism leads to uncultured individuals. The problem arises, then, How can we preserve the cultural and social identity of the national state? And this problem becomes much more complicated in times of globalization and the collision with new historical experience.

What role can philosophy play here? What are the possibilities of philosophy? Yet philosophy itself is in crisis; it doesn't satisfy the present needs of society. The philosophical approach to the changes in the characteristics and mentality of society includes a variety of theoretical paradigms and methodologies. There is a need of theories that are adequate to explain these complicated processes. To grasp the complexity and dynamics of the processes in today's society, contemporary philosophy needs to develop adequate research means – a complex of concepts and methods. It is only in conservative thinking that we can maintain philosophy as an unshakable and uniform concept.

Contemporary philosophy is multidisciplinary in its essence, as it combines and adapts methods taken from many of the other advanced sciences (e.g., physics, biology, cybernetics, theory of systems, psychology, etc.). It also uses concepts that have been constantly and laboriously adapted to philosophy during recent decades. The process of the change of philosophical methodology started in the previous century, along with the new discoveries in physics. This means that research on the paradigmatic changes in social mentality is going to be conducted on the basis of innovative methods and by means of new ways of doing philosophy.

The idea of such a new philosophical discourse arises from the understanding that the dynamism of contemporary society, the speed of the technical processes, changes in world outlook and attitudes, and the instability and mutation of cultural values, culture-shock, and the cultural decline of individual, all arising in the context of globalization, demand considerable changes in philosophy. It involves, for example, changes in Lithuania's societal thinking (both positive and destructive) and its links with problems from the European area. To understand the transformations of Lithuanian society, it is necessary to illustrate the differences between the mentality of citizens in the former Soviet system, and the mentality of the world that suddenly appeared when the Soviet system collapsed. Human identity is an emerging paradigm of new values, new thinking, and new threats.

It should be noted, however, that use of concepts at the common sense level and the various kinds of euphemisms actually prepare society to accept incomplete truth and even *intentional* distortion of the truth. As an example,

consider the notion of tolerance. It could involve compliance, or indifference, or even intimidation, but not a dialog of equal partners. What are the limits of tolerance? But the underlying question is: what are the real causes that create a disorganized and non-transparent way of thinking? Are we to violate an individual's consciousness and self-awareness, and indoctrinate them with the one-dimensional principles of consumerism?

Globalization became a driving force of modern life, leading to a culturally diverse and tightly interconnected society but having no ultimately prevailing centre. Among the essential questions are problems of the discoveries and losses of globalization, rapid changes and irreversible processes, and preconditions for the reliability of future strategies. A crucial role here is played by the accelerated changes in the public's thinking, influencing all spheres of social life. Hence, the priority of contemporary philosophical inquiry is essential for deepening knowledge about global processes and their impact on changes in societal thinking.

A variety of sources (political, sociological, etc.) help to frame the problems emerging during the transition to the new social model and identities; which social groups retained the Soviet style and which moved towards Western civilization; and how the two parts are polarized in terms of generations, educational background, and aspirations for the future. But we should not ignore the possibilities of employing new philosophical paradigms. The goals of contemporary philosophy in Lithuania include:

- research on some of the paradigmatic changes in present-day thinking, triggered by Lithuania's return to the Western area;
- systematic analysis of changes in thinking in contemporary Lithuanian society;
- systematic analysis of the impact of the virtual world upon social consciousness and self-confidence;
- addressing the conflict of religiousness and secularity;
- reviewing the connections between the latest trends in social thinking and European integration;
- analysis of the phenomenon of the one-dimensional, uniform individual, arising within the context of globalization;
- research on consciousness in modern society, earmarked by depreciation of values.

The Methodology of Contemporary Philosophical Research

Research today may be characterized by the application of the contemporary philosophical paradigm. This means that, instead of static methods for the analysis of the individual and society, the most complex self-organizing systems will employ concepts, describing dynamics, open systems and irreversible processes. The new paradigm of philosophy allows for such possibilities. It is essential for scholars of the social sciences to assimilate

late the new philosophical methodology and to cease the use of methodologies of obsolete paradigms to solve contemporary problems.

Philosophy in the 21st century achieves this when its methods correspond to the present paradigm of science. The task of contemporary philosophy is not only to attain truth, but also to show how this truth can become active. As philosophy is the means of thinking and action, new methodologies need to begin to be applied for solving the problems of man and society. There is an urgent and pressing need to understand the truth in contemporary social cognition – that *new problems require a new means of research*, and that new tools of cognition must be discovered. To tackle the complex and dynamic problems of today's society, contemporary philosophy has developed adequate modern research means – a complex of concepts and methods. The view of philosophy as a homogeneous concept remains only in conservative thinking. Contemporary philosophy is multidisciplinary in its essence as it combines methods taken from the most progressive contemporary sciences and it uses concepts that have been constantly adapted to the terminology of philosophy during recent decades.

Philosophy creates a new network of concepts and applies new methods of cognition. Contemporary philosophy does not dissect an integral, living social phenomenon into parts, but 'catches' this phenomenon, and its deeply-rooted relations and contradictions. The main features of this new paradigm of social theories are reflected by the notions of complexity, the perception of cognition as a continuous, uninterrupted dialogue with reality, the introduction of the explanatory principles of the feedback relation, complementariness, irreversibility, and the existence of an open system. However, it should be kept in mind that outcomes of philosophical research cannot directly affect practical life. Social reality cannot be immediately and directly explained by concepts and theories of a high level of abstraction. The identification of relations among them is provided by special theories and in the concrete sciences.

The problem of interdisciplinary research has already been resolved in 20th century philosophy. Philosophy is an integrated subject itself, and its interdisciplinary nature is hidden in methodology and the content of newly-introduced concepts. The methodology of contemporary philosophy is integral, that is, interdisciplinary. Contemporary research should not be confined by the use of only one paradigm of philosophy from several hundred years ago. Philosophical inquiry today is based on the current scientific paradigm, allowing new cognitive methods:

1. The special social sciences analyse strictly defined problems of the individual and society. Such sciences are very specific and limited by their methodology. Contemporary philosophy facilitates the understanding of specific problems in the wider context of social phenomena.
2. The goal of philosophy is to apply the force of thinking to tackle problems of the contemporary world and to open the abilities of individuals

for active and creative thinking. Such a goal constitutes a challenge to create new cognitive tools, allowing an impact on social change.

3. In times of the changing world order, society needs new means of interpretation, new meta-theoretical cognitive rules, and new social and humanitarian theories. This 'new age' requires new cognitive instruments.

4. It is no longer possible to study the person and society solely in terms of logic and morality.

Contemporary philosophy generalizes the most complicated and rapidly changing subjects of research, such as society and man. In this sense, social philosophy is always incomplete, relatively open, and, therefore, theoretically "imperfect," "non-systematic," and vulnerable. Philosophy develops by reconsidering the problems of order and disorder, complexity and simplicity, evolution, truth and error, and so on. The main features of the new paradigm in social theory are reflected in the concepts of complexity, the perception of cognition as a dialogue with reality, the introduction of explanatory principles of a feedback relation, complementariness, irreversibility, and of an open system.

Philosophy is understood as conforming to the present paradigm of science. In this case, what is important is reconsidering such main methodological principles as the static and the dynamic, and rethinking the concepts of preciseness, systematization, and determinism. It also involves a new approach to rationality, the dilemma of idealization and its conformity with reality, the concept of process, especially the concept of entropy, and so on. Complicated, self-developing systems such as the individual and society cannot be rendered in *static* categories. The basic theoretical principle is to analyse both the present state of reality and its reflection in concepts, not as a stiff static structure, but as a *process*. Complex self-developing systems should not be interpreted by the use of static categories of an outdated scientific paradigm. The interpretation of the individual and society as a *process* requires relevant theories and concepts.

Concepts of contemporary philosophy are mature enough and capable to "catch" the process without stopping it. They do not "kill" a process, or dissect an integral, living social phenomenon into parts, but "catch" this phenomenon and its deeply-rooted relations and contradictions as a whole. The goals, methods, and results are connected by a *feedback relation*. The feedback relation prevents philosophy from becoming an unshakable dogma. Therefore, these modern concepts and cognitive methods may be used not only in philosophical reflections but also in the theories of the development of social strategies.

Inevitability of the New Philosophical Paradigm

The transition to the new methods of philosophical research on the individual and society started in the middle of the 20th century. Cl. Lévi-Strauss noticed weakness of philosophy already in 1961, in his article "Cri-

sis of Contemporary Anthropology,” and he suggested that philosophy has to change its character. The current philosophy is founded on works by J.-P. Sartre, Cl. Lévi-Strauss, E. Morin, J. Delors, F. Mayor, and other thinkers. R. L. Ackoff, W. R. Ashby, Stephen Toulmin, I. Prigogin, and A. J. Greimas² proved the necessity for philosophy to apply new paradigms and create new methodological grounds and criteria for the contemporary analysis of individual identity, thinking, and progress.

Finally, in the seventies of the 20th century, Edgar Morin suggested the idea of starting the purposeful accelerating integration of scientific sub-domains, using their individual vocabularies and languages. According to Morin, “the former anthropological substrate has been joined by the economical network.”³ Thus, philosophical cognition has become interdisciplinary. Society as a process needs theories able to interpret the process without destroying it. Algirdas J. Greimas, a famous Lithuanian and French philosopher and one of the founders of semiotics, claims that the disproportion between the cognition of the human being and nature constitutes a serious threat to the existence of the humanity. He was convinced that “development of the sciences of man is not only the mission of the twentieth century, but also the necessity, determining the fate of the whole humankind.”⁴

Having made a critique of all social thought that had become dissociated from historical practice, the French sociologist Alain Touraine pursued the positive task of the reconstruction of social thought, associated with the changes and creations of the twentieth century, and sought to construct a new way of thinking about social facts and human behaviour. He wrote that

For long decades, social thought was suffocated by what I have termed the *dominant interpretive discourse*, which was created not by political leaders, but by intellectuals and opinion-makers who looked to their memories of the past to find the weapons that could help them to fight new ideas....They are plunging the stage into darkness at a time when incomprehensible or deafening noises are becoming louder. We are already aware that everyday life is making new demands, and that words and ideas we thought had gone for ever are back. We are looking for new categories that will allow us to understand the initiatives that we see, as well as the destruction and the upheavals.

This requires a twofold effort. We must first try to formulate, as coherently and clearly as possible, forms of thought that explain our situation and our behaviours to us.⁵

² See the section on ‘Additional Resources’ at the end of this paper.

³ Edgar Morin, *Sociologie* (Paris: Fayard, 1984), 328.

⁴ Algirdas J. Greimas, *The Social Sciences: A Semiotic View* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 30.

⁵ Alain Touraine, *Thinking Differently* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 3-4.

The new methodology also creates a scientific environment to determine criteria for inter-cultural and international dialogue. Such determination is especially important in the comparison of societal thinking and its evolution in the European Union member states, the integration of this thinking into a common and united development, and the successful resolution of conflicts and crises. Without the application of general principles of philosophical cognition, decisions may remain incidental and even erroneous. Still, these newly-created concepts work at explaining the chaotic contemporary world and human activity in it. Such an approach is especially needed to eliminate strict determinism – the deterministic nightmare, according to K. Popper – from the social sciences and philosophy, and regardless of whether the determinism will be constructive or destructive, modern or postmodern. The goal of a theory is to resolve the problem, sometimes by rejecting classical and generally accepted “pure” concepts

Cultural and social idioms of thinking, speaking, and writing, which have developed in recent decades, may not be successfully grasped and interpreted without systematic scientific research into changes in societal thinking. Therefore, future research requires continuous philosophical reflection on changes in contemporary societal thinking, thus allowing a better understanding of the historically changing structure of thinking and the primary sources of contemporary ideas.

Additional Resources

- Ackoff, R. L. and F. E. Emery. *On Purposeful Systems*. Chicago, IL: Aldine-Atherton, 1972.
- Badiou, Alain. *Second Manifesto for Philosophy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011.
- Bakhtin, Michail M. *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993.
- Greimas, Algirdas J. *Sémiotique et Sciences Sociales*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1976.
- McLean, George F. *Communication between Cultures and Convergence of Peoples: The Role of Hermeneutics and Analogy in a Global Age*. Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2003.
- Morin, Edgar. *Le paradigme perdu; la nature humaine*. Paris; Éditions du Seuil, 1975.
- Morin, Edgar, *Introduction à la pensée complexe*. Paris: ESF éditeur, 1990.
- Morkuniene, Jurat. *Globalization and Culture: Contemporary Social Cognition*. Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008.
- Popper, Karl R. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

Culture and Ecological Responsibility in the Global Era: A Philosophical Perspective from Latin America

H. Daniel Dei

If, as Heidegger asserted in the famous *Der Spiegel* interview, “thinking has become exhausted, there is nothing much left for thinking to do, [and] philosophy has come to an end,”¹ then this World Congress and all of its attendees, gathered in the land that gave rise to philosophy, are out of place. However, this kind of assertion, not so atypical of Heidegger, would paradoxically have some sense if we could only think, just as some of our colleagues have thought, that philosophy is reflection on all things without getting into the depths of anything. In other words, if philosophy has nothing to do with life, pain, and death, with the manipulation of our habitat or, basically, with our most elementary decisions regarding the modalities of how we bond with other human beings and with our desired world, then our task would be restricted, in the best of cases, to a critical reading of the history of thinking (which is precisely what Heidegger proposes in the mentioned interview, since he assumes that philosophical thinking “cannot be the cause of the state of things in the world”).

Fortunately, we believe that, from the time of Ancient Greek philosophy to our days, philosophy cannot be conceived without relating it to the practical concerns of mankind. Even when we feel desperate for answers to such worries and concerns, it is because we have already despaired about ourselves and our fellow men in relation to life. In fact, philosophy will be ineffective unless its discourse accompanies the existential worries of man.

¹ “...mehr verlangt das Denken nicht. Die Philosophie ist am Ende.” The interview was given on September 23, 1966 and was published after Heidegger’s death at his request under the following heading: “Nur noch in Gott kann uns retten. Der Philosophie.” See Rudolf Augstein and Georg Wolff, *Der Spiegel*, May 31, 1976, 193-219. Cf. Besides the online version of the magazine [<http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-9273095.html>], I have consulted the preliminary study, translation and notes of the interview by Ramón Rodríguez in the second edition of *La autoafirmación de la universidad alemana and El Rectorado, 1933-1934 and Entrevista del Spiegel* [*The Affirmation of the German University and The Rectorate and Spiegel Interview*] (Madrid: Tecnos, 1989). See also the version of the first edition by Alfredo Llanos (Buenos Aires: Editorial Rescate, 1984), 37, who describes the role of philosophy with a suggestive nuance: “...thinking does not intend to do more. Philosophy ignores what is to come.” The context of these assertions is the essence of the technique, which according to Heidegger, man does not master. Against this vision of the fate of philosophy, it is interesting to consult the introduction to Karl-Otto Apel, *La transformación de la Filosofía*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Taurus, 1985), 9ff.

When philosophy is deprived of hopeful discourse involving support and transformation, it will just remain a form of intellectual *divertissement*, or an activity for developing arrogance.

Therefore, the philosophical *question* comes to light every time the interrogation that breeds thinking opens up perspectives of meaning, that is, a new horizon in which the act of questioning unveils a previously unknown dimension to the act of questioning. Thus, Søren Kierkegaard, in spite of his harrowing justification to the world and to himself for his own misconduct as well as the incoherence of his personal behavior, has raised a decisive question to be answered in our time; a *question* about which we know has never radically focused our attention, or at least the serious and committed attention of political leaders or of the world's biggest corporations. It is the question about the difference between good and evil; particularly, the decision as to whether the issue of good and evil is important in our life and for our society. This difference between good and evil is present in the decisions that concern the community that these individuals circumstantially lead. However, this dilemma is not restricted to "them," i.e., to the others who are different from us. This dilemma directly involves us, since it is present in our customary, everyday decisions, whenever we act. After all, we cannot shun the question raised by Kierkegaard; it involved him and even today it cannot be shunned since it will always involve us personally and shall reveal our capacity to make this world a habitable place.²

We, philosophers, have certainly failed to commit ourselves to ethics, and we have not stopped a similar failure, through our testimony and discourse, in those people who are circumstantially in charge of making decisions for the future of our species. Indeed, with our help, rhetorical games, strategic shifts, and argumentation skills have taken the place of ethics in political action. Our ability to legitimize the modalities of life has implied, in practice, a new modality of delegitimizing the ways of life of those who are not or will never be – as long as we do not change – "in conditions of equality and symmetry." It is not even about agreeing and sharing the opportunity with others to argue, had we stayed fixed in our axis, remaining uncritically in the system of convictions and presuppositions in dialogue, in which statements such as "who else but Europe could draw from its own tradition the insight, the energy"³ foster the difference without looking for

² Cf. *Ou bien...ou bien, o L'alternative*, trans. O. Prior and M.-H. Guinot (Paris: Gallimard/Col. "Tel", 1988).

³ Jürgen Habermas, *Der Philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1985); *in fine*. This particular perspective has a long-standing tradition in German thinking; with exceptions, such as with Hans-Georg Gadamer's. A remarkable case is Heidegger, who, despite having tried to elude any "biographical" reference or personal stance referring to the reality he was living, he asserted the following, in the courses he delivered in 1943-1944 on Heraclitus: "...A reflection on the historical sense of the world may only come from the Germans, if they can find and preserve what is German...." This aspect is also present in the interview mentioned. In fact, this division between theory and praxis can be noticed in some of Heidegger's assertions in that

consensus. In these cases, just as Professor Apel has himself argued, aren't we exposed to the "temptation of imposing our own interest for a specific result of the discourse by using rhetorical strategic tricks?"⁴

A Reality That Commits Us All

In the process of globalization, it is unquestionable that we are all affected by the growing deterioration of the habitable conditions of our planet, or the ecological problem.⁵ Obviously, the impact of this and other decisive problems facing mankind do not affect all peoples and cultures in the same way or with equal intensity. The ways of experiencing and dealing with the apocalyptic character of the end of history, and even of the world, are indeed reflections of such differences. The reality television show 'Doomsday Preppers,' produced by National Geographic,⁶ is a good example of what was mentioned before. Even though the program is somewhat trivial and absurd in the manner that it reflects *the individualistic attitudes* towards the apocalyptic possibilities of mankind, it also shows many legitimate worries, such as securing resources like shelter, food and water, so as to survive in situations of uncertainty. However, while this is happening, more than 750 million people all over the world already suffer from these kinds of disasters in their daily lives: they do not have access to safe drinking water, and they survive in extremely precarious living conditions. The objective behind this TV program is, in a way, related to the confusion created by the terms "sustainable development" and "supportable development." Although this confusion was cleared up by the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), and acknowledged at different international events, in our opinion it originated as a result of the different stances, atti-

the personal life of a thinker may be correct and in spite of that, "the manifestation of his thought may not be truthful." This biographical (and ethical) retreat of Heidegger is nothing but a legitimation of a way of acting but would not justify, in my opinion, which supports a philosophical tradition that dates back to Socrates, the lack of correspondence between life and thinking (we should remember that Socrates accepted his death, thus confirming with his decision the "truth" of his thinking).

⁴ Cf. Karl-Otto Apel, *La globalización y una ética de la responsabilidad*, trans. R. Ma-liandi (Buenos Aires: Prometeo libros, 2007).

⁵ The IV Forum of Heads of Parliament from G20 countries, which was held this current year, cautioned about and admitted that "the climate change may lead to further drought, water shortage and rises in the cost of food," which, in turn, may bring about tensions and conflicts among countries.

⁶ It is an American TV program that airs on the National Geographic Channel and profiles various survivalists who prepare themselves for the imminent "end of civilization" or "Doomsday." If this became true, the consequences would surely not depend on the historical preventive measures taken. Perhaps, we could say that the best "shelter" would be that provided by the coherent and significative way of life we may have led.

tudes, and existential dispositions towards the changes and transformations that should be made to improve the habitability of our planet.⁷

Certainly, and with good reason, the cause of this environmental crisis has been ascribed “to the great economic powers, to Western imperialism, to technoscience, and to the excessive use of chemicals in industrial production....With no intention of minimizing the importance of these factors, it is really necessary to admit that there are deeper factors, which have shaped and granted leeway to the aggressive rationale that shakes and worries today’s world. These motivations and this rationale for the great paradigmatic mutation have the correlate...that the Western world has forgotten the ecophilosophical roots of its own tradition.”⁸ In fact, the shadows concealing this ecocentric orientation of ancient philosophy remained subsumed under the logic of an instrumental rationality during modernity. When this rationality unfolded and was implemented, it increasingly appeared dystopic, and unable to become aware of the other before oneself and, consequently, of the human condition. This current human condition is characterized by the waste of material goods, unequal access to basic resources, the absence of equity in human exchanges, expansionist policies which progressively wipe out the existence of different ethnicities, and the inhumane living conditions to which aboriginal populations have been subjugated.

The Ways of Being Human, Life, and the Task of Philosophy

This issue deserves a practical reflection from a philosophical perspective. Individualist stances toward life always involve choices that do not involve others as a possibility of being in the world, turning life into an instrument of a person’s own, and a matter of dominance. However, more than facing a problem, we are in the face of a question.⁹ A question opposed to a problem implies finding oneself in the horizon of an interrogation that opens up a path to a sense of life, which will necessarily unfold and shape a world, a universe of values in which everyone, every culture, and every

⁷ Cf. Arne Naess’ perspective, especially, his analysis of deep ecology, which he has called “ecosophy.” See his “The Deep Ecology Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects,” *Philosophical Inquiry* 8, nos. 1-2 (1986); see also Alicia I. Bugallo, *De Dioses, pensadores y ecologistas* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1995).

⁸ Paolo Scroccaro, “La nascita dell’ecofilosofía in Grecia e l’ecofilosofia di Raimon Panikkar,” presentazione dell’incontro del 4 maggio 2007 a Treviso, organizzato da Associazione per la decrescita sostenibile, Associazione ecofilosofica. Cf. Raimon Panikkar, *Ecosofia: La nuova saggezza. Per una spiritualità Della Terra* (Assisi: Cittadella, 1993).

⁹ The difference between “problem” and “question,” in relation to the philosophical task and the ontological extent of interrogation, was initially developed in my *Antropodicea* (Buenos Aires: Almagesto, 1997), and extended in *La cuestión del hombre* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2008) and in *Lógica de la distopía. Fascinación, desencanto y libertad*. (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2009). An English version of my discussion may be consulted: *The Human Being in History. Freedom, Power, and Shared Ontological Meaning*, trans. James G. Colbert, foreword Oliva Blanchette (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003).

people have to decide to live. For this reason, culture is clearly the objectivization in values of the exercise of our freedom to signify.

As we have said, life is a possibility that must be assumed in every act in order to be truly and fully lived, since it is essentially “a meeting place,” “a communicative interchange” with others and the things around us, a movement of freedom and interdependence on a ground of the possibility of a destiny that invites us to possess it,¹⁰ and to assume that destiny by acquiescing to life.

Now, to relate the ways of life of peoples and nations to the ecological question implies, from this perspective, not limiting ourselves to the problem of preserving the environment or to the mere sustainability of the planet’s resources. It is precisely because it is a question that it makes us responsible – as individuals and members of the community of values, i.e., of a culture – for the course of events. Such events, however, are shaped by the exercise of our freedom and the different modalities of power which we have historically exercised. Against all presuppositions, this power, considered ontologically, is not fatally determined as corrupting or oppressive. It is in the actualization of freedom, that is, it is in the act whereby we represent ourselves in a world where the power reveals itself as a promoter of the integrating sense of man and the community or, as an independent operator, whereby we ultimately turn man’s life into an instrument. In this human practice, in which our future is at stake, different levels of responsibility can be distinguished – a responsibility which becomes greater every time we are in a position to decide on generating ruptures in the order of events.

The Awareness of Ecological Responsibility Arises When We are First Aware of *Others*

Now, then, the awareness of ecological responsibility comprises, at least, the convergence of: 1) an attitude of acceptance toward life; 2) an attitude towards others; and 3) the denial of the instrumental mode of being in the world. This is the reason why we take the ecological responsibility to be an existential commitment toward life, an act of freedom that may guarantee one’s understanding of the worth of life and that every life has meaning, in short, consenting to life as an elementary human possibility throughout the world. This first attitude towards life entails another *spiritual disposition*, which includes the presence of the other as a condition for the possibility of being in the world. *I am and I do exist from the other*. This assertion is key, since it is not the same as considering others as an instance of a discursive rationality as opposed to a strategic rationality. We speak here of *thinking and being from the other*. *The other* is a presence that gives sense to my existence, thus validating my human condition.

¹⁰ Dei, *La cuestión del hombre*, 60.

Thus, the other refers to other human beings and also to the underlying culture that supports them. Hence, we have affirmed that life is the possibility of an encounter that we undertake. And, when we consent to life, we assume the others' reality as if it were our own, and nature as an extension of our ontological condition. It is precisely when we think about culture that we also think of what is generally referred to as nature. Nature becomes intelligible only in light of the values that make up a specific culture, since we can ideally imagine nature in itself, irrespective of any conceptualization that may be ascribed to it. Therefore, when we manipulate nature, we simultaneously manipulate the values that shape the universe of meaning of a specific culture.

Environmental Ethics and Responsibility

Luiz Paulo Rouanet

Introduction

When I first began to reflect on environmental issues, more specifically on environmental ethics,¹ climate change was not as evident as it is today. There were already many signals of it, but the discussion was restricted mainly to natural scientists. Even inside the scientific community there were some scholars who were skeptical about the accuracy and extent of what they called the “catastrophic” view.

Today I think that almost everyone agrees that we are facing a scenario of radical climate and environmental change. In this paper, I will take for granted the reality of climate change. I ask, firstly (I), what are the main changes and how far do they extend? (I cannot tackle issues on a global level, so I will limit myself to my own country, Brazil.) Secondly (II), I will evaluate the main ethical questions related to these environmental issues. Thirdly (III), I will discuss what institutions and people can do to have a positive impact on environmental issues today.

Diagnosis

Brazil is one of the NICs (Newly Industrialized Countries), countries of recent development which include Russia, India, and China, among others. In this condition, it aims to grow, even at the cost of increasing pollution. Still, the greenhouse gas emissions of developing countries are less significant than those of developed countries. The United States alone “produces about 25 percent of the global emissions.”² But this is, by now, well-known data. What are the main environmental issues facing Brazil today? According to the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), 4th Assessment Report, some of the main issues are:

- In northeast Brazil semi-arid and arid areas will suffer a decrease of water resources due to climate change (3.4, 3.7). Semi-arid vegetation is likely to be replaced by arid-land vegetation. In tropical forests, species extinctions are likely (13.4).

¹ Luiz Rouanet, “Ética ambiental e irreversibilidade,” *Anais do IV Simpósio Internacional Principia* (Florianópolis: UFSC, 2005), accessed August 2, 2013, http://www.oooci.ties.org/br/etica_ejustica/ambiental.pdf.

² C. Watson, J. Newman, S. Upton and P. Hackmann, “Can Transnational Sectoral Agreements Help Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions?,” *Round Table on Sustainable Development* (Paris: OECD, 2005), 382.

- Computed groundwater recharge will decrease dramatically by more than 70% in north-eastern Brazil (reference climate normal 1961-1990 and the 2050s) (3.4.2).

- Increases in rainfall in southeast Brazil have had impacts on land use, crop yields and have increased flood frequency and intensity (TS4.2).

- In the future, sea level rise, weather and climatic variability, and extremes modified by global warming are very likely to have impacts on mangroves (13.4.4).

- 38-45% of the plants in the Cerrado (Central Brazil savannas) are liable to extinction with a temperature increase of 1.7°C above pre-industrial levels (Table 4.1).³

Specifically, in the Amazon region:

- Highly unusual extreme weather events were reported, such as the Amazon drought in 2005 (TS4.2).

- Potential increases in drought conditions have been quantitatively projected during the critical growing phase, due to increasing summer temperatures and precipitation declines (4.4.5).

- In non-fragmented Amazon forests, direct effects of CO² on photosynthesis, as well as faster forest turnover rates, may have caused a substantial increase in density of lianas over the last 2 decades (1.3.5.5).

- Conversion of natural vegetation to agricultural land drives climate change by altering regional albedo and latent heat flux, causing additional summer warming in key regions in the Amazon region (4.4.1).

- A major loss of Amazon rainforest, with large losses of biodiversity with 2.0-3.0°C above pre-industrial levels (Table 4.1).

- Increases in temperature and decreases in soil water will lead to the replacement of tropical forest by savanna in eastern Amazonia (13.4).

I think that this data is sufficient to demonstrate the reality of climate change in Brazil.⁴ I would now like to discuss some of the possible causes, on a level of institutional and individual behavior, of this scenario.

On the institutional level, first, we have had, for some decades – and this attitude has increased in the last decade or so – policies that promote industrial and urban growth, with an emphasis on non-sustainable activities, such as automobile production, extraction of “pre-salt” oil (i.e., an oil which

³ WWF Global, “Climate Change Impact in Brazil,” accessed June 1, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20130204203520/https://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/ab/outcc/problems/rising_temperatures/hotspot_map/brazil.cfm. I am grateful to Rogerio Picoli for this information.

⁴ I am aware of some criticisms that have been made about the IPCC. According to some of these, the IPCC “exaggerates” the data, in order to receive more support for its research. I cannot assess these criticisms here. I am grateful to the students of the Post-Graduate program in Sustainable Development of the Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei (UFSJ) in Ouro Branco, who made me aware of some of these criticisms.

is deep within the ocean, and which has high monetary and environmental costs), construction of hydroelectric power stations (which have had a high environmental impact), and even the deviation of a major river (Sao Francisco) – a costly and risky project.

More sustainable projects, like wind stations and non-fossil fuels, ethanol made by sugar factories, etc., have been discontinued or not fostered. In sum, it is my opinion that the Brazilian government is not committed to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions or to other environment issues. Its industrial and urban policies are made in narrow terms, focusing more on immediate political results than on future generations' well-being. As is well-known, damages to the environment are not restricted to one country. Poor environmental policies have effects not only in neighboring countries, but on the entire world. Thus, this is not a question which can be treated exclusively on the internal level; it is really a global issue.

Regarding individual behavior, there is clearly a long way to go before people significantly modify their environmental attitudes. There have been some accomplishments in the last decade. A growing number of cities and citizens are more conscious of the necessity to recycle waste, to economize on water and electricity, and to adopt a more sustainable way of life in general. But this is still insufficient to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and deter environmental degradation. In my view, the public authorities are responsible for making sound environmental policies and to enforce, directly, by means of financial penalties or, indirectly, by means of tax incentives and by non-economic measures – more sustainable behavior by citizens.

Ethical Concerns

Environmental ethics is a recent field. I am not sure that it can be separated from bioethics but, even so, one can argue that there are a number of things that can be drawn from this term. I define 'environmental ethics' as: The set of ethical concerns which deals directly or indirectly with environmental issues such as: climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, floods, famine, and migration, among others.

That being said, as it is part of the global field of ethics, this definition is not sufficient, for there still remains the question: which particular ethical point of view are we talking about when we speak of environmental ethics? In other words, we cannot evade the question about our ethical position: Are we Aristotelians? Are we Kantians? Are we utilitarians? We must be precise, when we talk about environmental issues, about from which ethical point of view we are coming. As Alasdair MacIntyre has argued, our ethical position is the initial asset we need to have in order to enter moral debate.⁵ It is important to begin with an ethical position. Otherwise, we will be in-

⁵ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

clined to assume an eclectic position, and to end up falling prey to the influence of the last argument. So, even when we face a global threat such as climate change, famine, or flooding, etc., we cannot escape the issue of our initial ethical position. Here, then, we do not take a Kantian position, but move in the direction of a more contemporary ethics which can be related to some of the positions of discourse ethics, as sketched mainly by K-O Apel and J. Habermas.

Habermas' contributions to the environmental debate are, however, rather limited. In his book, *The Future of Human Nature* (2003), he deals with questions of bioethics like: the "good life," human dignity, species, and eugenics; there are no direct questions about our relations with nature, the environment, or climate change. However, we can find some interesting ideas about the character of contemporary ethics, from the perspective of being in a post-metaphysical age. We are no longer in the domain of normative ethics or subjective ethics. Ethical behavior is more than interpersonal or trans-subjective. In this sense, Habermas shows that the intersubjective character of language precedes the individual. In his words: "The *logos* of language embodies the power of the intersubjective, which precedes and grounds the subjectivity of the speakers."⁶ This means, in the present context, that the question of responsibility for the environment is more of a collective character than of an individual or subjective character.

Perhaps Apel's work, *Diskurs und Verantwortung*, can be more useful to our discussion. The concept of responsibility is more akin to a reflection on the future of human nature, related to environmental questions. Of course, when one talks of responsibility, it is Hans Jonas' 'Principle of Responsibility' that comes to mind. Indeed, Hans Jonas's *Das Prinzip Verantwortung* (*The Imperative of Responsibility*), published in 1979, was probably one of the first books which treated the problems of environmental ethics as major themes for philosophical reflection. It was preceded by Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, which, however, treated more specifically the issue of non-human animals, and not that of nature in general. There was also, on a level of (high) vulgarization, Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics* (1975, 1983). Still, Jonas's book was far more systematic than the other works, and gave to environmental ethics a solid philosophical status.

The first words of the German Preface of *The Imperative of Responsibility* go straight to the core of our present concerns: "The finally unleashed Prometheus, to whom science gives unprecedented powers and the economy gives a restless drive, calls for an ethics that, by means of a voluntary restraint, will keep his power from becoming disastrous for human beings."⁷ For the first time in history, people have the power to destroy not only other

⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature* (London: Polity Press, 2003), 11.

⁷ Hans Jonas, *O princípio responsabilidade* (Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto, 2006), 21. The original German reads: "Der endgültig entfesselte Prometheus, dem die Wissenschaft nie gekannte Kräfte und die Wirtschaft den rastlosen Antrieb gibt, ruft nach einer Ethik, die durch freiwillige Zügel seine Macht davor zurückhält, dem Menschen zum Unheil zu werden."

people, but the entire planet. And Jonas was not referring only to nuclear weapons, but to the degradation of nature caused by the actions of mankind. It is more comprehensive than the egoistic concern with our own species, or our own generation: the concern is now with future generations, other species, and the future of life on Earth. Thus, we can consider Jonas's book as paradigmatic concerning environmental ethics. To adapt Robert Nozick's remark: environmental ethicists must either work within Hans Jonas' theory or explain why not.⁸

Although the question of irreversibility is still under consideration, I prefer now to work with 'the imperative of responsibility,' which includes hope and fear. There are some things that are truly irreversible, such as the extinction of species, certain radical transformations of nature due to climate change, and so on. The longer we delay taking into account the reality of climate change, the higher the threats facing some species, including human, and both flora and fauna alike. Even so, I think that it is never too late to change our habits, as individuals and institutions, and some of the diversity of nature can still be saved. The imperative or principle of responsibility both differentiates itself from the principles of hope and of fear, and yet includes both. Jonas says that, "against the principle of hope, we oppose the principle of responsibility, and not the principle of fear."⁹ But, he continues, "fear is as much a part of responsibility as hope."¹⁰ What matters is to cultivate in us, out of reason and moral responsibility, a fear which, as far removed from fear as from hope, is nothing other than the appropriate emotional response to the real threat to life on earth. Regarding the relation between man and nature, Jonas is very adamant: "The conquest of nature and human civilization go hand in hand."¹¹

But at this point in time, we may argue, this degradation has increased exponentially.¹² The thesis of Jonas is that traditional ethics can no longer respond adequately to the development of technology and to the means of destruction which are within the reach of man: "Modern technology has introduced actions of such magnitude, with such new objects and consequences, that the framework of earlier ethics can no longer contain them"¹³

⁸ The original sentence is "Political philosophers now must either work within Rawls' theory or explain why not." See Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 183.

⁹ Jonas, *O princípio responsabilidade*, 351. The original German reads: "Dem Prinzip Hoffnung stellen wir das Prinzip Verantwortung gegenüber, nicht das Prinzip Furcht."

¹⁰ Jonas, *O princípio responsabilidade*, 351. The original German reads: "Wohl aber gehört die Furcht zur Verantwortung so gut wie die Hoffnung."

¹¹ Jonas, *O princípio responsabilidade*, 32. The original German reads: "Die ergewaltigung der Natur und die Zivilisierung seiner selbst gehen Hand in Hand."

¹² Donella Meadows, Jorgen Randers and Dennis Meadows, *Los límites del crecimiento (Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update)*, trans. Sergio Pawlowski (Buenos Aires: Aguilar, 2012), 53 *et passim*.

¹³ Jonas, *O princípio responsabilidade*, 39. The original German reads: "Die moderne Technik hat Handlungen von so neuer Größenordnung, mit so neuartigen Objekten und

– and he adds that “Nature as a human responsibility is certainly a novelty [*novum*] which must be thought about in ethical theory.”¹⁴ The questions of the irreversibility, the global dimension of climate change, the future, not only of humanity but of many species, and the point of view of future generations – all point to the necessity of a new ethics. In Jonas’s words:

No previous ethics has had to consider the global condition of human life and the distant future, including the survival, of the species. The fact that this is now an issue demands, in short, a new conception of rights and duties, for which no previous ethics and metaphysics can offer even the principles, still less a full doctrine.

I would, however, like to say something about Kantian ethics which, in my view, can offer a basis for reflection on environmental issues. In particular, I refer to the following formulation of Kant’s Categorical Imperative: “Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature.”¹⁵ In my view, this formulation can be used to think, more generally, about the environmental issues with which we are presently confronted.

Still, there remains the above-mentioned question, namely that people cannot be forced to act autonomously, i.e., morally, otherwise their actions would not be genuinely autonomous. As Habermas says: “deontological theories after Kant may be very good at explaining how to ground and apply moral norms, but they still are unable to answer the question of why we should be moral *at all*.”¹⁶ The stakes are so high in the current environmental debate that it is a matter of global survival. It is not a matter of choice, it is a duty concerning ourselves, future generations, and the future of other forms of life on our planet. We cannot be indifferent to that. There are some critical considerations that must be made concerning Hans Jonas’s work, and I think that, here, Apel is the better guide. In his *Diskurs und Verantwortung*, he agrees with Jonas concerning the centrality of environmental issues to philosophical reflection today. According to Apel,

The No. 1 world problem of our time is not simply to find a solution to the domestic and international social conflicts between human beings; it consists rather in finding, at the same time, along with the so-

so neuartigen Folgen eingeführt, daß der Rahmen früherer Ethik sie nicht mehr fassen kann.”

¹⁴ Jonas, *O principio responsabilidade*, 39. The original German reads: “Die Natur als eine menschliche Verantwortlichkeit ist sicher ein Novum, über das ethische Theorie nachsinnen muß.”

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, in *Werkausgabe*, XII Banden, Bd. VII (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1977), BA 52.

¹⁶ Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature*, 4.

lution of social conflicts, a solution, so to speak, of the new conflict between humanity as a whole and nature.¹⁷

That being said, Apel points to a kind of conservatism in Jonas's position. He distinguishes between two kinds of conservatism: there are, following E. Eppler (1981), the "Wertkonservativen" (i.e., the "value conservative persons") and there are the "Strukturkonservativen" (i.e., the "structure conservative persons"). Jonas's would be a conservatism of the first kind, but not of the second.¹⁸ If I fully understand Apel's criticism here, I tend to agree with him. We cannot be against technology as a formal and abstract entity, but only against its utilization against the interests both of mankind and of life on Earth. Technology, itself, is a neutral tool. It can be used both to destroy and preserve the biosphere. So, Jonas would be conservative in a sense that I could not agree with, if he spoke against technology as such. I am not sure that he truly defends that position, but I will here follow Apel, for the sake of argument.

It is interesting to note, in the contemporary debate on climate change, that some scientists also defend some sort of proactive intervention in nature. On their view, we cannot simply wait, passively, while the predictable consequences of climate change, such as the elevation of ocean temperature, the dissolution of coral reefs, the disappearance of marine species, occur (or not). There must be more research done that support interventions, on a local and regional scale, to try to save species and biological environments, instead of waiting for global measures that may be too late, or never, to be implemented. Rau, McLeod, and Hoegh-Guldberg,¹⁹ for instance, say: "it is unwise to assume that we will be able to stabilize atmospheric CO₂ at levels necessary to reduce or prevent ongoing damage to marine ecosystems."²⁰ They further add: "Once CO₂-induced temperature and acid tolerance thresholds for a given species are crossed, there can be no quick return to tolerable conditions, barring active environmental intervention. In the case of ocean chemistry, the time frame for a return to previous conditions is measured in many thousands of years."²¹

¹⁷ Karl-Otto Apel, *Diskurs und Verantwortung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990), 133. The original German reads: "Das Weltproblem Nr. 1 unserer Zeit besteht nicht einfach nur darin, eine Lösung der innerstaatlichen und zwischenstaatlichen sozialen Konflikte zwischen den Menschen zu finden; es besteht eher darin, mit der Lösung der sozialen Konflikte zugleich eine Lösung, sozusagen, des neuartigen Konfliktes zwischen den Menschen insgesamt und der Natur zu finden."

¹⁸ Apel, *Diskurs und Verantwortung*, 186-187.

¹⁹ I wish to thank Bárbara Dutra, a student of the Post-Graduate Program in Sustainable Development at the UFSJ in Ouro Branco, who kindly alerted me to these facts.

²⁰ Greg H. Rau, Elizabeth L. McLeod and Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, "The Need for New Ocean Conservation Strategies in a High-Carbon Dioxide World," *Nature Climate Change*, *Nature* 2, no. 10 (2012): 720-724.

²¹ Rau, McLeod, and Hoegh-Guldberg, "The Need for New Ocean Conservation Strategies: For some data regarding past eras and the relation between global warming and climate change in the ocean, see B. Hönisch et al., "The Geological Record of Ocean

The question of irreversibility must be reframed. The irreversibility can be non-absolute, but it is still a threat. Even if the degradation can eventually be reversed, it can be irreversible for the present and the next generations. Returning to Apel, it must be said, also, that he seems, initially, still committed to an ethic that is exclusively human. The following quote is an illustration of this view:

It is not enough...for us to declare the “permanence of an authentic human life on Earth” or the “continuation of mankind on Earth” as (quasi-ontological) objectives of an ethics of responsibility. We also have to do justice to *claims of justice* – to effective and potentially expected *claims of justice* of all human beings living now and in the future.²²

On the contrary, today we face a reality, which is the reality of global climate change, which affects both the human species and all the other species on the planet, and I think that Jonas is right in not considering the present models of ethics as sufficient to deal with the present challenges which threaten life on Earth as a whole. In this sense, it must be considered to be not only in the interest of the present and future generations of human beings, but also in the interest of those who cannot speak on their own behalf, as Apel also recognizes. In short, Apel admits, with Jonas, that we have arrived at an impasse regarding the “ultimate foundation” of ethics:

Here we have reached the point where modern philosophy has no way out concerning the problem of ultimate foundation. And I believe, in agreement with Hans Jonas, that the paradox of this situation lies in the following fact: the same rational-scientific thinking that makes technology possible and, thus, represents the external challenge for an ethics of responsibility – the same thinking, as a value-free objectification of the world, seems to prove that a rational foundation of ethical norms is impossible.²³

Apel takes Jonas’s call for a new ethics seriously, and he thinks that “discourse ethics” can provide a solution. In his words, “in serious thought

Acidification,” *Science* 335, no. 6072 (Mar 2, 2012): 1058-63. I am grateful, again, to Bárbara Dutra for this reference.

²² Apel, *Diskurs und Verantwortung*, 196.

²³ Apel, *Diskurs und Verantwortung*, 200. The original German reads: “Wir haben hier den Punkt der Ausweglosigkeit der modernen Philosophie angesichts des Problems der Letztbegründung erreicht. Und ich glaube, in Übereinstimmung mit Hans Jonas feststellen zu können, daß die Paradoxie dieser Situation in dem folgenden Umstand liegt: Dasselbe wissenschaftlich-rationale Denken, das die Technik ermöglicht und so die äußere Herausforderung für eine Verantwortungsethik darstellt, – dasselbe Denken scheint als wertfreie Vergegenständlichung der Welt eine rationale Begründung ethischer Normen als unmöglich zu erweisen.” [N.B. The German text throughout this essay has been provided by the Editor.]

we already recognize a *discourse ethics or responsibility ethics*, in the sense of the universalized *reciprocity of a potentially unlimited community of communication*.²⁴ And finally, he also recognizes that this responsibility also extends to “the possible problems of those that are not capable of speech.”²⁵ So, we can reasonably assume that Apel agrees with Jonas in his major thesis, and that he thinks that discourse ethics can provide the ethical alternative called for by Jonas.

What Can We Do?

Now that we know that environmental degradation is real and that climate change is occurring, we must face the problem. There is, indeed, the problem of irreversibility. Have we reached “the point of no return”? It is probably too late for many species or kinds of vegetation, but we cannot take it to be true of everything. If we do so, then fear will win, and hope will die. The principle of responsibility, as we have seen, stands between the two, or goes further. On one hand, there is the reality of environmental degradation, the extinction of species and of vegetation, the loss of landscapes like Kilimanjaro’s “eternal snow,” the melting of the polar shelf, and so on. But, on the other hand, there are many things that we can do and a number of species which can be saved, including our own.

Here, I put aside the question of irreversibility, preferring to focus, instead, on the Principle of Responsibility. John Rawls wrote that “Political philosophy is realistically utopian when it extends what are ordinarily thought of as the limits of practical political philosophy.”²⁶ I think that environmental ethics is also a kind of political philosophy. It concerns the future not only of mankind, but of life as we now understand it, including other species and vegetation.

Of course, much work has been done since 1979, when Hans Jonas first published his book in Germany. The task, now, is to review this material, including Apel’s contributions as I have attempted to do above, in order to update our notion of responsibility. Moreover, we must put it together to reflect upon our present world, its real condition, and what we can do for it. There are now a number of organizations around the world preoccupied with saving species, climate change and its consequences, and the non-sustainable ways of life of people and countries. One of the pioneers was Greenpeace, but there are others.

Participation in traditional politics, by means of ‘Green’ political parties, has its limits. Politics, as traditionally understood, is an art of negotiation, and it is difficult, for one thing, to ‘trade’ when one is concerned with

²⁴ Karl-Otto Apel, *Ética e responsabilidade*, trans. Jorge Telles Menezes (Lisboa: Instituto Piaget, 2007), 149.

²⁵ Apel, *Ética e responsabilidade*, 150.

²⁶ John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 6.

the future of life on the planet. There is now a project in Brazil that advocates for “zero deforestation,”²⁷ and there is a public petition that aims to collect 1.4 million signatures, with the goal of making deforestation illegal. The pre-salt oil exploration in Brazil is listed as one of the “world’s biggest dirty energy projects”;²⁸ it occupies the ninth position in this ranking, out of 14. It combines high monetary investment, high technical risk, and a huge emission of greenhouse gases. It has been implemented by the government mostly for political reasons. Of course, it is a rather controversial issue, and we can here only express our concern. If we speak of “possible scenarios,” then this seems a very bad one.

Conclusion

Earlier, I spoke of irreversibility, when referring to problems related to the environment. Now, I prefer to speak in terms of responsibility. It is an open question whether we can adopt the Principle of Responsibility as first formulated by Hans Jonas, or whether we must take into account the many developments since then, both by commentators and by other authors, concerning the notion of responsibility. No doubt, we must do both: move away from Jonas’ Principle of Responsibility but also update our notion of responsibility. This will be a task for other papers and contributions.

Certainly, this kind of research cannot be carried out alone. More than ever, research in the field of philosophy, and specifically in environmental ethics, is multi- and interdisciplinary. Philosophy can give a general account of the main questions involved in the relation between man and nature, but it must be accompanied by other research fields, such as: history, law, archeology, political science, biology, astronomy, literature, and many others. Only in this way can philosophy fulfill its universal mission, that is, to be the “friend of wisdom.” The acknowledgement of its limitations gives to it the necessary humility that favors the “craving for knowledge.”

²⁷ See “Chega de desmatamento no Brasil,” accessed April 24, 2013, <https://web.archive.org/web/20130227061631/http://desmatamentozero.org.br/>; <http://www.greenpeace.org/brasil>.

²⁸ Greenpeace, *Point of No Return: The Massive Climate Threats We Must Avoid* (2013), accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-sweden-stateless/2019/01/86be17a6-86be17a6-pointofnoreturnrapport2013.pdf>.

Indigenous Climate Knowledge in Africa and the Need for Global Climate Justice

Workineh Kelbessa

Introduction

Climate change is one of the most urgent problems humanity is facing today. Various studies have shown that it is present in different parts of the world.¹ The Third² and Fourth³ Assessment Reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report that the Earth has shown clear signs of warming over the past century. Camilla Toulmin is of the opinion that the latest report by the IPCC did not sufficiently reflect the seriousness of global warming.

Global emissions of greenhouse gases are rising ever more rapidly, and considerably faster than in the models used by the IPCC. The ice

¹ See Robin Attfield, *The Ethics of the Global Environment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Louis P. Pojman, *Global Environmental Ethics* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000); Dale Jamieson, "Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming," in *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, eds. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 371-379; Stephen M. Gardiner, "Ethics and Global Climate Change," *Ethics* 114 (2004): 555-600; Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers: How Man is Changing the Climate and What it Means for Life on Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2005); Camilla Toulmin, *Climate Change in Africa* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2009); Holmes Rolston III, *A New Environmental Ethics: The Next Millennium for Life on Earth* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012); Salvatore Di Falco, Marcella Veronesi and Mahmud Yesuf, "Does Adaptation to Climate Change Provide Food Security? A Micro Perspective from Ethiopia." *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (2011): 1-18; Momodou Njie, Bernard E. Gomez, Molly E. Hellmuth, John M. Callaway, Bubu P. Jallow and Peter Droogers, "Making Economic Sense of Adaptation in Upland Cereal Production Systems in the Gambia," in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary, James Adejuwon, Vicente Barros, Ian Buton, Jvoti Kulkarni and Rodel Lasco (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008), 131-146; Pius Yanda et al., "Climate, Malaria and Cholera in the Lake Victoria Region: Adapting to Changing Risks," in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary, James Adejuwon, Vicente Barros, Ian Buton, Jvoti Kulkarni and Rodel Lasco (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008), 109-130.

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2001: Synthesis Report. A Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, eds. R. T. Watson and the Core Writing Team (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

³ IPCC, "Summary for Policymakers," in *Climate Change 2007: Climate Change impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: Working Group II Contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report, 2007*, accessed April 12, 2007, <http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM6avr07.pdf>.

at the Poles has been melting much faster than expected, with the Arctic ice cap shrinking to its smallest size in the summers of 2007 and 2008. Temperatures and sea levels have been rising at the top end of the model predictions, suggesting that the latest report by the IPCC, issued in 2007, presents a conservative interpretation of our current and likely future situation.⁴

The earth's surface is warming up due to human activities and natural causes. According to Louis Pojman, "[w]hile natural processes, especially volcanic eruptions like that of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991, account for some of the increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, a great deal of it is caused by human activities."⁵

Africa contributes less than 4% to global emissions of GHGs, 75% of which are from land use changes (e.g., deforestation, land degradation). Although Africa's contribution to climate change is insignificant, it has been affected by recurrent droughts, floods, and storms. Its people are especially vulnerable to climate change impacts, as they lack the capacity to control the adverse effects of climate change. They are in a very difficult situation to cope with increasing climatic uncertainty and greater rainfall fluctuations. Accordingly, studies have shown that Africa is already facing harsh weather conditions (e.g., high average temperatures, scarce and erratic rainfall) in some places. Local temperatures get warmer in various parts of the continent. The Sahel has experienced decline in annual rainfall levels over the course of the last century.⁶

Annual rainfall during the period 1931-60 was between 20% and 40% greater than during the most recent three decades.⁷ There was also a dramatic decline in average rainfall conditions in all West African drylands for the period 1960-1990.⁸ About 40% to 60% of West Africa's major river systems have dropped since the early 1970s.⁹ Most parts of Southern Africa were also hit by drought, with five recent major episodes, in 1980-1983,

⁴ Toulmin, *Climate Change in Africa*, 145.

⁵ Pojman, *Global Environmental Ethics*, 255-256.

⁶ See Glantz, 1987; Tarhule and Woo, 1998; and Ozer, 2003, cited in Daniel D. Dabi, Anthony O. Nyong, Adebawale A. Adepetu and Vincent I. Ihemegbulem, "Past, Present and Future Adaptation by Rural Households of Northern Nigeria," in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary, James Adejuwon, Vicente Barros, Ian Buton, Jvoti Kulkarni and Rodel Lasco (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008), 8.

⁷ M. Hulme, D. Conway, P. M. Kelly, S. Subak and T.E. Downing, "The Impacts of Climate Change on Africa," Working Paper for the Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment (1995), 6.

⁸ M. Put, J. Verhagen, E. Veldhuizen and P. Jellema, "Climate Change in Dryland West Africa," in *The Impacts of Climate Change on Drylands: With a Focus on West Africa*, eds. A. J. Dietz et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 27-31, at 27.

⁹ Niasse, cited in J. C. Nkomo, A. O. Nyong and K. Kulindwa, "The Impact of Climate Change in Africa, Final Draft Submitted to The Stern Review on The Economics of Climate Change" (2006), 15, accessed July 4, 2012, http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/Chapter_5_The_Impacts_of_Climate_Change_in_Africa-5.pdf.

1987-1988, 1991-1992, 1994-1995, 1997-1998, and 2002.¹⁰ While the eastern African weather station records located close to the coast and major inland lakes showed decreasing temperatures,¹¹ the Guinea coast has also experienced increases in the annual rainfall during the last 30 years.¹²

In short, the overall impact of climate change on Africa is severe. As I have described elsewhere, Africa has been suffering from rising temperatures and evaporation, widespread water stress, increased frequency and severity of droughts and floods, crop loss, rising sea levels, decline in biodiversity, high level of disease, and conflicts over access to land and water.¹³ Although some scholars have tried to study the seriousness of this problem, no African philosopher has yet done a comprehensive study of climate change in general and indigenous climate management in particular. Similarly, climate scientists have not paid sufficient attention to indigenous climate knowledge and climate ethics.

In this paper, I will examine the contribution of African indigenous climate knowledge to the solution of problems related to climate change. Although the diversity to be found within Africa's landmass and its enormous size make generalizations difficult, I will examine some important common features and indigenous mitigation and adaptation strategies. Part One looks into how some African peasant farmers and pastoralists perceive climate change and respond to it. It will show Africa's contribution to environmental management, astronomy, and the like. Part Two explores the ethical dimensions of climate change, and the need for global climate justice. Finally, I would offer concluding remarks.

People's Perceptions of Climate Change and Indigenous Climate Management

Peasant farmers in different parts of Africa are familiar with climate change and its negative impacts. They have been observing the devastating impacts of climate change on their livelihood. For instance, farmers in the Eastern Saloum and other parts of Africa have clear opinions on climate changes and how they can affect livelihood.¹⁴ Peasant farmers in some parts

¹⁰ R. Basher and S. Briceño, "Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa," in *Climate Change and Africa*, ed. Pak Sum Low (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 271-283, at 272.

¹¹ See the work of King'uyu et al., cited in Susan Parnell and Ruwani Walawege, "Sub-Saharan African Urbanisation and Global Environmental Change," *Global Environmental Change XXX* (2011): 1-9, at 2.

¹² See the work of Nicholson et al., cited in Susan Parnell and Ruwani Walawege, "Sub-Saharan African Urbanisation and Global Environmental Change," *Global Environmental Change XXX* (2011): 2.

¹³ Workineh Kelbessa, "Climate Change Impacts and Planning in Africa," in *Meltdown: Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Other Catastrophes: Fears and Concerns for the Future*, ed. Kathryn Gow (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009), 247-266.

¹⁴ See the work of D. Thomas et al., cited in Ole Mertz, Cheikh Mbow, Anette Reenberg and Awa Diouf, "Farmers' Perceptions of Climate Change and Agricultural

of Tunisia and Egypt perceive climate change as a major risk to agricultural production.¹⁵ Similarly, the Oromo peasant farmers and pastoralists in Ethiopia have experienced the negative consequences of climate change.¹⁶ Different socio-demographic and environmental factors affect peasant farmers' perception of climate change.

Others consider weather as a divine phenomenon on which humans have no control.¹⁷ Climate change is attributed to various spiritual and social causes. So, some peasant farmers and pastoralists have appealed to supernatural forces, and do very little to address problems related to climate change. However, like other indigenous people in the world, many African peasant farmers and pastoralists have designed various adaptation measures to withstand short-term cyclical droughts and long-term temperature and precipitation changes. This shows that "people in the global South are not mere suffering victims, but have agency and autonomy, and are actively addressing this crisis every day."¹⁸

African peasant farmers and pastoralists have adopted indigenous coping strategies and tactics including livelihood diversification (diversification of herds and crops); reliance on forest products; cultivation of heat-and drought-resistant crops, early maturing crops, and high yield varieties; adoption of hardy varieties of crops; reducing or constraining the cultivation of high water consuming crops; multiple cropping, relay cropping (planting several crops in succession on the same plot to make use of different parts of the growing season), and intercropping; crop selection and plot dispersal; replanting when crops are lost; relocating farms; selective keeping of livestock in areas where rainfall declined; settlement and resettlement activities; migration; changing planting dates and irrigation; using local plants to control pests; a variety of strategies for water use and storage; installing and maintaining wells and water pumps; food storage; participation in nonfarm activities; moving away from dependency on arable farming into petty trade of assorted items including salt, pepper, dried fish, groundnuts, and okra; planting mangroves and resilient shrubs and grasses along the beach to form

Adaptation Strategies in Rural Sahel," *Environmental Management* 43 (2009): 804-816, at 812.

¹⁵ Raoudha Mougou et al., "Adapting Dryland and Irrigated Cereal Farming to Climate Change in Tunisia and Egypt," in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary, James Adejuwon, Vicente Barros, Ian Buton, Jvoti Kulkarni and Rodel Lasco (London and Sterling, VA.: Earthscan, 2008), 181-195, at 192.

¹⁶ Workineh Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics: A Study of the Indigenous Oromo Environmental Ethic and Modern Issues of Environment and Development* (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2011).

¹⁷ See the work of L.T. Ajibade and O. O. Shokemi, cited in Mertz et al., "Farmers' Perceptions," 814.

¹⁸ J. Timmons Roberts, "The International Dimension of Climate Justice and the Need for International Adaptation Funding," *Environmental Justice* 2, no. 4 (2009): 185-190, at 186.

a green barrier to flooding; using wild fruits and vegetables in animal feed; and the like.¹⁹

As I have stated elsewhere, Ethiopian peasant farmers and pastoralists have adopted the strategy of spreading risks of loss associated with changes in climate across location, time, and the diversity of materials they use.

They grow the same landrace in different places. In other words, they enhance biodiversity in diverse geographical areas. In so doing, they spread their risks across locations. If something fails in one location, it will do well in another. They also spread risks across seasons. When a landrace does not work in one season, they go to the local market and exchange it with the variety that will grow well on their own location. The former one may grow well in other places in a more appropriate planting season. This exchange has created a system which has allowed the landrace to be grown on a wide range of locations.²⁰

The strategy of spreading risks enables the people to reduce the risk of complete crop failure, as climate events affect different crops differently at different locations and times. After examining agricultural households across 11 countries in Africa, Rashid Hassan and Charles Nhemachena have also reported that farmers perceived the following adaptation strategies as appropriate:

crop diversification; using different crop varieties; varying the planting and harvesting dates; increasing the use of irrigation; increasing the use of water and soil conservation techniques, shading and shelter; shortening the length of the growing season; and diversifying from farming to non-farming activities.²¹

Similarly, households in Eastern Saloum, Senegal, mentioned the following adaption measures to counter perceived climate impacts on agricultural production: “new crops or crop varieties (mostly vegetables); keeping animals in stables; replacing draught horses with cattle, which are cheaper

¹⁹ A. Nyong, F. Adesina and B. Osman Elasha, “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge in “Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies in the African Sahel,” *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 12 (2007): 787-797, at 791; Dabi et al., “Past, Present and Future Adaptation,” 154; James Oladipo Adejuwon, Theophilus Odeyemi Odekunle and Mary Omoluke Omotayo, “Using Seasonal Weather Forecasts for Adapting Food Production to Climate Variability and Climate Change in Nigeria,” in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary et al. (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008), 163-180, at 166-167; Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 131-143.

²⁰ Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 140-141.

²¹ Rashid Hassan and Charles Nhemachena, “Determinants of African Farmers’ Strategies for Adapting to Climate Change: Multinomial Choice Analysis,” *African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics* 2, no. 1 (2008): 83-104, at 85.

to feed; and using manure.”²² In Mali, circular migration of women and children is common against drought.²³ They stay with their relatives in order to minimize the negative impacts of drought on households. Communities in the Sahel region have combined mitigation and adaptation strategies to deal with droughts.²⁴ Local farmers in the Sahel have used zero tilling practices in cultivation, mulching, and the like to conserve carbon in soils.²⁵ “Natural mulches moderate soil temperatures and extremes, suppress diseases and harmful pests, and conserve soil moisture.”²⁶ The use of organic farming also reduces GHG emissions. Similarly, agroforestry plays an important role in carbon sequestration.²⁷ Pastoralists use the following adaptation strategies: using emergency fodder in times of drought, multi-species composition of herds that can withstand climate extremes, culling of weak livestock for consumption during periods of drought, and changing cattle to sheep and goats during drought periods.²⁸

Another coping strategy in the Limpopo basin in South Africa is the *mafisa* system where the livestock owners loan cattle to poorer households and relatives from which the latter benefit by using the animals’ labour and milk, and receiving payment at the end of the lease while taking care of the cattle. This system enabled livestock owners to spatially diversify the risk from variable water supplies, pasture productivity and disease, and reduced grazing pressures.²⁹ However, social and economic changes in the 20th century have led to the suspension of the *mafisa* system in the Limpopo basin and, thereby, aggravated the vulnerability of communities to drought and other stresses.³⁰ Moreover, people of the handheld at the Limpopo river basin use meat from wild animals, edible insects, honey, roots, melons, seeds, and wild fruits in times of drought.³¹

Furthermore, African peasant farmers rely on indigenous forecasting and early warning systems to reduce their vulnerability to climate hazards,

²² Mertz et al., “Farmers’ Perceptions,” 810.

²³ D. Rain, *Eaters of the Dry Season: Circular Labour Migration in West African Sahel* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999).

²⁴ Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 788.

²⁵ See the work of Schafer and of Osunade, cited in Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 793.

²⁶ Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 792.

²⁷ Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 793.

²⁸ See the work of Oba, cited in Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 794; see also Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 131-136.

²⁹ See the work of Tlou, cited in Opha Pauline Dube and Mogodisheng B. M. Sekhwela, “Indigenous Knowledge, Institutions and Practices for Coping with Variable Climate in the Limpopo Basin of Botswana,” in *Climate Change and Adaptation*, eds. Neil Leary et al. (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008), 71-89, at 75.

³⁰ Dube and Sekhwela, “Indigenous Knowledge, Institutions and Practices,” 75.

³¹ See the work of Campbell, cited in Dube and Sekhwela, “Indigenous Knowledge, Institutions and Practices,” 76.

and to predict and cope with droughts and other environmental disasters.³² Among others, farmers in the Sahel have developed intricate systems of weather prediction, interpretation, and management.³³ Indigenous “seasonal forecasting” methods were developed based on the observations of birds, animals, and plants. For instance, the Oromo people, the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, use the movement and voice/sounds of animals and the flourishing of different trees to anticipate the behavior of the natural environment and the weather conditions.³⁴ The movement and sound of the turtledove indicates the coming of rain. Martial De Salviac said that the natives use it as a barometer. He writes,

[t]he turtledove of the rain makes a high and low sound, a plaintive tremolo. At the approach of the rain, its sound precipitates, its accents vibrate stronger. It serves as the barometer for the natives, who, deprived of the instruments provided by our discoveries, follow indications of nature that mother Providence has put at their disposal.³⁵

Similarly, as I have described elsewhere, my interviewees in Ambo, western Ethiopia, stated that the roar of *ummo* (emu-like (flying) birds (with red marks on the neck) that always move in twos) and *Aa'ee* (a kind of bird) heralds the coming of the rain.³⁶ *Ummo* and *Aa'ee* will feed on earth worms and insects, thanks to the rain. The *moroc* or honeybird serves as the discoverer of honey. Different honey bees make honey in hives, in the hollows of trees, and in holes underground. Father Lobo reports that the *moroc* bird indicates the location of a hole of bees.³⁷ On the other hand, peasant farmers use the physical appearance and conditions of animals as important indications of upcoming local weather. My Oromo informants in my previous study expressed their belief as follows:

[w]hen a cow continuously moos by refusing to go out and graze, the dry season is believed to come soon....When the cow moos during milking time, it is believed to herald the coming of the dry season. When domestic animals refuse to leave the river and sleep there after

³² See the work of Ajibade and Shokemi, cited in Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 793; Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 95-97.

³³ Nyong et al., “The Value of Indigenous Knowledge,” 793.

³⁴ For details, see Workineh Kelbessa, *Traditional Oromo Attitudes towards the Environment: An Argument for Environmentally Sound Development*, OSSREA Social Science Research Report Series, no. 19 (Addis Ababa: Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, 2001), 69-70.

³⁵ Martial De Salviac, *An Ancient People in the State of Menelik. The Oromo: Great African Nation*, trans. Ayalew Kanno (Finfinnee: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, 2008 [2005]), 136.

³⁶ Kelbessa, *Traditional Oromo Attitudes towards the Environment*.

³⁷ See Salviac, *The Oromo*, 137.

drinking the water, there will be no rain in the future. Also, when a cow defecates while sleeping, it heralds the dry season.³⁸

The Oromo also think that forests can influence the weather. Forests protect the soil and contribute to the climate that is essential for both human beings and the natural environment. As I have described elsewhere, my interviewees know the link between local biological resources and climate change.³⁹ They maintain that trees help retain moisture by sheltering the land from the sun and the wind; they also state that planting trees has influenced the weather of their locality. Widespread deforestation could lead to changes in atmospheric heat and rainfall patterns. They recounted that the amount and seasons of rainfall have decreased because of the destruction of forests and natural causes such as drought. Aneesa Kassam and Gematchu Megerssa also report that the Boran Oromo in south Ethiopia know that the depletion of trees will result in climatic change and the overheating of the atmosphere.⁴⁰ They are aware that soil erosion and desertification are the result of overgrazing, overcultivation, and deforestation. "They recognize that forested zones attract rain clouds and that they play an important role in the cooling of the environment."⁴¹ Although scientific evidence on the local effect of forest cover on rainfall is inconclusive, J. T. Winpenny expressed a similar view: "On a larger scale, forests contribute to the cycle of rainfall and transportation. It is estimated that 50% of the rainfall in Amazonia has its source in the evapo-transpiration of the trees themselves."⁴² Forests can absorb carbon dioxide and "regulate local and global weather patterns by storing and releasing moisture."⁴³ In other words, forests provide sinks for atmospheric carbon dioxide. However, when forests die because of temperatures and shifts in rainfall, they will "release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere."

Like the Oromo, some indigenous people in Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia have developed their own prediction schemes based on the observation of the behavior of the surrounding world. They commonly use the following methods as indicators of local climate change: the appearance of plants, flowering density of certain trees, immature dropping of fruits by certain tree species, dripping of water from the leaves of some trees before the onset of the rains, higher than normal flowering density of certain trees,

³⁸ Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 95.

³⁹ Kelbessa, *Traditional Oromo Attitudes towards the Environment*; Kelbessa, "Climate Change Impacts and Planning in Africa"; Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*.

⁴⁰ Aneesa Kassam and Gematchu Megerssa, "Aloof Alollaa: The Inside and the Outside: Boran Oromo Environmental Law and Methods of Conservation," in *A River of Blessings: Essays in Honour of Paul Baxter*, ed. David Brokensha (Syracuse, NY: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1994), 85-98, at 90.

⁴¹ Kassam and Megerssa, "Aloof Alollaa," 90.

⁴² J. T. Winpenny, *Values for Environment* (ODI; London: HMSO, 1991), 18.

⁴³ Toulmin, *Climate Change in Africa*, 71.

higher than normal ambient temperatures, wind direction, appearance of insects, appearance of certain animals, mists and rumbling sounds in mountains and hills, birth of babies (the birth of many baby girls as indication of good rains), and the appearance of the moon.⁴⁴

Additionally, some Africans employ indigenous technology and alternative, affordable, and sustainable building materials such as bamboo to build houses. According to Adebayo A. Ogungbure, a house built of bamboo, which is light, flexible, versatile, durable, and sustainable, can “help to cushion the effect of climate change.”⁴⁵ Different indigenous communities also use clay pots to store and cool drinking water in a hot climate.

There is also evidence that Africans have contributed to astronomy. In 1978, two American scientists, B. M. Lynch and L. H. Robbins of Michigan State University, “uncovered an astronomical observatory” on the edge of Lake Turkana in Kenya, which was constructed 300 years before Christ. “It was the ruins of an African Stonehenge, with huge pillars of basalt like the stumps of petrified trees lying at angles in the ground.”⁴⁶ This place was given the name Namoratunga, which is translated as “the stone people” in the Turkana language. There were 19 huge stone pillars at Namoratunga that were arranged in rows. According to Asfaw Beyene, “[t]he configuration of the basalts represented the alignment of the stars and constellations known as Urjii Dhaha to Oromos [people in Ethiopia], used to compute accurate calendar [sic].”⁴⁷ Lynch and Robbins also confirmed that there was a correlation between each stone and a star, with the exception of one stone that was too small. Different stone pillars served as sighting points. According to these scientists, this evidence

attests to the complexity of pre-historic cultural developments in sub-Saharan Africa. It strongly suggests that an accurate and complex calendar system based on astronomical reckoning was developed by the first millennium BC in eastern Africa.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ The Pilot Project Research Team (PPRT), “Promotion and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge in Seasonal Climate Forecasts: Interim Report prepared for Drought Monitoring Centre, Harare, Zimbabwe” (Tanzania: Sokoine University of Agriculture, 2002), 15-16, accessed September 23, 2006, <http://www.dmc.co.zw/research/PilotProjects/PromotionAndIntegrationOfIndigenousKnowledgeInSeasona.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Adebayo A. Ogungbure, “The Possibilities of Technological Development in Africa: An Evaluation of the Role of Culture,” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 4, no. 3 (2011): 86-100, at 96.

⁴⁶ Ivan van Sertima, “The Lost Sciences of Africa: An Overview,” in *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*, ed. Malegapuru William Makgoba (Cape Town: Mafube and Tafelberg, 1999), 305-330, at 309.

⁴⁷ Asfaw Beyene, “Oromo Calendar: The Significance of Bitu Qara,” *The Journal of Oromo Studies* II, nos. 1-2 (1995): 58-64 at 58.

⁴⁸ B. M. Lynch and L. H. Robbins “Namoratunga: The First Archeo-Astronomical Evidence in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Science* 200, no. 4343 (1978): 766-768, quoted in Sertima, “The Lost Sciences of Africa,” 310.

The Oromo of Ethiopia have time-reckoning experts known as *Ayyanttus*. Time-reckoning experts observe the position of the stars and the moon, and inform the local people about the local weather conditions and other future events.⁴⁹ It is believed that time-reckoning experts are capable of determining propitious days for social, economic, and religious activities. According to Beyene,

[o]bserving the Oromo time reckoning techniques, one has to admire the Ayyanttus for their cognizance of the complex rules of the celestial space. The calendar involved consistent analysis of intricate movements and positions of the moon, the earth, the sun, and about half a dozen stars and/or constellations. It included Calculation and registration of their relative positions, and permutating the flexible days of the lunar month over the fixed ceremonial days. It is a highly complex and unique civilization, still shielded by Oromo Ayyanttus who are not given their scholarly credit for guarding the brilliance of prehistory.⁵⁰

Similarly, the Dogon people of Mali have possessed an extremely complex knowledge of astronomy.⁵¹ Particularly, their observation of a dwarf star, Sirius B, was confirmed by modern science.

Ethics, Climate Change and the Need for Global Climate Justice

To date, very few moral philosophers have written about the problem of climate change.⁵² Some of them conceived climate change as fundamentally an ethical issue.⁵³ Dale Jamieson maintains that, besides scientific concerns, the problem of climate change is related to our values. “It is about how we ought to live, and how humans should relate to each other and to

⁴⁹ For details, see Asmarom Legesse, *Gadaa: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society* (New York: Free Press, 1973); Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*.

⁵⁰ Beyene, “Oromo Calendar,” 62.

⁵¹ See Sertima, “The Lost Sciences of Africa,” 310-312.

⁵² See Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” 555.

⁵³ Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming”; Stephen M. Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” in *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings*, eds. Stephen M. Gardiner et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-35; Donald A. Brown, “Ten Practical Policy Consequences of Acknowledging that Climate Change is an Ethical Problem,” ClimateEthics.org, 2011, <http://rockblogs.psu.edu/climate/2011/08/ten-practical-policy-consequences-of-acknowledging-that-climate-change-is-an-ethical-problem.html>, and “Going Deeper on What Happened in Durban: An Ethical Critique of Durban Outcomes,” ClimateEthics.org, 2011, <http://rockblogs.psu.edu/climate/2011/12/going-deeper-on-what-happened-in-durban-an-ethical-critique-of-durban-outcomes.html>; Denis G. Arnold, “Introduction: Climate Change and Ethics,” in *The Ethics of Global Climate Change*, ed. Denis G. Arnold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1-15; Derek Bell, “How Should We Think about Climate Justice?,” *Environmental Ethics* 35, no. 2 (2013): 189-208.

the rest of nature. These are problems of ethics and politics as well as problems of science.”⁵⁴ Science reveals the impact of humankind on the planet Earth which, in turn, compels us to question our place in the universe and to challenge our value system to address the problems of global climate change. This reveals that climate change requires an interdisciplinary study, as one subject cannot cover all dimensions of climate change. So, it would be wrong to focus only on the scientific, technical, and economic aspects of climate change and ignore other dimensions.

Jamieson reveals that the dominant Western value system cannot be an adequate basis to deal with global environmental problems, such as those entailed by climate changes caused by human activity.⁵⁵ He suggests that a fundamental paradigm shift in ethics is required to successfully address global climate change. The solution of global climate change requires nurturing and giving “new content to some old virtues such as humility, courage, and moderation and perhaps” developing “such new virtues as those of simplicity and conservatism.”⁵⁶ Jamieson thus suggests that what is required is bringing about value change, and developing new values and conceptions of responsibility that enable us to recognize “the interconnectedness of life on a dense, high-technology planet.”⁵⁷

Furthermore, ethical issues such as “responsibility and, historically, accountability for the causes of climate change, duties to future human and nonhuman generations, “the just distribution of the costs of mitigation and adaptation,”⁵⁸ the health of mother Earth, and the like can be raised in relation to energy consumption and its impact on climate change. Donald A Brown argues that climate change is fundamentally an ethical problem because of the following reasons: First, although the rich developed countries are more responsible for climate change, people in the developing world are facing the harshest impacts of climate change. This problem “creates duties, responsibilities, and obligations,” as those who contributed little to climate change are its biggest victims. Second, “climate-change impacts are potentially catastrophic for many of the poorest people around the world if not the entire world.” Third, the global dimension of climate change makes it an ethical problem, as a single nation alone cannot address it.⁵⁹

However, negotiating countries have not yet paid sufficient attention to the ethical dimensions of climate change. Above all, they are guided by economic self interest rather than international responsibility.⁶⁰ Accordingly, one of the fundamental problems of international environmental treaties is that negotiating governments seek a lowest common denominator

⁵⁴ Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming,” 372.

⁵⁵ Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming,” 376.

⁵⁶ Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming,” 378.

⁵⁷ Jamieson, “Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming,” 377.

⁵⁸ Arnold, “Introduction: Climate Change and Ethics,” 10.

⁵⁹ For details, see Brown, “Ten Practical Policy Consequences.”

⁶⁰ For details, see Brown, “Going Deeper on What Happened in Durban.”

that in fact involves a very minimalist approach – not only in the sense that the strategies adopted are likely to be the ones that conflict least with the national interest of the negotiating countries (particularly the more powerful negotiating countries), but also that the very interpretation of the problem promoted is likely to be a minimalist one.⁶¹

As a result, the world has not yet taken all measures necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Some industrialized nations have continued to emit a disproportionate share of greenhouse gases. The Kyoto Protocol does not seem to have had a significant impact. It should be recalled that the US is not a party to the Kyoto Protocol, and Canada, Japan, and Russia have already expressed their unwillingness to take up another set of emission reduction targets under an extended Kyoto framework. Other nations take their responsibility to reduce emissions without waiting for the US and other developing countries to do so. This is an appreciable move, and one day in the future reluctant nations will follow their footsteps. Stephen M. Gardiner identifies the following factors for the inadequacy and failure of the Kyoto Protocol: the political role of energy interest, confusion about scientific uncertainties, economic costs, and the inadequacies of the international system. The unwillingness of the US government to support Kyoto and the insufficient attention given to the intergenerational aspects are two additional reasons identified in the literature for Kyoto's failure.⁶² Moreover, consecutive Conferences of Parties every year have not provided globally and ethically acceptable solutions to climate change. For instance, although the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP-17) in Durban, South Africa in December 2011 took some positive steps⁶³ to help to solve the problem of climate change, it failed to articulate the ethical responsibilities of different nations that can address the immense threat of human-induced warming.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Michael Seigel, Yusuke Honda and Mai Fujii, *Promises and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Treaties* (Nagoya: Nanzan University Institute for Social Ethics, 2010), 13.

⁶² Gardiner, "Ethics and Global Climate Change," 594.

⁶³ Among others, it was negotiated that both developed and developing countries shall agree to participate in GHG emission reductions by no later than 2015. It is hoped that this will be implemented by 2020. The commitments for GHG emission reductions in the Kyoto Protocol are restricted to the industrialized countries. The UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol do not require developing countries to fulfill specific mitigation obligations. All parties agreed on the differentiation of commitments between developed and developing countries, because "[t]he largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases has originated in developed countries, that per capita emissions in developing countries are still relatively low and that the share of global emissions originating in developing countries will grow to meet their social and development needs," it is accepted that "the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof. UNFCCC, "United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change," reprinted in *International Legal Materials* 31 (1992): 849-873, Preamble Article 3.2.

⁶⁴ For details see Brown, "Going Deeper on What Happened in Durban."

The 18th Conference of the Parties (COP 18) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change took place in Doha, Qatar, from 26 November to 7 December 2012. Although much was expected from this conference, the overall outcome was unsatisfactory. One of the achievements of the Doha conference was agreement to a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol starting in 2013, although fewer countries joined it. EU member states and seven others, including Australia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Monaco, Norway, Switzerland, and Ukraine have accepted obligatory emissions cuts during the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. It is estimated that the green gas emissions of these countries are less than 15 percent of total global emissions. The target for the second commitment period is reducing emissions at least 18% below 1990 levels in 2013-2020. Several key countries still signed up to Kyoto, including Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and Russia, declined to participate in the second commitment period that will cover the gap years 2013-2020. The United States and China, the world's largest greenhouse gas emitters, did not accept the new agreement either. The other two important decisions of the Conference were the following:

The countries ended the negotiating track created in 2007 on 'Long-term Cooperative Action,' which previously produced the Copenhagen Accords and the Cancun Agreements that drew up voluntary pollution-reduction commitments covering 80 percent of global emissions.

The new negotiating track on the 'Durban Platform for Enhanced Action' – which was designed last year to produce by 2015 a new treaty that is applicable to all parties and cover 100 percent of global emissions – took its first steps toward achieving those goals.⁶⁵

Another shortcoming of the Conference was that the delegates did not agree on new funds to help poor countries adapt to climate change. There has been very insignificant attempt to scale up climate finance and reach the US\$100 billion goal by 2020. In Doha, only about US\$5 billion were pledged for climate action, post 2012.

Lamenting that the previous climate negotiations failed to take ethical obligations into account, some studies suggest that post-Kyoto proposals should consider the following three ethical criteria: environmental sufficiency, equity (each nation reduce its emissions to its fair share of safe global emissions), and just adaptation (giving adequate adaptation funding to developing countries so as to avoid harsh climate impacts).⁶⁶ As Brown states, it would be wrong to restrict climate negotiations to what is politically

⁶⁵ Andrew Light et al., "Doha Climate Summit Ends with the Long March to 2015: Near-Term Progress Now Depends on Fast Action in Other Forums," Centre for American Progress 2012, <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/DohaClimate-1.pdf>.

⁶⁶ See Brown, "Going Deeper on What Happened in Durban."

feasible and ignore international obligations.⁶⁷ Thus, nations should try to balance their economic interests and duties, responsibilities, and obligations about the health of the people and mother Earth. Philosophical writers agree among themselves on the subject of the allocation of the costs and benefit of greenhouse gas emissions:

they are virtually unanimous in their conclusion that the developed countries should take the lead role in bearing the costs of climate change, while the less developed countries should be allowed to increase emissions for the foreseeable future.⁶⁸

Peter Singer, in his *One World*, examines the ethical principle of equity or fairness. Although he stresses that the principle of an equal share for everyone is fair, he persuasively shows that the strict egalitarian principle is indefensible, as it proposes that equality can be achieved by “‘leveling down,’ that is, by bringing the rich down to the level of the poor without improving the position of the poor.”⁶⁹ Stating the problems that industrialized nations may face if humanity allocates the atmosphere’s capacity to absorb greenhouse gases to nations on the basis of equal per capita shares, Singer proposes that global emissions trading⁷⁰ can accommodate the interests and concerns of both industrialized and developing nations. J. Timmons Robert also states that “[a]n equal allocation of emissions rights does not assure poor nations of development benefits, unless much else changes adequate, well-targeted, and well-managed funding flows.”⁷¹

Singer thinks that global emission trading is both possible and desirable. Some oversight on the disposition of the proceeds of such trading is required when autocratic governments are on the scene. Singer further suggests that the development of institutions or principles of international law is important to limit national sovereignty and force all countries to respect international cooperation. He thinks that this is one possible way. The second possible way is the use of sanctions against countries that do not play their part in global measures for the protection of the environment.

Although a system of international pollution permits may have a temporary role to play, there are some practical problems. Among others, it is difficult to give each country the same permitted level of pollution. If we assume that this can be done, who is going to do it? On what basis? Moreover, tradable permits are not effective in addressing the interests and wellbe-

⁶⁷ See Brown, “Going Deeper on What Happened in Durban.”

⁶⁸ Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” 579.

⁶⁹ Peter Singer, *One World: the Ethics of Globalization*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, NJ and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 37.

⁷⁰ The Kyoto Protocol of December 1997 also recognizes trading emission permits. It allowed countries “to meet their commitments through buying unused capacity from others, through permit trading.” Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” 590.

⁷¹ J. Timmons Roberts, “The International Dimension of Climate Justice and the Need for International Adaptation Funding,” *Environmental Justice* 2, no. 4 (2009): 186.

ing of nonhuman entities and of ecosystems, as they are based on human interests. Paul Steidlmeier is of the opinion that pollution permits “have a certain legitimacy as a second-best, short-term solution.”⁷² It is clear that we cannot stop pollution within a short period of time, as to live is to pollute. We cannot live in a pollution-free world. So, the only viable option is reducing the level of pollution using internationally acceptable mechanisms. As Steidlmeier states,

[o]nly as society becomes more value critical, only as empirical work becomes more solid and comprehensive, and only as the horizon of technological feasibility expands will solutions that are better than second-best be perceived as viable options and be implemented.⁷³

Some writers and organizations including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)⁷⁴ suggest that those who have caused pollution should pay.⁷⁵ This is known as the polluter pays principle (PPP). Henry Shue, however, stresses that his argument is not equivalent to the PPP, as he thinks that the PPP is a “forward-looking” principle that requires the future polluter to pay.

Philosophers disagree on the date that polluting countries should start to be accountable for their historic emissions. Singer and Jamieson think that ignorance is responsible for emissions prior to 1990.⁷⁶ Although Singer is aware that “backward-looking principles” are relevant, he thinks that poor countries might “generously” ignore it. Jamieson for his part stresses that emissions after 1990 are not because of the intention to deprive the poor of their share.⁷⁷ Gardiner does not seem to agree with this position, as he doubts the extent to which the ignorance defense extends.

On the one hand, in the case of the historical principle, if the harm inflicted on the world’s poor is severe, and if they lack the means to defend themselves against it, it seems odd to say that the rich nations have no obligation to assist, especially when they could do so relatively easily and are in such a position largely because of their previ-

⁷² Paul Steidlmeier, “The Morality of Pollution Permits,” in *Environmental Ethics: Concepts, Policy, and Theory*, ed. Joseph Des Jardins (London and Toronto: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 278-284, at 284.

⁷³ Steidlmeier, “The Morality of Pollution Permits.”

⁷⁴ OECD, *The Polluter Pays Principle* (Paris: OECD, 1975).

⁷⁵ Henry Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality,” *International Affairs* 75, no. 3 (1999): 531-545, at 533-537; Eric Neumayer, “In Defence of Historical Accountability for Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” *Ecological Economics* 33 (2000): 185-192.

⁷⁶ Singer, *One World*; Dale Jamieson, “Climate Change and Global Environmental Justice,” in *Changing the Atmosphere: Expert Knowledge and Global Environmental Governance*, eds. P. Edwards and C. Miller (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 287-307.

⁷⁷ Jamieson, “Climate Change and Global Environmental Justice,” 301.

ous causal role. On the other hand, in the case of the sink consideration, if you deprive me of my share of an important resource, perhaps one necessary to my very survival, it seems odd to say that you have no obligation to assist because you were ignorant of what you were doing at the time.⁷⁸

Thus, Gardner rejects the arguments in favor of ignoring past emissions, as

the presumption that past emissions pose an issue of justice which is both practically and theoretically important. Since this has the effect of increasing the obligations of the developed nations, it strengthens the case for saying that these countries bear a special responsibility for dealing with the climate change problem.⁷⁹

Other writers do not endorse the PPP. According to Simon Caney, it would be unfair and inadequate to apply the “polluter pays” principle to climate change, as some actual individual polluters are dead and cannot pay.⁸⁰ Caney is of the opinion that the polluter pays principle is not a complete principle of justice, as it cannot be applied to present and past generations, because the former is not responsible for climate change and the latter may not be aware of the harmful effects of GHG emissions on the climate. Accordingly, Caney was against historical responsibility with regard to pre-1990 emissions. He asserted that, if the polluter is not aware of the negative consequences of his/her action, his/her ignorance is excusable.⁸¹

One can reasonably question this position, as the current generation has enjoyed the wealth created because of the past emissions by the past generation. According to Shue, “current generations are, and future generations probably will be, continuing beneficiaries of earlier industrial activity.”⁸² Caney is, however, determined to oppose the beneficiary pays principle, because “the acts that led to a higher standard of living (in this case industrialization) did not make the standard of living of currently alive persons higher than it would have been had industrialization never taken place.”⁸³ Caney proposes what he calls the hybrid account. He writes,

The key point about this account is that it recognizes that the ‘polluter pays’ approach needs to be supplemented, and it does so by ascribing duties to the most advantaged (an ‘ability to pay’ approach). The

⁷⁸ Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” 581.

⁷⁹ Gardiner, “Ethics and Global Climate Change,” 583.

⁸⁰ Simon Caney, “Cosmopolitan Justice, Responsibility, and Global Climate Change,” in *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings*, eds. Stephen M Gardiner et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 122-145; see also Bell, “How Should We Think about Climate Justice?” 207.

⁸¹ Caney, “Cosmopolitan Justice, Responsibility, and Global Climate Change,” 130.

⁸² Shue, “Global Environment and International Inequality,” 536; see also Neumayer, “In Defence of Historical Accountability for Greenhouse Gas Emissions,” 189.

⁸³ Caney, “Cosmopolitan Justice,” 129

most advantaged can perform the roles attributed to them, and, moreover, it is reasonable to ask them (rather than the needy) to bear this burden since they can bear such burdens more easily. It is true that they may not have caused the problem, but this does not mean that they have no duty to help solve this problem.⁸⁴

Caney states that the hybrid account does not make states responsible for the decisions of earlier generations. He suggests that affluent persons rather than affluent countries in the world should bear the responsibility of dealing with climate change.⁸⁵ Although I believe that rich persons in the world should address the negative consequences of climate change, Caney's proposal that seems to exempt the governments of developed countries is not persuasive. He should have understood the difference between the standard of living in industrialized and non-industrialized countries. The current high levels of prosperity in the developed world are based on cumulative emissions of greenhouse gases. So, it would be unethical for developed countries to neglect their responsibility. Governments, and particularly the governments of developed countries, have the prime responsibility. Many individuals have responsibilities, as citizens, to try to persuade their governments to act in these ways, and to set a personal example.

Another important question is: can industrialized nations learn something from Africa to combat climate change? Africa is home to many cultures that have developed complex and long-lasting systems of government that are participatory and that underscore the indelible responsibility of each citizen to the group, and the individual and common responsibility for the environment and the prerequisites for life in general. The relation between the responsible use of the planet's resources and ethics remains apparent in many cultural and social systems of traditional Africa. Accordingly, many African peoples envision a kinship relationship between themselves and the natural world. They have developed an organic conception of nature that promotes an ecological interdependency among human, plant, and animal life. The importance of relating to, rather than mastering, nature and the environment is emphasized in the African worldview.⁸⁶ To give just one example, the Oromo of Ethiopia have developed environmentally friendly beliefs and practices. In particular, the Borana Oromo of Ethiopia have concerns for both domestic and wild animals. After drawing water from deep wells, they water their animals during the day. In the evening, they leave the water behind for wild animals to drink. The Borana Oromo have a strong belief that, as the creation of *Waaqa*, wild animals, as species, have the right to exist and drink water whether they are useful or not.⁸⁷ Unlike modern

⁸⁴ Caney, "Cosmopolitan Justice," 136.

⁸⁵ Caney, "Cosmopolitan Justice," 137.

⁸⁶ Kwasi Wiredu, "Philosophy, Humankind and the Environment," in *Philosophy, Humanity and Ecology*, vol. I. *Philosophy of Nature and Environmental Ethics*, ed. Henry Odera Oruka (Nairobi: ACTS Press and AAS, 1994), 30-48 at 45.

⁸⁷ Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 133.

hunters, no one is allowed to kill or hunt animals at water points in the night. It would be unethical to do so.

Moreover, the Oromo ethics opposes the unlimited exploitation of natural resources and the inhuman treatment of fellow human beings. *Safuu* (moral principle) regulates the relationship between various things, and the use of resources. As I have stated elsewhere, the Oromo conception of *safuu* is based on justice.

It reflects deep respect and balance between various things. The Oromo do not simply consider justice, integrity and respect as human virtues applicable to human beings, but also they extend them to nonhuman species and mother Earth.⁸⁸

Derek Parfit's "non-identity problem" is not a serious challenge to the African conception of intergenerational justice.⁸⁹ Parfit doubted whether the current generation can stand in any kind of morally normative relationship with future beings if their very existence and individuality is affected by its very actions today. He says that we cannot base our policy on the interests of particular individuals, because their identity is not yet settled. For him, there is no moral justification for a "pure time preference" for nearer over further generations.

The African worldview includes intergenerational ethics that teaches that natural resources should not be overexploited beyond limit, and the land should be taken care of for the benefit of both humans, including future human generations, and nonhuman species. For instance, the Oromo of Ethiopia believe that we know enough about the welfare of future persons to act responsibly on their behalf, because, like present persons, future persons are human beings and need a healthy environment.⁹⁰ Thus the current generation should not engage in activities that will endanger the survival of future generations. It has considerable moral obligations towards future generations, as they are morally significant. So, those countries which irresponsibly aggravate climate change should learn from this ethical principle about the intergenerational dimensions of global climate change, and pay attention to the wellbeing of future generations besides their current interests.

Besides their reverence for the natural environment, like other indigenous people in the world, many African peoples have all along been actively manipulating it. The use of various animals and plants for food is not contrary to the cosmic purpose. The people exploit natural resources in a respectful and just way. They do not abuse nature's generosity by consuming more than what is needed. Instead, Africans have promoted the ethics of not taking more than you need from nature.

⁸⁸ Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*, 237.

⁸⁹ Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

⁹⁰ Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*.

Perhaps this explains why earth, forests, rivers and wind and other natural objects are traditionally believed to be both natural and divine. The philosophy behind this belief may not necessarily be religious, but a natural means by which the human environment can be preserved. The ethics of care is essential to traditional understanding of environmental protection and conservation.⁹¹

According to Ogungbemi, an orientation in which one is not taking more than one's needs from nature amounts to the ethics of care. Thus, in traditional Africa, human beings have developed an attitude of *live and let live* toward nonhuman beings.⁹² One can object that it is not because of morality that Africans refrain from over exploiting the natural environment. The reason is technological backwardness, as they do not have the means to produce and take more. However, this does not hold water. Many Africans believe that no one can destroy the natural environment and its inhabitants for the simple reason that s/he has the opportunity to do so. One should respect the laws of God and her/his society.

From the preceding discussion, we suggest that industrialized countries can learn from African ethics and try to solve the problem of climate change, as the African value system teaches what Jamieson calls "the interconnectedness of life" on mother Earth. According to the African worldview, it would be wrong to disturb the balance of nature and endanger the survival of the creations of God. This can be extended to oppose the pollution of the atmosphere that will have negative repercussions on the interconnectedness of life. Thus, among others, technological societies whose current emissions far exceed their fair share of emissions should give attention to justice, and play their respective role in averting the most extreme risks of climate change.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion outlines how peasant farmers and pastoralists in Africa have observed climate change and its impacts and developed indigenous mitigation and adaptation strategies based upon years of experiments and observations. They have been able to cope with local weather and climate change for many years.

Although indigenous coping strategies worked sufficiently well until recent years, unusually severe climate-induced changes make some of them ineffective. Indigenous coping strategies and tactics did not prevent the

⁹¹ Segun Ogungbemi, "An African Perspective on the Environmental Crisis," in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edition, ed. Louis J. Pojman (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997), 204.

⁹² Godfrey B. Tangwa, "Some African Reflections on Biomedical and Environmental Ethics," in *A Companion to African Philosophy*, ed. Kwasi Wiredu (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 387-395; Kelbessa, *Indigenous and Modern Environmental Ethics*.

death and starvation of many people from climate induced disasters in different parts of the continent. An erratic climate undermines poor people's ability to cope with climate variability. This shows that the climate change problem is beyond indigenous mechanisms. It is a global problem. Local mechanisms can mitigate but cannot avoid disasters until they are supported by the concerned parties and the problem is tackled globally, especially by the states causing the changes.

Thus, there is a great urgency to supplement existing practices with new techniques to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change. To put matters another way, indigenous coping/adaptation strategies should be assisted by national governments and other concerned bodies through the introduction of credit facilities, favourable pricing and market policies, storage facilities, "an improvement in the provision of infrastructure facilities in rural areas for roads, electricity and communication networks, and development of industries such as food processing and marketing,"⁹³ "effective information dissemination, protection of intellectual property,...capacity building in entrepreneurship, and strategic provision of seed resources for community initiatives,"⁹⁴ and the like. These interventions can help African farmers and pastoralists adapt to climate change.

Moreover, it has been stated that climate change is fundamentally an ethical problem. The world's poorest countries which are not the major contributors to climate change face the most severe impact. Although they have contributed little, the globalization of climate change has reached them in different corners of the world. Prolonged drought and flooding have affected millions of people. Those who lack the resources to adapt, or to find alternative sources of food and healthcare will suffer greatly from climate change. They are not able to protect themselves. The measures that can be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can also have negative impacts on the poor by restricting the use of resources and their movement. On the other hand, developed countries which are the major contributors to global warming, are not the ones that suffer the consequences most severely. Far worse, polluting nations have tried to ignore their negative impacts on the earth's atmosphere and to keep on exploiting people in the developing world and the planet Earth. As Toulmin notes,

[a]t present the rules for addressing climate change are being written by the powerful and polluting nations. And it is inevitable that the deal they reach among themselves will pay particular attention to their current and future interests.⁹⁵

However, their action is harmful to themselves and the planet Earth. They need to reconsider their position and help solve problems related to

⁹³ Dabi et al., "Past, Present and Future Adaptation," 160-161.

⁹⁴ Dube and Sekhwela, "Indigenous Knowledge," 84.

⁹⁵ Toulmin, *Climate Change in Africa*, 10.

climate change. Therefore, the states whose current emissions most exceed their fair share should be accountable and pay their fair share for what they have done to the global climate. To repeat the obvious, global problems do not have frontiers and affect all human and nonhuman beings, and require international ethical thought and the international cooperation of governments, scientists, and citizens. No nation should be allowed to pursue its interests with total impunity. I would thus suggest that, to reduce their respective emissions, different nations should engage in genuine dialogue that respects global justice and equity.

Until now, much of the climate discourse has excluded peasant farmers and other indigenous peoples in the world. In order to respond effectively to climate change, the climate change forum should incorporate indigenous knowledge and perceptions. This will help policy makers develop effective mitigation and adaptation strategies. Thus, governments should engage communities in decisions that affect their livelihoods.

Corporate Social Philosophy: Challenges in the Philosophy of Business in Global Times

Engelbert C. Pasag and Rhonda Padilla

Introduction

What is the primary responsibility of business today? Is it to make a financial return for their shareholders? Or is it to contribute more broadly to the welfare of employees and society as a whole? Milton Friedman (1970) argued that companies exist to generate profit for the owners, e.g., the shareholders. Chief Executive Officers or company presidents seek to please the Chairman and the Board, and, in turn, the shareholders, who expect higher profits year after year. The higher the profit, the higher the share. And this measures the ability of the CEO to steer or sometimes even “manipulate” the company to meet the challenges of the industry, the competition, and the economy.

At the same time, Friedman assumed that companies would abide by laws and prevailing ethical customs. There are prevailing “legal terms” that are used by companies in order to maximize what was provided or what was not written in the law. Yet this yields to the fact that some companies engage in unethical or immoral activities, and this is with the justification that it is still “in the bounds of legality.” Much of this has been published in business magazines, books and even in newspapers, and we all know about the downfall of big and respected companies which in turn led to the downfall of the economies of powerful countries. This impacts the lives of millions of people who have lost their jobs, houses, and even their lives.

With the downfall of the economy (which is comparable to what happened during the Great Depression), it is very clear that companies have a purpose which – since these behaviors affect the lives of owners, employees, customers, suppliers, communities and the environment – is not merely to its owners and the generation of profits. Instead, there is a need to rethink about taking care of the welfare of employees (the other shareholders) and the communities where companies reside. There are companies that have started to rethink their purpose and are aligning it to the needs of the communities. One of the business terms used nowadays is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

CSR as a Form of Compassion

Giving companies a human touch – compassion – is a term used by David Bejou to describe companies that simultaneously make profits, obey the laws, and are ethical.¹ The best understanding of compassion is from Aristotle, when he said “let compassion be a sort of distress at an apparent evil, destructive or distressing, which happens to someone who does not deserve it, and which one might expect to happen to oneself or someone close to one, and this when it appears near.”² Martha Nussbaum also explained that “compassion forms a psychological link between our self-interest and the reality of another person’s good or ill.”³ The Dalai Lama also defines compassion as associated with “commitment, responsibility and respect toward the other.”⁴ In the past, the concept of a responsible company has been limited to the paying of taxes and compliance with the law. However, there are corporations that have gone beyond compliance and corporate giving. There are companies which operate according to internally set standards that create a positive impact on society. The concept of a compassionate company has become a norm in businesses that are “giving” something for the community.

CSR in the Philippines and its Definition

Francisco Roman expanded the framework of Gisela Velasco in his evaluation of the evolution of CSR networks in the Philippines.⁵ The first way that companies demonstrated compassion was with the provision of financial assistance to NGOs and charitable institutions. Secondly, companies either partnered with intermediaries or established their own foundations to execute their own CSR efforts. The third way was when companies “incorporated end-users in the design and implementation of CSR programs.” And the fourth was when companies internalized programs in policy formulation. Currently, companies engage in CSR programs by addressing the concerns of society in general. The following are definitions of CSR:

¹ David Bejou, “Compassion as the New Philosophy of Business,” *Journal of Relationship Marketing* 10, no. 1 (2011): 1-6.

² Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.8 1385b13-16, cited in R. Crisp, “Compassion and Beyond,” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 11 (2008): 234.

³ Martha Nussbaum, “Compassion and Global Responsibility,” Commencement address, Georgetown University, Washington, DC (2003), accessed February 13, 2012, <http://www.humanity.org/voices/commencements/speeches/index.php?page=nussbaum>.

⁴ Dalai Lama, *The Art of Happiness* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998).

⁵ Francisco Roman, “Chapter 3: Philippine CSR over Five Decades: Networks, Drivers and Emerging Views,” in *Doing Good in Business Matters: CSR in the Philippines*; Volume 1: *Frameworks*, ed. Vergel Santos (Philippines: Asian Institute of Management and De La Salle Professional Schools, 2007).

A. CSR is the “continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the community and society at large” (World Business Council for Sustainable Development⁶)

B. “A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Union⁷)

C. CSR “as achieving commercial success in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities and the natural environment” (Business for Social Responsibility⁸)

D. CSR “encompasses not only what companies do with their profits, but also how they make them. It goes beyond philanthropy and compliance and addresses how companies manage their economic, social and environmental impact, as well as their relationships in all key spheres of influence: the workplace, the marketplace, the supply chain, the community, and the realm of public policy” (Harvard/Kennedy School of Government⁹).

The CSR Efforts of Companies

Several companies worldwide have demonstrated some CSR efforts in their core values. The Ford Motor Company,¹⁰ through its Ford Foundation, has, since the 1950s, tried to help with education and tried to uplift the way companies in different countries do their business. Similarly, it created the Ford Mobil Food Pantry project, which provides support to food banks in the USA. In 2009, Ford and its employees volunteered 100,000 hours of community projects in 44 countries, in 6 continents. The work benefited children and families in need.

PepsiCo¹¹ promises quality and healthy products and a full commitment to global nutrition. It also commits itself to caring for the planet by respecting human rights for water use, land use, natural resources and reducing its carbon footprint. PepsiCo donated \$16M to the earthquake victims in Chile, China, Pakistan, and Haiti, as well as to victims of flooding in Asia and of tsunamis in Southeast Asia. A ‘Philosophy of Integrity’ is

⁶ World Business Council for Sustainable Development, <http://www.wbcsd.org/templates/TemplateWBCSD5/layout.asp?type=p&MenuId=MTE00Q>.

⁷ European Union Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/index_en.htm.

⁸ Business for Social Responsibility, “Overview of Corporate Social Responsibility” (2003), <http://www.bsr.org/BSRResources/.IssueBriefDetail.cfm?>

⁹ Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School, “The Initiative: Defining Corporate Social Responsibility,” http://www.hks.harvard.edu/m-rcbg/CSRI/init_define.html.

¹⁰ Ford Media Center, http://media.ford.com/article_display.cfm?article_id=24900.

¹¹ Pepsico, <http://www.pepsico.com/Purpose/Sustainability-Reporting/Sustainability-Reporting.html>.

embedded in Aeropostale, Inc.¹² It has provided gifts to children in hospitals, donated 100,000 new coats to shelters in USA and Canada, and collected jeans for homeless children and victims of earthquakes in Haiti.

The moral compass of Johnson and Johnson¹³ is embodied in its “Credo,” which was crafted by Robert Wood Johnson, its former chairman, in 1943. Even before the establishment of CSR, Johnson and Johnson (J&J) believed that “putting the needs and well-being of the people we serve first” is the recipe for business success. J&J’s Corporate Giving efforts include helping mothers and infants survive childbirth, supporting doctors, nurses, and local leaders work to provide the best medical care, and the education of communities on how to reduce the risk of infection from preventable diseases. J&J’s efforts went viral when it started to set up a global standard, which is followed by its Supply Chain (aka Family of Companies).

Beyond CSR

In the Philippines, the Ayala Corporation is the oldest conglomerate of properties, malls, condominiums, hotels, world-class subdivisions, service industries, etc. In 1961, through its Filipinas Foundation, Ayala donated land in Manila (where La Concordia College now stands) and in Makati (home of the Asian Institute of Management, 1963). With its charitable giving, the Ayala Corporation¹⁴ suggests that philanthropy should be strategic and must be undertaken in a manner that ensures its sustainability. It should attempt to make a positive impact on a country’s socioeconomic and environmental problems.

Companies can do this on their own – including through capacity-building and influencing other companies – and in collaboration with others. Companies can do this in two ways: internal initiatives and influencing initiatives.¹⁵ Internal initiatives include the compliance with existing labor and environmental laws, paying the right taxes, the creation of an International Standard within the enterprise, training its people in the supply chain, waste disposal, and community relations, promoting a code of conduct, and creating an avenue for the sharing of CSR. Companies can also have influencing initiatives by disclosing what the company is doing and what can still be done, and in working with others to comply with standards, thereby creating synergy among CSR practices.

¹² PRNewswire 2009, <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/acropostale-to-donate-100000-new-coats-this-holiday-season-69600492.html>.

¹³ Johnson & Johnson website, “Our Credo,” <https://www.jnj.com/credo/>.

¹⁴ Ayala, “From Philanthropy To ‘Beyond CSR,’” <http://www.ayala.com.ph/CSR.php>.

¹⁵ M. B. Herrera, M. I. Alarilla and R. L. Uy, *Towards Strategic CSR: Aligning CSR with the Business and Embedding CSR in the Organization: A Manual for Practitioners* (Makati City: Asian Institute of Management, 2011).

Conclusion

In the wake of the global recession, world powers and economic leaders are caught in a struggle. Aside from the struggle to recover our economies, we find ourselves in a situation where millions of people have lost their means of living, their homes, and even their loved ones. On the other hand, there are companies that are reaping the fruit of their labor so that the gap between the rich and the poor is wider. It is high time that companies re-examine themselves, following the words of Socrates that an unexamined life is not worth living. Companies are not just for profits. They have a responsibility to humankind. Zobel de Ayala of the Ayala Corporation said “I like to think that at the end of the day, we have to give back and help contribute to something bigger than ourselves.”¹⁶

¹⁶ Ayala, “From Philanthropy to ‘Beyond CSR’.”

Changing the Culture of ‘Anti-Politics’

William Sweet

Introduction

It goes without saying that we live in a time of radical global change. In some respects, the effects have been very positive: a wider recognition of human rights, the awareness of climate change and the creation of popular movements to address environmental issues, improvements in technologies that make communication easier and more efficient, and efforts to increase global cooperation, to name but a few. Yet it would be worse than naïve to hold that the effects of this global change have been simply positive. It is not just that human rights, concern for environmental integrity, and global cooperation, for example, have not been as widely respected as one might like to think; they have also been frequently ignored or undermined by political actors, both nationally and internationally. The net response of many citizens, then, has been mistrust and a scepticism about the credibility of political leaders; an increasing disengagement from participation in public life, including voting; and an overall indifference to political process and participation in the public sphere, in general, what has been called ‘anti-politics.’¹

What I wish to do here is briefly outline what is meant by ‘anti-politics,’ and explain how and why some political and educational responses to it have failed (or will likely fail). I also wish to argue, however, that there may be ways to respond to anti-politics, such as reinvigorating a natural sense of justice, challenging scepticism, and developing small or base communities – and here I drawing on some ideas taken from the work of the French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, and the Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor. Such activities can, I suggest, provide a way for reanimating politics, culture, and ways of life in a time of global change.

Sources of the Culture of Anti-politics

We are confronted almost daily with news of political malfeasance, corruption, scandals, and the indifference of political elites; it seems as if many of the decisions affecting our daily lives are not made by our elected representatives but by forces and bodies far removed from us; and it seems that matters of justice are often thwarted by *Realpolitik* – politics based on

¹ For an explanation and elaboration of this term, see “Anti-politics” in *A Dictionary of Human Geography*, eds. Alisdair Rogers, Noel Castree, and Rob Kitchin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 20; Vittorio Mete, “Four types of anti-politics: Insights from the Italian case,” *Modern Italy* 15, no. 1 (2010): 37-61.

purely pragmatic factors rather than on ethical principle or justice. Politics today does not seem to be concerned with matters of the common good and ensuring public participation in reasoned debate, but is almost entirely partisan and party-based. Even individual legislators are often not free to express their own views or to follow the views of those they putatively represent. In the end, there is a broad sentiment that citizens are impotent – that they simply do not have the power to effect any meaningful change in the public sphere by means of the political process.

There seems to be, today, as well, a decline in the sense of community and of obligations to the community. In its place, we find an individualism and a dedication to self-interest that leads, sometimes, to people being concerned with politics or public life only so far as they think they can achieve something for themselves through it. Otherwise, we see an indifference about public matters – perhaps because many believe that these matters have little bearing on them. There is, I think, a further phenomenon characteristic of the present time. We live in a world where many have lost faith in 'reason.' For example, during elections, but also in public discussion of government policy, citizens are bombarded with clever arguments and media sound bites from many sides, and they do not know how to evaluate them or to judge among them. Indeed, it seems that there is no reliable, neutral way to assess such statements. Or, worse, we often see attempts at reasoned debate in politics being defeated by ideology, rhetoric, and sophistry.

The issue here is not, however, just a matter of politics and public life. It is a matter of culture, i.e., culture, in the sense of 'a shared way of thinking, a social practice, and a systematic pattern of behaviour, with its own rationality and logic, that determine how one is to respond.' And so, in many of our societies today, we see a growing culture characterised by anomie, indifference, and alienation from, and a lack of interest in, politics and the political process. Signs of such a 'culture' are evident. One obvious sign is that there is an increasing lack of trust in political leaders. In a recent poll conducted in Canada, only 26% expressed "considerable confidence and respect" for Canada's parliamentarians, a drop from 42% in 1976.² In the minds of many citizens, politicians have little or no moral authority; at best, they command support largely because they have social and political influence and power.

Another sign of this culture is the refusal to participate in elections by voting. During a recent Canadian federal election, in the spring of 2011, voter apathy was one of the major topics of discussion in the media. Nevertheless, despite major efforts to encourage young people and the marginalized to vote, in the end, the voter turnout was just 61.4%. This was simply a further decline in a pattern of constant decline in participation in less than 25 years when, in 1988, over 75% of eligible voters cast a ballot.

² See Lance W. Roberts, S. Langlois, R. Clifton, K. Kampen, and B. Ferguson, *Recent Social Trends in Canada, 1960-2000* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

Finally, one finds a skepticism about the entire political process since, as noted above, many think that even the politicians they elect have little or no real impact on key economic and social issues so that some wonder why bother with politics at all. This lack of trust in politicians and this scepticism about the political process, then, lies at the root of what has become a ‘culture’ of anti-politics.

Initial Responses to the Culture of Anti-politics

Many of these concerns and responses are, perhaps, not all that new and a number of suggestions have already been made about how one might address them.

One response has been to call for more civic education, for example, that secondary and even elementary schools provide mandatory courses on the basics of politics. The assumption here is that, the more informed that people are about politics, public life, and the mechanics of the political process, the more they are likely to participate in it.

A second response is to institute mandatory voting. (There are, today, some 23 countries with compulsory voting.) The assumption is that, if people know that they will have to vote, they will take the time to inform themselves about the issues before voting, and perhaps even actively engage in the political process.

A third response is that there is a need to elect politicians who will engage those sectors of society that do not normally vote in large numbers, e.g., the youth, those who are poor, etc. The assumption here is that politicians who have a certain charismatic quality will attract people’s interest in political matters, and, again, that, as a result, more people will participate in the political process.

Yet efforts to act on these suggestions have had little obvious success.

Even when there is more emphasis placed on civic education, voting rates have still declined, and even in those countries where there is mandatory voting it is questionable whether voters are more informed about policy matters. Moreover, in many countries with compulsory voting, the obligation to vote is not regularly enforced. Finally, it seems as if the principal concern in politics today is simply ‘leadership’ – a very ill-defined term that seems to focus on the style of politicians rather than on their character and principles. And, even here, hoping that a charismatic leader can energize voters is, certainly, a risky matter. When the focus is primarily on leadership rather than on policy, the interests of the leader may come to ‘trump’ the public good.

A More Sophisticated Response, and Problems with It

Some will say that, despite the above, one should still not be pessimistic. One thing that speaks in favour of a continuing, popular engagement in politics and public life is that, despite the fact of alienation or scepticism,

people still have 'an intuition of justice.' Even where people are cynical or indifferent, they still recognize justice, have a sense of 'fair play,' and feel that politics should respect justice. For example, when it is learned that political figures are engaging in questionable or illegal activity, there is often a popular outcry, reflected in the media, and calls that they apologize or, even, that they resign.

Yet one might argue that even this intuition or sense of justice has been eroded.

A first reason is because of what many call 'relativism' – that people are not confident that there are any objective ethical norms or universals, and so, even if an individual has a sense of justice, she may nevertheless believe that this is "simply" her own opinion, and, thus, be reluctant to act on it. Moreover, in an increasingly globalized world, we hear about the practices and traditions of other races and cultures and traditions, and we are often reminded by sociologists and anthropologists that what is considered moral or just in one society may be considered immoral and unjust in another. Thus, one might, again, believe that their intuition of justice, while strongly felt, is still only a personal opinion, or a private view, or a bias. And so this intuition of justice ultimately does not lead many people much farther than simply to complain about matters; rarely do they act on them.

A second reason for this erosion in the intuition of justice is what I call passive tolerance. We all recognize that the world is home to a diversity of cultures, ethnicities, practices, and traditions. Indeed, most of the countries of the world reflect this diversity to lesser and greater degrees, and the countries of what is called the West not only tend to have significant diversity, but generally celebrate it. Toleration is regarded as a key value, then, that is necessary for a vital, pluralistic society. It involves a recognition not only of the diversity of cultures, but that each person's cultures and traditions are important because they form part of that person's identity, and that one's identity and beliefs should be respected.

Now, in principle, toleration does not exclude the possibility of challenging the practices and beliefs of others. But, increasingly in the West, public discourse tends to seek to avoid challenging people on many issues (e.g., their conceptions of the good, of how to lead their lives, of diet and dietary regulation, of God, and of worship). The reason for this reluctance to challenge others, however, is *not* because *their* views may be right but, rather, because we ourselves believe that *we* do *not* know – and perhaps can never know – what is right. So one reason why there is toleration of what different groups believe, is that many individuals, and perhaps even the dominant culture in a society, hold that, on such matters, nothing can really be known or certain. Thus, even if a person has an intuition that an instance of a cultural practice or tradition of another person or group may be problematic, there is a reluctance to challenge it directly, because one is not confident that this is a matter about which anyone can know or be certain that it is, in fact, problematic. And so one passively tolerates different cultures and

traditions, while, at the same time, still not being open to considering that they might offer useful alternatives to what a person currently believes.

Third, while a person may have an intuition that an action is just or unjust, they may suspect that others do not share that intuition. They may think that, to avoid any public criticism of their own actions, it is best not to raise too many questions of others' actions, at least, not publicly. One's intuition of justice and injustice, then, stays within a person's private sphere, that is, of one's opinions about ethical matters, and outside of the public sphere.

The overall consequence of these factors is that, even though a person may have an intuition of justice, she is often hesitant to say that it has any objective character, or expect that it should have an influence on others. She is ready to accept that, despite having her own sense of justice, there are no objective, true, universal conceptions of justice. Perhaps paradoxically, for many, reluctance or refusal to act on one's own sense of justice is not especially problematic. Rather, it may be seen as just a feature of what it is to live in the contemporary pluralist world, that is, not questioning the culture or cultural practices of others.

We have here, again, an issue that is ultimately an issue of culture – of a systematic pattern or way of thinking. A large number of people (at least, in the 'Western' world) are suspicious of ethical and moral absolutes or universals. Thus, they are reluctant to act publicly on their own intuitive sense of justice. For many, the most that they will allow is that the "right" thing to do may be evident in particular cases, but they would decline to say that certain actions or practices are objectively or universally right or wrong. Consequently, not even one's sense or intuition of justice and one's feeling that politics be conducted fairly are sufficient to bring that person to engage the pressing political issues of the day, with the overall result that, again, there is a culture of anti-politics.

A Further Response

The erosion of the sense of justice and the phenomenon of anti-politics are real and, in some places, very strong. Is there any way, other than what has been noted above, to respond? I want to argue that we can confront this culture of anti-politics by rebuilding and reactivating the intuition of justice, by drawing on the universal, or almost universal, recognition of some basic values and rights, and by rebuilding collaboration and community at the local level. Such an approach can provide, I suggest, a practical way, not only to encourage people to engage in politics, but to effect an overall change in culture. For guidance here, I want to draw on some insights from the work of Jacques Maritain and Charles Taylor – first, to give some reasons why intuitions of justice (and, perhaps, basic values) carry significant moral weight and, second, to suggest how these intuitions can be developed, e.g., in building collaborative relationships at a local level, which will reinforce such intuitions and, thereby, encourage citizens to act so that there can be a more robust alternative to the culture of anti-politics.

Consider, for example, some insights found in the work of Jacques Maritain. Much of Maritain's social and political thought was written during and after World War II, offering a response to the many appalling violations of justice that characterized that conflict. Yet despite the horrors of that war, Maritain was convinced that there was a sense of justice and a recognition of basic principles of morality that were essential to human beings, and that they could be used to build public life – a democratic public life – in the post war period.

To begin with, Maritain held that all human beings have the capacity for, and a natural sense of, justice. In his *Lectures on Natural Law*, Maritain argued that there are “dynamic schemas” or “apperceptions”³ in human moral consciousness, which express basic precepts, as well as a growing awareness over centuries and millennia of the natural law. Maritain held, for example, that there was a pre-conceptual awareness in all human beings of such values as ‘existence’ (i.e., to preserve oneself), the ‘life of a man’ (i.e., not to treat human life on a par with that of other beings), and that some people are ‘one of us’ (i.e., the value of the family), as well as a recognition of “the cause of things” (i.e., awareness of something transcendent).⁴ We have, here, a sense of the first principles of morality and justice. This sense of justice is more than a mere feeling. It is something that has ethical weight, although it exists at a pre-conceptual and connatural level. The sense of justice is, to be more precise, a result of a connatural awareness of the basic ethical principle, “Do good and avoid evil,” as well as of some of the basic goods that all human beings seek. This connaturality is also referred to in the *Lectures on Natural Law* and in *Man and the State*,⁵ when Maritain speaks about the ‘gnoseological’ element of natural law. Thus, this sense of justice is a feature of human beings – a feature of what Maritain calls, in an essay entitled “Christianity and Democracy,” the good sense of “the plain people”⁶ and Maritain would argue that we draw on it as we form, and participate in, culture.

³ Jacques Maritain, “The Foundations of Democracy,” in *Pour la justice* (New York: Éditions de la Maison Française, 1945), 350. French translations of the English texts in *Pour la justice* are found in Maritain, *Œuvres complètes: 1944-1946*, vol. VIII (Fribourg, Suisse: Editions Universitaires, 1989).

⁴ See Jacques Maritain, *Lectures on Natural Law*, tr. and ed. William Sweet, in manuscript, forthcoming University of Notre Dame Press; see Jacques Maritain, *La loi naturelle ou loi non écrite: texte inédit*, ed. Georges Brazzola (Fribourg, Suisse: Éditions Universitaires, 1986).

⁵ Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

⁶ In “Christianity and Democracy,” Maritain writes: “DEMOCRACY must not only proclaim in a more or less symbolic manner, but foster in reality, and be really animated by, *trust in the people, in the plain people*. Such trust does not proceed from... rationalistic and romanticist optimism” (emphasis mine). See “Christianity and Democracy,” in his *Pour la justice* (New York: Éditions de la Maison Française, 1945), 251 (see also his *Œuvres complètes*, vol. VII, 860). This essay was later developed into a book of the same name.

Maritain provides, then, a defense of the legitimacy and the reliability of the intuition of justice and, by extension, something of a bulwark against the erosion of the intuition of justice that contributes to anti-politics.

Second, in addition to this connatural sense of justice, human beings have, as well, a general recognition that there are certain other basic values (including human rights) that must be respected. In an essay of the mid-1940s, entitled "The Foundations of Democracy,"⁷ Maritain refers to the practical agreement among human beings of the values of "truth and intelligence, human dignity, freedom, brotherly love (which elsewhere he calls "civic friendship"⁸), and the absolute value of moral good." These are, as Maritain writes elsewhere, "matters of practical rather than theoretical or dogmatic agreement...they deal with practical conclusions that the human mind, rightly or wrongly, can try to justify from quite different philosophical outlooks, probably because *they depend basically on simple, "natural" apperceptions, of which the human heart becomes capable with the progress of moral conscience.*"⁹ This practical recognition by human beings of basic values and of human rights, is, Maritain would argue, something on which public life can draw. It reminds us that people may have much more in common than they think, and that there is a general recognition and sense of justice that can serve in building or in reorienting public life.

Third, to develop and strengthen this intuition of justice and the recognition of these basic values, Maritain held that it is useful, if not necessary, to provide a philosophical defence of them. While some may think that, given the predisposition of many scholars in favour of a philosophical anti-foundationalism, this is a too difficult argument to make, Maritain would insist that it is important to provide such an argument, particularly in order to defend human dignity, human rights, and justice. The possibility of such an argument depends, admittedly, on people having confidence in reason. It also depends on having a more substantive and comprehensive view of the human person than one finds in many authors of the modern period, i.e., of the person as a being with a spiritual as well as an intellectual and physical character. With such a philosophical defense, Maritain held, one who has this intuition of justice will be better placed to resist the 'clever' arguments of those who argue for conventionalism or subjectivism. And Maritain provides just this in *Integral Humanism*, the *Lectures on Natural Law, Man and the State*, and a series of essays from the 1940s to the 1960s.

Nevertheless, one may say that these suggestions are at a rather abstract or formal level. Moreover, while it is important to have arguments for

⁷ Maritain, "Foundations of Democracy," 348-354.

⁸ Maritain refers to "those moral realities which are called *justice* and *civic friendship*, the latter being a natural and temporal correspondence of that which, in the spiritual and supernatural plane, the Gospel calls brotherly love." See *Scholasticism and Politics*, 3rd ed. (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954), 66. For an electronic copy, see <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/maritain-scholasticism-and-politics-1940-2011>.

⁹ Maritain, "Foundations of Democracy," 350; see also "The Pluralist Principle in Democracy," in *The Range of Reason* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953), ch. 12, 172-184.

the legitimacy and moral weight of an intuition of justice and of basic moral values and principles, they are likely to be far too removed from daily life to be of practical value. There are, however, additional resources in Maritain's work that provide some suggestions as to how, practically and more concretely, people may bring about a change of culture that addresses anti-politics and revitalizes participation in public life.

In *Integral Humanism*, Maritain introduces the ideas of 'civic fraternities,' and, later, of 'cives praeclari' – "enlightened political elements."¹⁰ Animated by and oriented towards "the perfection of natural law,"¹¹ these groups would have a moral and spiritual discipline, and would seek to rise above political parties.¹² Inspired by the virtues of Christianity, these small groups would address injustice and engage in action in public life in the light of Christian values.¹³ They would be fundamentally democratic in structure and, while not seeking to exercise political power, would promote values that are necessary to public life. Their involvement would not only build a stronger sense of public life, but would change the culture itself.

This idea of civic fraternities was part of an idealized body politic, and while these fraternities – even if they had the independent role in society that Maritain hoped for – might be able to effect some change of culture, they do not obviously address the cynicism or indifference or suspicion that characterises anti-politics.

So, a second way to promote a change of culture and overcome the drift to anti-politics is by stimulating a sense of solidarity with others. This is something that, according to the American philosopher Richard Rorty, can follow on what has been called "sentimental education." In his 1993 Oxford Amnesty International Lecture, "Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality,"¹⁴ Rorty, argues that, if we try to provide a 'rational' argument for acting justly and for respecting human rights, for example, based on claims about the dignity or nature of human beings, we will fail. Yet he allows that appeals to justice can work, but that they need to work on an affective level. For example, Rorty believes that we can develop or "create" a sentiment of justice, if we can bring about an "imaginative identification"

¹⁰ *Integral Humanism*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1968), 169; see Maritain, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. VI, 579.

¹¹ *Integral Humanism*, 167.

¹² Maritain's discussion in *Integral Humanism* of 'cives praeclari' had an influence on a number of English Christian Protestant intellectuals, including T. S. Eliot. See Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglicanism Theories of the State between the Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004), 208, 241; and Matthew Grimley, "Civil Society and the Clerisy: Christian Elites and National Culture c.1930-1950," in *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions*, ed. Jose Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹³ See *Integral Humanism*, 171. See also the comments of Joseph W. Evans in Maritain, *Integral Humanism*, viii, note; and see *Man and the State*, 139-146.

¹⁴ See Richard Rorty, "Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality," in *On Human Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1993*, ed. Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

with others. Because a recognition of the demands of justice and the demands of human rights must take place within a culture and within a context, a call to justice depends, practically, on appealing to other, pre-existing values that are shared by the people concerned. While Rorty's 'sentiment of justice' is not the same as 'the intuition of justice,' it seems nevertheless plausible that, if human beings can be led to see things on a more affective level, the intuition of justice will be validated, and people will have more confidence in it.

Maritain seems to offer a third – and, perhaps, a more concrete – way of how to carry out a revitalization of the intuition of justice, an intuition that can challenge a culture of anti-politics and lead to a change of culture. He speaks, for example, in "The Foundations of Democracy," of a "Christian leaven" who would carry "responsibility for nurturing, strengthening, and enriching a common democratic faith"¹⁵ – a shift, it would seem, from the more elite notion of 'civic fraternities' found in *Integral Humanism*. And, later, in *Le paysan de la Garonne* (1966), Maritain refers to the existence of "les petits équipes et les petits troupeaux" – "little teams and small flocks"¹⁶ – "who work at their own risk with no other object or end than the truth."¹⁷ Their task is "to struggle most effectively for man and the spirit, and, in particular, to give the most effective witness to those truths for which men so desperately long and which are, at present, in such short supply."¹⁸ These flocks are able to carry out tasks that technology and mass organisations cannot; they are able to "muster around...the love of wisdom and of the intellect and the trust in the invisible radiation of this love" – they have an "incredible power in the realm of the spirit."

These small, intimate – perhaps one may call them 'base' – communities, created on a local level, are animated by a common interest in the truth and, so, bring it to bear in all aspects of social life. They raise the ethical and political consciousness of those within that group, encourage discussion and build solidarity, but also may undertake local, social, and spiritual action and reform. Maritain's suggestion is that they are able to do things that larger organisations cannot do, and, so, offer a mechanism to allow one to resist or overcome the sense of powerlessness, of cynicism, and of indifference that is characteristic of 'anti-politics.'

In arguing for a revitalization of a sense of justice and basic values and, thereby, public life, Maritain is not arguing for a monolithic or uniform public sphere; he notes that "the revitalized democracy we are hoping for... is of the *pluralistic type*. Men belonging to most different philosophical or religious creeds and families could and should co-operate in the common task and for the common welfare of the earthly community, provided they

¹⁵ Maritain, "Foundations of Democracy," 353.

¹⁶ Maritain, *Le paysan de la Garonne* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1966), 893-896.

¹⁷ Maritain, *Le paysan de la Garonne*, 896.

¹⁸ Maritain, *Le paysan de la Garonne*, 895.

similarly assent to the charter and basic tenets of a society of free men."¹⁹ This effort would not only build a stronger sense of community, but would change the culture itself. If we wish to address anti-politics, then, a move to this level is necessary in order to overcome the indifference, cynicism, and suspicion that feeds it.

An illustration of this effort is also hinted at in some of Charles Taylor's recent writings.²⁰ Taylor would suggest that, in our 'secular age,' people of religious faith promote a vision of civic mutuality. Indeed, Christians can offer a model of charity, self sacrifice, renouncing or overcoming violence, and so on, that culminates in the notion of loving even one's enemies. But Taylor would also say that to do this, in the contemporary 'secular age,' Christians must begin by working 'locally,' within their own religious culture, before attempting to engage people who live in other cultures.

Thus, can one respond to the sense of powerlessness, of cynicism, and of indifference that is characteristic of 'anti-politics'? For Maritain it is through the work of small communities and, arguably, with the development of the affective or sentimental dimension that this can be achieved. With "a basic common inspiration"²¹ and the promise of a revitalization of our intuition of justice, human beings can be "called to participate in political life."²²

The response to contemporary 'anti-politics' that I am suggesting involves, then, not simply changes in politics but, first, an effort to change culture. To paraphrase Maritain, anti-politics is a cultural problem and not just a political problem, and responding to it requires a change of culture. The above approaches, then, provide us with some practical ways of building confidence in the intuition of justice, but also of building on that intuition so that there can be such a change.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of anti-politics is widespread and, because of the increased tendency for individuals to be sceptical of, or indifferent to, the political process and participation in the public sphere, it poses dangers not only for politics but for cultures and ways of life. There have been attempts to respond to this, but some have clearly not succeeded or may be risky.

What I have argued here is that there are other ways of responding to anti-politics, by creating movements to change culture rather than movements that seek only to increase political participation. We have already some tools to do so, such as an intuition of justice and a connatural recognition of some basic values.

¹⁹ Maritain, "Foundations of Democracy," 349; see also "The Pluralist Conception of Democracy."

²⁰ See, for example, Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2007).

²¹ Maritain, "Christianity and Democracy," 350.

²² Maritain, "Foundations of Democracy," 250.

I have also argued that, if we revitalize and build on this intuition of justice and develop a sense of solidarity through encouraging a sentimental education, this will provide opportunities to reduce the scepticism, the indifference, the cynicism, and the narrow individualism that often characterizes public life today. By showing that such an intuition of justice is not merely something subjective, by drawing on basic values that are recognised by citizens, and by encouraging the development of small teams or base communities, we have ways of reducing the sense of alienation that many feel today, when confronted with the large, often difficult, issues of national and international politics. Such an approach would also put people in a context in which they would have more of an incentive to act, to help to develop the desire to participate in public life, and to make participation worthwhile.²³ In this way, one may be able to change the culture of ‘anti-politics.’

²³ A much earlier version of some sections of this paper have since been published in “Anti-politics, Maritain, and Change of Culture,” *Notes et documents: pour une recherche personnelle*, ns No. 32/33 (2015): 36-46.

Bioethics as an Intercultural Bridge

Tsai Wei-Ding

History has shown us that it is in general difficult for different cultures to communicate with each other, because their views of world are so different that none of them can understand exactly what the other peoples think. Nevertheless, history has also shown that there are some successful cases of intercultural communication, for example, Chinese Buddhism is a result of long term communication between Chinese culture and Indian Buddhism.¹ This article aims to reflect on a problem of intercultural philosophy, namely: How is intercultural communication possible in practice? Since successful communication between two cultures indicates at least a kind of consensus that is reached, our problem can be reworded as follows: How is the exchange of a system of values and beliefs through intercultural communication possible? This paper focuses, therefore, on the phenomena of conflict and consensus between two cultures in general, and tries to reflect on practicable principles of intercultural communication, especially with the help of studies of bioethics.

To date, intercultural philosophy has taken as its subject matter principally the so-called great cultures. They might be so in an anthropological sense, for example, German, Greek, Indian, and Chinese culture, or in a religious sense, like Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist culture, or in a geographic sense such as Asian, African, and European culture, etc. These great cultures can be distinguished from each other by their typical characters, especially their ways of thinking, forms of expression, and value systems. Intercultural philosophy appreciates cultural specialties and differentiations very much, and particularly concerns itself with the comparison and confrontation between philosophies from different cultures. It aims not only to propose conditions of the possibility of interculturality, but also to solve cultural conflicts.

If we examine the conflicts between any two independent cultures in human history, we can find at least two fundamental factors which are responsible for such conflicts. One of the factors consists of a continual incomprehension or misunderstanding between both cultures, and the other is the persistent incompatibility between their value systems. These two factors engage with each other so closely that we can barely find a consensus between two cultures. Since cultural conflicts are rarely avoided, skeptics would thus speak even of the impossibility of intercultural communication. According to the logic of these skeptics, we must admit that there could not

¹ W.-D. Tsai, "How does a foreign religion survive in an indigenous culture successfully? A comparative study of the spread of foreign religions in the Chinese-speaking culture," *Budhi* 17, no. 3 (2013).

be any kind of intercultural understanding in theory; even if such an understanding could exist, it would not be able to develop further to reach a concrete consensus. However, we can also see from history that such a skeptical claim is not correct because it ignores the historical fact that people from different cultures have at least sometimes successfully communicated with each other about something, and reached some agreements. Even today, numerous examples in areas such as international politics, business, entertainment, or tourism show us very clearly that there is, all the time, at least a minimal understanding between peoples of different cultures, whether explicitly or implicitly. Therefore, we can at least be sure that, even if cultural conflicts can probably not be eradicated, this does not mean that there is no way to reduce it.

Insofar as intercultural philosophy wants to solve cultural conflicts, it has to show us how to reduce such conflicts in practice. Tolerance is an often-mentioned prescription against cultural conflict. For example, the ex-Secretary-General of United Nations Kofi Annan said, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2004, that “Tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity are more essential than ever in a world where peoples are becoming more and more closely interconnected.”² Moreover, it has been claimed that conflicts between peoples could be avoided if we are tolerant towards other peoples. But tolerance means neither patience nor toleration. According to Tran Van Doan,³ patience is simply an attitude of self-restraint when a person meets someone or something beyond his power and control, and toleration is an attitude of a social superior in forgiving a lower-ranking person for his wrongdoings. Neither attitude presupposes respect for others. In contrast, tolerance involves respecting others. Tran argues further that we must recognize the humanity and the right of particularity and diversity in order to be able to respect others.⁴ That is why Annan also mentioned the respect for diversity.

Undeniably, tolerance is necessary for intercultural communication. But simply to be tolerant is not enough for the task of successful communication between two cultures, especially when only one of the two sides is tolerant. One-sided tolerance doesn't necessarily bring people into mutual tolerance, although it may seem that they are in harmony with each other. Actually, it may even bring more harm than benefit to the one who is only tolerant, if he insists simply on sacrificing his personal benefit and refuses to be in conflict with other people. Besides, this one-sided tolerance can avoid conflict only for a short while and, thus, doesn't really contribute to a real harmony between different opinions, only to a superficial one. That is to say, such a harmony indicates the intentional repression of essential dif-

² Kofi Annan, “Secretary-General: Statements, 12 March 2004,” accessed July 14, 2013, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sgsm9195.doc.htm>.

³ Tran, Van Doan, *Politics and Morality* [政治與道德] (Taipei: Taiwan Bookstore, 1998), 207ff.

⁴ Tran, Van Doan, *Politics and Morality*, 218ff.

ferences between both sides and also the temporary postponement of the unavoidable outburst of conflict. Finally, even if the both sides happen to be tolerant of each other, it doesn't guarantee that they will communicate with each other successfully and reach a consensus later. For example, both sides could be completely incomprehensible to each other because of the lack of a common language. Or it is possible that they could disagree with each other because of a lack of common values. In this case, they might simply uncritically give what the other says is their equal right. They would thus regard themselves as tolerant and eventually become value relativists. They think that they show their respect for others, but it is just an appearance, i.e., only a pseudo-respect.

In short, tolerance is not a cure-all for the problem of intercultural communication. Tolerance is, at most, one of the necessary conditions of successful communication, but not the sufficient condition. We need something more concrete to resolve this problem. We should therefore go back to the things themselves, in order to find an appropriate model for intercultural communication. The question now is How? In my view, we could turn to bioethics to get some clues.

As a new area of research in philosophy, bioethics is increasingly emphasized internationally. Bioethics is the ethical reflection on the responsible dealing with living beings in the technological world. The problems that bioethics is engaged in are, nowadays, well-known and urgent, because such problems, which emerge from rapid advancements in the fields of biology and medicine, get worse so quickly that there may not be a social consensus among the various interest groups. Bioethics deals with disputes about euthanasia, abortion, birth control, organ transplantation, reproductive medicine, genetic engineering, prenatal diagnosis, the doctor-patient relationship, and so on, in different disciplines such as medicine, life sciences, ethics, theology, law, and politics. Bioethical issues arise in these various discourses from the outset, and bioethics attempts to find some principles and strategies for moral judgments in order to build some consensus for all disciplines involved. The aggravating problems which the rapid development of the life sciences and medical technology bring to us require a common decision among the various interest groups mentioned above, so that we can cope with human life together responsibly and justifiably. When a common decision is reached, there is a social consensus between the interest groups. And it is astonishing that we can always find some minimal consensus about bioethical issues within our own society, even if it is only regarded as a temporary and unsatisfactory consensus. This fact will be a foundation for me to reflect on how bioethics could be a model for intercultural communication.

Up to now, when people speak of intercultural problems in bioethics, most are concerned about the issue of cultural pluralism and imperialism. On one hand, bioethics as a branch of ethics would like to make a claim to be universal, i.e., to go beyond any single culture, but, on the other hand, it must be applicable in different cultures and therefore adapt to their specific

social norms. The task of bioethics for those people is to show us how it can stand on its claim of universality and at the same time still respect cultural diversity. For this reason, Segun Gbadegesin brings up the concept of 'transcultural Bioethics,' and describes it as the following: "A transcultural bioethics would be a bioethics that is not specific to any single culture, but forms an arena of discussion in which people from diverse cultures can all take part on an equal footing."⁵ What he implies here, with the phrase "on an equal footing," is the critique from non-Western cultures that bioethics is a Western product, i.e., "bioethics is dominated by the West and by the Western ethos of liberal individualism."⁶ Obviously, most discussion in bioethics recognises the human right of individual freedom and autonomy. Western culture attaches much importance to such rights, whereas non-Western cultures do not tend to give priority to them. Under the schema of the opposition between Western and non-Western cultures, some non-Western scholars conclude that the West will impose their core values on the non-West through the globalization of bioethical problems and, thus, extend the territory of its cultural empire. In order to resist cultural imperialism, these scholars take not only a stance of cultural pluralism, but an even more radical stance of value relativism.

Gbadegesin rejects such a radical stance. He recognizes the relativity of cultures, but not the relativity of ethical values.⁷ After all, cultural relativism does not imply ethical relativism. Gbadegesin rejects both cultural imperialism and ethical relativism. He takes bioethics as an arena for dialogue, and looks for some common values that can cross the boundary of cultures and build foundational principles of bioethics. His prescription for finding these common values is "intercultural understanding" and "transcultural dialogue."⁸ He outlines five important stages of transcultural bioethics as follows:⁹

1. Making a serious effort to understand the cultures and values of other peoples;
2. Developing a compendium of values and belief systems across cultures;

⁵ S. Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," in *A Companion to Bioethics*, eds. Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 26.

⁶ Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," 24f..

⁷ Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," 30.

⁸ Undoubtedly, the effort of intercultural understanding is, for Gbadegesin, the key to solving the problems of cultural conflict. It seems that Gbdegesin differentiates between intercultural understanding and transcultural dialogue, and sees intercultural understanding as a stage preceding transcultural dialogue. Since intercultural understanding must presuppose transcultural dialogue, I will suggest that these two concepts refer to an identical process of communication. Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," 26, 30f.

⁹ Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," 30.

3. Promoting intercultural dialogue on the critical analysis of those values and belief systems;
4. Identifying a set of common values that transcend particular cultures; and
5. Using this set of common values in the development of bioethical principles and standards.

Gbadegesin's prescription is more convincing than the above-mentioned prescription of being merely tolerant. Firstly, its two main elements give intercultural communication in bioethics a theoretic justification: intercultural understanding can guarantee cultural diversity and transcultural dialogue can promote ethical universality. Secondly, it offers us a set of procedures that is more concrete than merely shouting slogans, and, therefore, is more promising for reducing cultural conflict and forming intercultural consensus.

Nevertheless Gbadegesin's prescription is still unsatisfactory, because what he presents is still a kind of ideal process, i.e., not at a level of practical operation, but at a level of theoretical principle. Gbadegesin is right insofar as he indicates that the most difficult problem in bioethics is cultural differentiation in value and belief. But he does not seem to be aware that values and belief systems in intercultural communication are integrated with their praxis so intimately that a change of the former always accompanies a change of the latter, and vice versa. For a practical philosophy like bioethics, which is hungry for a social consensus among various interest groups, it is definitely not sufficient to talk about theoretical principles without their practical operations. When Gbadegesin concludes that the most difficult challenge in bioethics occurs not at "the level of the practice of bioethics itself," but "at the level of fundamental ethical values,"¹⁰ he makes much of what to do theoretically, but not how to do it practically. He does not investigate whether and to what extent those theoretical principles are practicable in reality. We could certainly find some cases in which intercultural understanding does not imply the recognition of the ethical values of another culture and, thus, transcultural dialogue eventually remains simply at the level of spoken statement. Gbadegesin's prescription does not give sufficient concrete instruction for us to resolve this key problem of intercultural communication.

The main issue that we encounter here is how the exchange and, ultimately, change in a system of values and beliefs through intercultural communication is possible. What we here can be sure of is: If there are no changes of values and beliefs on both sides, no consensus will be generated. We have to answer a further question: How can we make both sides willing to change themselves in reality? Obviously, neither the attitude of tolerance nor the act of intercultural understanding and transcultural dialogue is able to handle this problem. Therefore we need to investigate the characters and

¹⁰ Gbadegesin, "Bioethics and Cultural Diversity," 27.

practices of bioethics more deeply in order to hit the mark. I will now go into the account of interdisciplinary discourse in bioethics again in order to see whether we could derive from it some advantage for successful intercultural communication.

First, we need to explain how it is possible to see interdisciplinary discourse in bioethics as a kind of intercultural communication. We have seen that the above-mentioned disciplines involved in bioethical discussions are varied and belong to different branches of knowledge. According to the usual classification of the sciences, these disciplines can be divided into two main groups, i.e., the humanities and the natural sciences. The ways of thinking, use of language, and professional interests in both scientific groups are so different from each other, that scientists in both groups usually cannot understand each other very well. It looks as if they live in different worlds or, we might say, in different cultures. In view of this unbridgeable gap between humanists and scientists, C.P. Snow characterizes the two groups of science in his 1959 lecture, "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution," as "two cultures." He sees literary intellectuals and physical scientists as the typical representatives of the two cultures:

Literary intellectuals at one pole – at the other, scientists, and as the most representative, the physical scientists. Between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension – sometimes (particularly among the young) hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding. They have a curious distorted image of each other. Their attitudes are so different that, even on the level of emotion, they can't find much common ground.¹¹

Although the essential differentiation between the humanities and the natural sciences had long been discussed by philosophers, especially between the end of the 19th century and the early 20th century (for example, by Wilhelm Dilthey and Heinrich Rickert), it is Snow who made the opposition of the two kinds of 'science' well known. The two groups that Snow met at that time were "comparable in intelligence, identical in race, not grossly different in social origin, earning about the same incomes," but had little in common "in intellectual, moral and psychological climate."¹² With the term "two cultures," Snow describes literary intellectuals as nostalgic Luddites who are strongly against all new technologies in society, and physicists as optimistic progressives who sincerely use new technologies to improve human well being. Because of mutual misunderstanding and different value systems, they have no common ground from which to communicate and, thus, cannot cooperate with each other well. Since there is no place where the two cultures can meet, they lose the chance to make breakthroughs for creative thought, for example, the discovery of the non-conservation of pari-

¹¹ C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and A Second Look* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 4.

¹² Snow, *The Two Cultures*, 2.

ty by T. D. Lee and C. N. Yang in 1956.¹³ For Snow, the only one way to resolve this problem is through education,¹⁴ but what he really means here is general education in the natural sciences for literary intellectuals. Snow imputes the basic problem of the gulf between the two cultures to the fact that literary intellectuals do not understand natural science. Snow's picture of the two cultures seemed so offensive to many literary intellectuals and so partial to natural scientists that it has given rise to many debates.¹⁵

Although Snow's argument for two cultures is not very carefully constructed and thus not convincing for everyone, it does not undercut his insights that (1) interdisciplinary discourse is also an issue of communication between cultures and that (2) the "enemy" image between the humanities and the natural sciences still prevails. Today both groups of sciences still do not understand each other very well and are even hostile to each other.

From the viewpoint of natural scientists, the opposition of the two sides is about the differentiation between science and non-science. Natural scientists insist that only they can, in the name of science, conduct reliable research and rational discourse; what scholars from the humanities do is basically unreliable and irrational, in sum, non-scientific. On the other side, humanities scholars do not agree on the monopoly of human knowledge by the natural scientists. They might recognize that the natural sciences are right about the physical world, but they don't think that the validity of all human knowledge can be judged exclusively by the standard of the natural sciences.

Especially since 1962, when Thomas Kuhn criticized the traditional notion of science in his famous book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, there are more and more literary intellectuals who do not believe that there can be a clear demarcation between theories of natural science and theories of the humanities. Despite the fact that the opposition between the natural sciences and humanities remains in force, the relation of the two sides may now be seen in from another perspective. A number of scholars in the humanities, especially those whose names are connected with the movement of postmodernism in the late 20th century, have begun to see this relation as a differentiation between autocratic modernity and diverse postmodernity. Postmodernists attack the objectivity and authority of the natural sciences; meanwhile, natural scientists condemn postmodernism as the relativism and irrationalism of the "academic left." Inevitably, it has become part of the so-called "science war" between the natural sciences and the humanities.

A dramatic example of this is found in a recent event involving Alan D. Sokal. In 1996, Sokal, a professor of physics at New York University, published a joke article with the title "Transgressing the Boundaries: toward

¹³ Snow, *The Two Cultures*, 15f.

¹⁴ Snow, *The Two Cultures*, 18.

¹⁵ One especially famous debate is that between British literary critic F. R. Leavis and Snow.

a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity” in the journal *Social Text*, a leading North American journal of cultural studies. His article was rife with terms of postmodernism, and corresponded with the ideology of postmodernism. He alleged that the unity of quantum physics and the theory of relativity will promote a postmodern emancipated science. But as a whole, he wrote only nonsense, and did so on purpose. Directly after his article was published in *Social Text*, he exposed his joke in another journal, *Lingua Franca*. The so-called Sokal affair made many scientists happy, because their suspicion that postmodernists are actually ignorant of the natural sciences was thus proved. The Sokal affair seemed not only to confirm Snow’s concept of two cultures, but also to claim the impossibility of intercultural communication, since the humanities have no knowledge and right to judge what natural scientists do.

Snow’s suggestion was that the only way to bridge the gap between these two cultures is to have scholars in the humanities learn the knowledge and methods of the natural sciences, and use them to deal with things in our life world. In other words, Snow’s solution for intercultural communication was to have all scholars use the conceptual categories of natural sciences in order to speak. It would seem that there would be no cultural conflict between them any more, since they would be talking to each in one language. With his solution, Snow actually reduced *intercultural* communication to *intracultural* communication.

But this matter should not be so easily simplified. Since Snow’s time, there have been many technologies invented with the development of the natural sciences, but also many new problems that involve these new technologies, and that cannot be resolved by the natural sciences alone. The problems which bioethics deals with are good examples. We have learned from such problems that the natural sciences are able to open ‘Pandora’s Box’ and enable human beings to experience more of the possibilities provided by these sciences, but they cannot alone provide sufficient information to enable human beings to make proper decisions concerning such possibilities. To learn the knowledge provided by the natural sciences does not entail being able to use it appropriately and in practice. Therefore, the natural sciences need some help outside of themselves in order to apply themselves in everyday life, especially when they concern affairs in society. In contrary to the natural sciences, which often regard their theories as “value-free,” the humanities are more adept at practical knowledge, and can help to make judgments about value concerning new problems in bioethics. Therefore, there needs to be cooperation, to make a common decision which presupposes a consensus between them. This is because there is no one discipline that can claim the field of life as its domain alone.

Certainly, then, there is at least one field where we see that the natural sciences and the humanities really meet each other, instead of just fighting with each other. In interdisciplinary discussion in bioethics, we can theoretically encounter two kinds of communicative problem. One is the problem of the untranslatability of languages – between the language of the humani-

ties and the language of natural science. Another is the problem of the incommensurability of values – between the values of morality and the values of research. Although both problems seem to be difficult to resolve completely, it does not mean that, hence, we do not have to reach at least a temporary consensus. In fact, the global issues in bioethics force us to communicate in order to arrive at a common decision about what is morally good to do. To this end, we must at first admit the other's right of particularity and try to understand one another. This will open a door for us to alter or modify our own conceptual system of values and beliefs, at least to some extent, so that we can try to be compatible with each other.

In short, the natural sciences and the humanities can really work together in bioethics. Their motivation for interdisciplinary communication is their interdependence and co-involvement on bioethical issues which need to find a workable consensus or, at least, a temporary solution. This motivation is not only valid for intracultural interaction and cooperation, but also for intercultural interaction and cooperation. The common need to reach a consensus is key for intercultural communication in bioethics. The reason why some scholars regard Western values in bioethics as cultural imperialism lies in the fact that the West in the global academic world seems to have no need to be interdependent with the Non-West.

Let us conclude this study by emphasizing that it is not absolutely impossible for two cultures to communicate mutually and to reach a consensus successfully. We could say that the praxis of bioethics can teach us the necessity of interdisciplinary thinking and cooperation.¹⁶ Insofar as interdisciplinary communication is also a kind of intercultural communication, the principles for mutual communication in the praxis of interdisciplinary cooperation could also apply to other intercultural praxis.

Additional Resources

- Chen, R. "Morality Versus Science: The Two Cultures Discourse in 1950s Taiwan." *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* 4 (2010): 99-121.
- Edgerton, D. "C. P. Snow as Anti-Historian of British Science." Translated by Jen-Yun Chou 周任芸. In *科技渴望社會 Science Desires Society*, edited by Chia-ling Wu 吳嘉苓, Daiwie Fu 傅大為 and Sean Hsiang-lin Lei 雷祥麟, Taipei: Socio Publishing, 2004, 107-122.
- Evans, D. *Values in Medicine: What Are We Really Doing to Patients?* New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2008.
- Jacobsen, M. and O. Bruun. *Human Rights and Asian Values: Contesting National Identities and Cultural Representations in Asia*. Oxford: Routledge Curzon, 2006.

¹⁶ See Thomas A. Shannon, *Introduction to Bioethics*, 3rd ed (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1998).

- Höffe, O. *Koexistenz der Kulturen im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*. München: Münchner Kompetenz Zentrum Ethik LMU, 2008.
- Irrgang, B. *Einführung in die Bioethik*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2005.
- Kimmerle, H. *Interkulturelle Philosophie zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius, 2002.
- Kollek, R. "Schritte zur internationalen Verständigung über bioethische Prinzipien," in *Allgemeine Erklärung über Bioethik und Menschenrechte. Wegweiser für die Internationalisierung der Bioethik*, hrg. Dieter Offenhäuser and Lutz Möller. Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission, 2006, 37-49.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1970.
- Paul, G. *Einführung in die interkulturelle Philosophie*. Darmstadt: WBG, 2008.
- Sandel, Michael J. *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010.
- Wellman, C. "Ethical Disagreement and Objective Truth." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 12 (1975): 211-221.
- Wiesemann, C. "Kulturübergreifender Konsens in pluralistischen Gesellschaften? Das Beispiel der Zentralen Ethik-Kommission für Stammzellforschung in Deutschland," in *Gibt es eine universale Bioethik?*, edited by Nikola Biller-Andorno, Peter Schaber and Annetee Schulz-Baldes. Paderborn: Mentis, 2008, 297-307.

Contributors

Gholamreza A'avani is a member of the Iranian Academy of Sciences, and a steering committee member of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) and of the Council for Research and Values in Philosophy. He is an emeritus professor of philosophy at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran and recently has served as the Kenan Rifai Distinguished Professor of Islamic Studies at Peking University, China.

Jove Jim S. Aguas is Professor in the Department of Philosophy/Center for Theology, Religious Studies, and Ethics at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines. He has been President of the Philosophical Association of the Philippines, Vice Executive Governor of the Philippine National Philosophical Research Society, and Editor of *Philosophia: International Journal of Philosophy*. He is also the author of *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)*.

Anthony C. Ajah is Lecturer in Philosophy in the School of General Studies at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His research interests include communicative rationality, deliberative democracy, intercultural philosophy, cross-cultural communication, and the work of Jürgen Habermas.

Thummapud Bharathi is Professor of English at Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (University), Andhra Pradesh, India, and the author of *A History of Telugu Dalit Literature*.

S. R. Bhatt was formerly Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Delhi, and has been Chairman of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research and of the Indian Philosophical Congress. The recipient of many national awards, he is an authority on ancient Indian culture, and his research areas extend to Indian logic, epistemology, and ethics. He is a member of the Executive Council of the Sanchi University of Buddhist and Indic Studies, Madhya Pradesh.

Oliva Blanchette was Professor of Philosophy at Boston College, Boston, MA. His areas of research included philosophy of liberation, metaphysics, ethics, Hegel, and Maurice Blondel. He was a former president of the Metaphysical Society of America, and won its J.N. Findlay Award for his book *Philosophy of Being: A Reconstructive Essay in Metaphysics*.

Gang Chen studied at Wuhan University, Cambridge University, and the University of Western Ontario in Canada, and is currently Professor of Philosophy at Huazhong University of Science and Technology, in Wuhan, China. His research specialties are philosophy of mind, metaphysics, history of science, philosophy of science, and philosophy of language.

Cheng Sumei is Professor at the Institute of Philosophy, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and deputy editor of *Philosophy Analysis*. Research areas include the philosophy of science and philosophy of physics.

Dan Chițoiu is Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy and Social-Political Sciences at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, Romania. Among his books are *Persoană, lume, realitate ultimă. Filosofare și spiritualitate în Răsăritul Creștin; Founding Ideas of the Eastern-European Cultural Horizon; Repere în filosofia bizantină;* and *Virtute și cunoaștere la Platon*. His research

interests include Byzantine culture and philosophy, the spirituality of the Christian East, Eastern philosophy, phenomenology, and the character of intercultural encounters.

Indra Nath Choudhuri has been engaged in academics, administration and cultural diplomacy. He taught at Delhi University and the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras, and was the first Tagore Chair at The Scottish Centre for Tagore Studies at Edinburgh Napier University. He has also served as Academic Director, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, and as Director of The Nehru Centre, London, England.

Wilhelm Dancă is Professor and Dean in the Faculty of Catholic Theology, at the University of Bucharest (Romania). He has published 19 books, 12 as sole author, and was editor in chief of the journal *Dialog teologic* (Iasi). He is a Knight of the National Order of "Faithful Service," a member of European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and a member of the Romanian Academy.

H. Daniel Deí is Director at the Ethical Research Center in the Department of Humanities and Arts of the National University of Lanús, in Argentina. Among his books are *De amor y soledad*; *Elementos de Antropología Cristiana Clásica*; *La objetividad en ciencias sociales*; *Poder y libertad en la sociedad posmoderna*; *Antropodicea: La cuestión del hombre*; and *The Human Being in History: Freedom, Power, and Shared Ontological Meaning*.

Pham Van Duc is Vice-President of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and a Member of the Steering Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies. He is the author of many books and articles, including the recent book *Practical Issues and Social Philosophy in Vietnam Today*.

Mark Gedney is Professor of Philosophy at Gordon College, Wenham, MA. He received his PhD from Boston University, and served as Associate Program Coordinator for the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy and as the Associate Editor of the *Proceedings* (in 12 volumes). His teaching and research interests include ontology, continental philosophy (including Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Nietzsche, Ricoeur, Derrida, and Lévinas), philosophy of religion, and social and political philosophy.

Chrysoula Gitsoulis is Adjunct Associate Professor of Philosophy at City College, City University of New York. She has also taught at the University of Maryland University College, the Fashion Institute of Technology, and the Stevens Institute of Technology. Her research interests include Wittgenstein's philosophical method and its applications and, more generally, issues in moral and political philosophy.

Workineh Kelbessa is Professor of Philosophy at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. He studied at Addis Ababa University, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and the University of Wales, Cardiff. He is the author of two books and numerous articles in referred journals. His research focuses on environmental philosophy, development ethics, and African philosophy.

A. T. Kulsaryieva is Vice-Provost of Academic Affairs at the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University in Almaty, Kazakhstan. She does research in cultural studies, ethics, and aesthetics, and has particular interests in gender studies, cultural sociology, and the ontological meaning of the metaphor of "cultural trauma."

Wilfred Lajul was Chair of the Department of Philosophy in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. He has carried out extensive research in East and West Africa on traditional African social and political philosophy, traditional epistemology, and traditional metaphysics. Among his publications is his book, *African Philosophy: Critical Dimensions*.

Benedetta Lanfranchi was Research Fellow at the Makerere Institute of Social Research, Kampala, Uganda, teaching pre-Modern and Modern social and political thought. She obtained her PhD in African Philosophy from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London with a thesis on traditions of justice in Acholiland.

Katia Lenehan is Associate Professor at Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan, and former Director of the Institute of Scholastic Philosophy, Fu Jen Academia Catholica. Her areas of specialization include the philosophy of art, philosophy of education, Scholastic philosophy, and phenomenology, and she is the author of *Beauty and Goodness in Jacques Maritain's Theory of Art*.

Ruth M. Lucier received her PhD from the University of Maryland. She taught at Northern Arizona University and at Bennett College (Greensboro, NC, USA), where she also served as Coordinator/Director of the Interdisciplinary Studies Traditional Option Program.

Troy R. Mack obtained his PhD in Philosophical Studies from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He has taught at a number of institutions, including Fairleigh Dickinson University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and Pace University, New York. His research interests include healthcare, community organising, and human rights.

John Panteleimon Manoussakis is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA) and Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University.

Geeta Mehta is retired Head of the Department of Philosophy at the K. J. Somaiya College of Arts and Commerce, and former Director of the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Studies in Jainism, Mumbai, India. Research areas include the philosophy of the 20th century Indian advocate of nonviolence and human rights, Acharya Vinoba Bhave.

Sotiris Mitralaxis received his doctorate in philosophy from the Freie Universität Berlin (2014) and is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the City University of Istanbul as well as Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Winchester, UK.

Jurate Morkuniene is a member of the Department of Philosophy at Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius, Lithuania. She has published several books, on themes such as the philosophical problems of humanism, social philosophy, the information technology society, and globalization and the culture of peace and tolerance. Her research areas include modern social philosophy, the methodology of modern social cognition, and the philosophy of human rights.

Héctor Muzzopappa teaches at the Universidad Nacional de Lanús, Argentina, where he also serves as Director del Instituto de Cultura. From 1998 to 2014 he was Director of the Departamento de Humanidades y Artes. His research interests include the history of Argentine ideas and culture and philosophical theories of democracy.

Alois Agus Nugroho studied in Jakarta and in Belgium (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), and is Professor of Philosophy and Ethics at the School of Business Administration and Communication, Atma Jaya Catholic University, Jakarta. His research includes business ethics, corporate culture, hermeneutics, the ethics of communication; and intercultural communication. Among his many books and articles is a co-authored book, *Sejarah pemikiran Hak-hak Asasi Manusia di Indonesia (The History of the Idea of Human Rights in Indonesia)*, with Andre A. Hardjana and Anhar Gonggong.

Jānis (John) Tāivaldis Ozoliņš is Professor in the School of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia, and is a Foreign Member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. His research interests include the philosophy of education, social and political philosophy, philosophy of science, comparative philosophy, and metaphysics (especially Thomistic metaphysics). He is the author or editor of a number of books concerning philosophy and education as well as health care ethics, and is the Editor of *Res Disputandae* (formerly *Ethics Education*).

Sreekala M. Nair is Professor at the Philosophy Department in the Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit in Kalady, Kerala, India. She has served as a member of the council of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research and as Joint Secretary of the Indian Philosophical Congress. Her areas of primary scholarly interest are contemporary epistemological issues, Buddhist philosophy, philosophy of religion, Indian philosophy of language, contemporary analytic metaphysics, consciousness studies (Indian), and Indian aesthetics.

Rhonda Padilla is President of the Panpacific University North Philippines, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, Philippines.

Engelbert C. Pasag teaches philosophy and business at the University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City, Philippines, and the Asian Institute of Management.

Konstantinos Polias earned his PhD from the Athens School of Fine Arts with a dissertation on Kant's *Critique of Judgment* and its reception in post-Kantian philosophy of language. He has also conducted research on Kant and Friedrich Schlegel at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Marburg.

Tran Tuan Phong is Vice-Director of the Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, and Deputy Editor-in-chief in charge of the *Vietnam Social Sciences Review*. He is also an Editorial consultant for *Prajñā Vihāra: Journal of Philosophy and Religion* from Assumption University, Thailand.

Wen-berng Pong is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy of the National Taiwan University, Taipei. He teaches German Idealism and, in particular, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and his research interests are Fichte, Kant, ethics and, more specifically, comparative studies of contemporary Neo-Confucianism and German Idealism.

Ruzana Pskhu is Professor at the People's Friendship University of Russia. Principal research interests include the history of Indian philosophy, the history of Arab-Muslim philosophy, and philosophical methodology. She has also published translations of medieval philosophical treatises from the Arabic and Sanskrit languages, with commentaries.

Mogobe B. Ramose obtained his PhD at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. Exiled from South Africa due to the policy of apartheid, he worked at the University of Zimbabwe, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, and at the Katholieke Universiteit Brabant in the Netherlands. After 1994, he was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Venda, at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, and at University of Limpopo, Sovenga, South Africa. He is a member of the Steering Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies.

Luiz Paulo Rouanet is Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Method at the Universidade Federal de São João Del-Rei, Brazil. He did post-doctoral work on Kant's philosophy of nature and on "Being" in Parmenides, and also does research on peace, justice, and tolerance in the contemporary world. He has edited several anthologies, including *Razao minima* (2004) and *Ética e direitos dos animais* (2016).

Rekha Singh teaches in the Department of Philosophy of the B. R Ambedkar Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar, India.

R. C. Sinha is Professor and former Head in the Department of Philosophy at Patna University, India, and a fellow of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research. He is the author of *Samkalina Bhartiya Chintak* and *Samaj Darshan evam Rajniti Darshan ki Rooprekha* (1994), and has edited two volumes of *Dimensions of Philosophy* (2012).

Vassiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou was Associate Professor in ancient Greek philosophy at the University of Ioannina, Greece; the author of *Polis and Aristotle: The World of the Greek Polis and its Impact upon some Fundamental Aspects of Aristotle's Practical Philosophy*; and a Co-editor of *Philosophy and Crisis: Responding to Challenges to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World* (with Golfo Maggini, Helen Karabatzaki, and Konstantinos D. Koskeridis).

Marietta Stepanyants is the holder of the UNESCO chair, "Philosophy in the Dialogue of Cultures," and Chief Research Fellow at the Department of Oriental Philosophies, Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Research areas include the history of oriental philosophies (especially Muslim philosophy and modern Indian philosophy), comparative philosophy, and intercultural dialogue. She is also an active member of the Academy of Humanities and was first Vice-President of FISP (the International Federation of Philosophical Societies) from 2008 to 2013.

William Sweet is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Centre for Philosophy, Theology, and Cultural Traditions at St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Canada. He is President of the World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies, and a past-president of the Canadian Philosophical Association and of the Istituto Internazionale Jacques Maritain (Rome). His most recent books are *Migrating Texts and Traditions* (2012), *Ideas under Fire* (2013), *What is Intercultural Philosophy?* (2014) and *Care of Self and Meaning of Life* (2015, with Cristal Huang). He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

Wei-Ding Tsai studied at the University of Munich, has taught at Tunghai University, Taiwan, and teaches in the Department of Philosophy of the National Chengchi University, in Taiwan. His research areas focus on hermeneutics and phenomenology, and he has published on the ontological turn of hermeneu-

tics (e.g., Heidegger and Gadamer), the aesthetics of poetry, Western and Eastern cultural traditions, cross-cultural communication in a globalized environment, bioethics, and the ethics of care.

Stelios (Stylianos) Virvidakis studied philosophy at the University of Athens, the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, and Princeton University. He is currently Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Philosophy and History of Science of the University of Athens and is a member of the Steering Committee of FISP.

Wang Shang-Wen is Director of Guna Chakra Research Center in the Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand. He did doctoral studies in philosophical musicology at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany, and in philosophy at the National Taiwan University. Research interests are in hermeneutics, critical theory, historical musicology, and aesthetics.

Yan Lianfu teaches philosophy in the School of Humanities and Social Science and in the College of Marxism, Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an City, China. Research areas include Marxist philosophy, ideological and political education, and the comparison between Chinese and Western philosophy.

Yu Xuanmeng 俞宣孟 was Professor and Director of the Institute of Philosophy at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. He has co-edited a number of volumes in English, such as *Chinese Cultural Traditions and Modernization* (with Wang Miaoyang and George F. McLean); *Beyond Modernization: Chinese Roots for Global Awareness* (with Wang Miaoyang and George F. McLean); *Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age* (with He Xirong); and *Exploring the Root and Seeking for the Origin: Essays from a New Round of Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy* (with He Xirong).

Zhuldyz A. Zhumashova is a teacher in the section of foreign philology and general linguistics of the Faculty of Philology, Literary Studies and World Languages, at the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, in Kazakhstan. Research interests include anthropology, Kazakh-Turkic culture, the semiotic analysis of national culture including the culture of the family, comparative studies in Western, Russian, and Islamic culture, and intercultural dialogue.

Index

A

abstraction, 38, 86, 101, 232, 233, 236, 248, 385, 391, 482
Adorno, 162, 172
Advaita, 11, 189, 190, 191, 192, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 202
aesthetic, 12, 26, 36, 37, 88, 122, 123, 143, 162, 201, 228, 229, 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 269, 332, 339, 345, 346, 347, 399, 443, 476, 477, 478
agnostic, 30, 35, 110
Ahimsa, 434, 435, 437, 439, 440, 445, 446, 451
alienation, 344, 386, 427, 529, 530, 538
Anekantavada, iii, 8, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 446, 451
anti-foundationalism, 534
Aquinas, 12, 112, 113, 119, 120, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 142, 143, 216, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 236, 238, 242, 467
Arendt, iv, 12, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276
Aristotle, 33, 81, 82, 84, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 109, 111, 117, 146, 147, 176, 180, 181, 184, 216, 250, 266, 277, 279, 281, 282, 463, 467, 476, 524
atheist, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 33
atman, iv, 11, 190, 192
Augustine, 112, 120, 126, 127, 129, 135, 205
Aurobindo, 8, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93

B

Bantu, 7, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 427, 432
benevolence, 34, 286, 374

Bioethics, v, 19, 539, 541, 542, 543, 547
Buddhism, 13, 190, 206, 320, 350, 393, 539
Cassirer, 14, 38, 45, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338
caste, 80, 81, 82, 86, 88, 89, 90, 96, 394, 451

C

Christianity, 12, 23, 61, 104, 105, 258, 261, 359, 360, 395, 475, 477, 533, 535, 537
civil society, 274, 433, 474
civilization, 15, 28, 62, 92, 184, 213, 352, 353, 354, 355, 357, 358, 364, 481, 488, 496, 511
colonialism, 5, 68, 290, 374
communicative rationality, 71, 75
Confucianism, 13, 164, 207, 211, 212, 213, 284, 287, 289, 290, 316, 320, 453
consciousness, 11, 13, 15, 77, 78, 81, 84, 86, 100, 113, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 125, 126, 127, 131, 145, 157, 173, 182, 184, 189, 190, 192, 193, 196, 198, 199, 200, 202, 203, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 212, 213, 214, 219, 224, 225, 280, 282, 283, 297, 298, 300, 317, 318, 325, 337, 339, 342, 343, 354, 355, 356, 357, 362, 368, 381, 393, 395, 419, 450, 479, 480, 481, 533, 536
Cottingham, 24, 25, 26, 28, 32, 34, 35, 36
Cultural Diversity, 542, 543
cultural identity, 7, 15, 16, 479

D

Daoism, 164, 284, 453
democracy, 5, 15, 17, 83, 84, 89, 90, 97, 205, 292, 367, 378, 379,

380, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 536
 Derrida, 4, 202, 346
 Descartes, 63, 104, 105, 106, 120, 205, 216, 224, 277, 281, 294, 298, 300, 302, 319, 320, 332
Dharma, 89, 92, 433, 439, 444, 445
 dialogue, 11, 15, 73, 77, 78, 123, 129, 144, 159, 161, 180, 181, 182, 205, 211, 212, 214, 215, 352, 383, 385, 404, 419, 431, 432, 482, 483, 485, 487, 522, 540, 542, 543
 dignity, 68, 88, 89, 260, 272, 426, 427, 432, 456, 495, 534, 535
 disenchantment, 28, 125
 diversity, 5, 6, 14, 16, 65, 69, 115, 147, 157, 190, 215, 218, 369, 373, 374, 376, 382, 383, 395, 397, 431, 449, 468, 470, 479, 496, 504, 506, 531, 540, 542, 543
 Dostoevsky, 15, 361, 362
 duty, 50, 52, 86, 139, 268, 340, 431, 440, 441, 497, 512, 515, 517, 518
 Dworkin, 28, 29, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37

E
 Eco, 12, 228, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 241, 242
 economy, 70, 245, 328, 352, 353, 367, 453, 462, 463, 464, 471, 495, 523
 embodiment, 6, 10, 11, 12, 16, 177, 187, 209, 211, 244, 247, 248, 251, 253, 255, 256, 257, 334, 383, 419
 empiricism, 52, 66, 281
 Engels, 277, 376, 386
 enlightenment, 23, 77, 78, 209, 213
 eternity, 31, 88, 141, 196
 ethicotheology, 40, 41, 42, 46, 48, 51
 European Union, 479, 485, 525

evil, 35, 88, 91, 138, 153, 185, 260, 288, 361, 419, 442, 456, 487, 524, 533
 expertise, 244, 247, 248, 249, 250, 255

F

Foucault, 12, 34, 35, 185, 202, 206, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 274, 346

G

Gadamer, 239, 258, 279, 280, 385, 393, 394, 403, 467, 487
 Gandhi, 92, 93, 433, 446, 451
 Geertz, 4, 366
 Ghika, 9, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143
 Giddens, 17, 453, 454, 456, 457
 Gyekye, 7, 16, 402

H

Habermas, 7, 28, 49, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 215, 487, 495, 497
 happiness, 24, 33, 35, 91, 98, 172, 180, 182, 184, 202, 274, 324, 387, 388, 389, 436
 harmony, 27, 88, 89, 93, 96, 97, 122, 123, 163, 167, 168, 203, 207, 215, 233, 237, 304, 350, 366, 379, 407, 412, 415, 430, 431, 442, 445, 446, 447, 540
 Hegel, 45, 72, 110, 111, 116, 205, 267, 277, 278, 279, 341, 342, 344, 375, 405, 478
 Heidegger, 110, 111, 114, 115, 120, 125, 248, 277, 282, 283, 284, 293, 306, 346, 486, 487
 Herder, 3, 339, 478
 hermeneutic, 75, 394, 403, 417
 Ho Chi Minh, 15, 16, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 387, 388, 389
 Hountondji, 58, 59, 61, 68, 71, 401
 human rights, 16, 418, 421, 426, 427, 432, 471, 525, 528, 534, 535

humanism, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30,
36, 105, 246, 261, 263, 293,
475, 476, 534, 535, 536

humanity, 11, 14, 18, 43, 44, 45,
46, 48, 51, 54, 89, 92, 120, 150,
154, 163, 203, 212, 213, 259,
261, 292, 338, 342, 343, 344,
352, 355, 357, 364, 368, 384,
385, 386, 387, 413, 420, 442,
445, 464, 479, 484, 497, 498,
502, 515, 524, 540

Husserl, 110, 116, 120, 124, 125,
127, 130, 180, 190, 282, 283

I

immanence, 31, 110, 111, 119

indigenous, 18, 57, 59, 406, 422,
424, 425, 426, 429, 430, 432,
504, 505, 507, 509, 510, 519,
520, 521, 522, 539

individualism, 292, 529, 538, 542

intercultural philosophy, 7, 69, 78,
79, 419, 539, 540

Intercultural philosophy, 79, 539

Islam, 49, 104, 395, 454

J

Jain, 17, 433, 434, 436, 440, 441,
442, 443, 444, 445, 447, 450,
451

jiva, 11, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193,
194, 195, 196, 198, 199, 202

John Paul, 11, 216, 218, 219, 221

Johnston, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36,
201

Judaism, 23, 59, 395

justice, 7, 16, 18, 19, 23, 25, 80,
81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 93, 114,
178, 280, 324, 345, 352, 364,
378, 379, 395, 407, 418, 420,
421, 422, 423, 425, 426, 427,
430, 432, 468, 475, 499, 504,
517, 519, 520, 522, 528, 531,
532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537,
538

K

Kagame, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63,
64, 65, 66

Kant, 4, 7, 9, 13, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42,
43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50,
51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 61, 62,
64, 99, 102, 104, 105, 107, 108,
109, 117, 122, 123, 130, 144,
145, 269, 271, 272, 273, 277,
280, 281, 306, 307, 308, 309,
310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315,
316, 317, 319, 368, 405, 497

Kitcher, 6, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30,
37

L

Laotse, 165, 166

Laozi, 165, 285

law, 4, 44, 50, 83, 85, 107, 119,
135, 153, 207, 211, 267, 297,
315, 316, 334, 338, 343, 412,
434, 444, 467, 474, 497, 501,
515, 523, 524, 533, 535, 541

Lévinas, 6, 7, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43,
44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 51, 54, 55,
56, 110, 115, 127, 279, 284, 395

love, 10, 31, 35, 36, 88, 91, 97,
104, 129, 136, 138, 158, 160,
161, 163, 174, 177, 178, 179,
180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185,
186, 217, 279, 323, 324, 366,
434, 435, 442, 534, 536

M

Marion, 8, 111, 120, 121, 122, 124,
125

Maritain, 12, 19, 132, 133, 228,
230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 236,
238, 242, 528, 532, 533, 534,
535, 536, 537, 538

Marx, 72, 75, 267, 332, 338, 342,
343, 344, 345, 348, 375, 381,
382, 385, 386, 478

materialism, 8, 31, 88, 105, 277,
278, 294, 343, 361

mathematics, 140, 255, 281, 296,
326, 328, 329, 354, 478

Mbiti, 408, 414

McLean, 2, 20, 485
 McLuhan, 355, 356, 357
 Mencius, 210, 289, 468
 Mengzi, 467
 Merleau-Ponty, 115, 116, 127, 206,
 248, 255
 Mou Zongsan, 13, 289, 306, 307,
 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313,
 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319
 multiculturalism, 16, 390, 391,
 393, 394, 395, 399
 mystical, 3, 9, 29, 33, 34, 155, 156,
 157, 158, 161, 197, 200, 261,
 398, 403

N

Nagel, 25, 26, 27, 35, 466
 naturalism, 27, 28, 31, 36
 Niffary, 9, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161
 Nussbaum, 180, 524

O

Odera Oruka, 61, 518
 ontology, 9, 13, 38, 46, 54, 55, 56,
 58, 59, 64, 65, 66, 117, 144,
 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151,
 152, 153, 176, 206, 208, 211,
 282, 283, 307, 320, 331, 419,
 421

P

phenomenology, 8, 31, 35, 42, 51,
 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115,
 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121,
 122, 124, 125, 127, 131, 190,
 205, 206, 208, 210, 211, 212,
 235, 237, 238, 244, 247, 255,
 277, 278, 282, 283
 Plato, 10, 27, 35, 38, 39, 63, 66,
 72, 83, 84, 99, 100, 101, 102,
 104, 105, 106, 122, 123, 130,
 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179,
 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185,
 186, 205, 264, 271, 277, 279,
 280, 281, 282, 338, 452, 474,
 475
 pluralism, 8, 49, 94, 147, 541
 Polanyi, 251, 252, 253, 254

psyche, 11, 216, 217, 221, 222,
 225, 226, 396

R

rationalism, 52, 106, 263, 281
 Rawls, 82, 84, 85, 86, 496, 500
 recognition, 16, 390
 refugees, 460, 464
 relativism, 7, 8, 78, 153, 354, 446,
 447, 531, 542, 545
 Ricoeur, 12, 115, 454
 Rorty, 27, 454, 470, 535
 Rousseau, 341, 476
 Rumi, 10, 99

S

Schiller, 2, 3, 96, 173
 secular, 6, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29,
 30, 32, 33, 36, 37, 203, 290,
 398, 537
 secular age, 537
 secularism, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30
 self-cultivation, 236, 241, 242,
 288, 383, 384, 385
 Senghor, 70, 71
Serat Wédhatama, 17, 456, 457
 Shankara, 11, 189, 190, 192, 195,
 199, 200, 201
 Smuts, 16, 419, 425, 426, 427, 429,
 430, 431, 432
 Snow, 544, 545, 546, 547
 Solidarity, v, 15, 370, 371, 374,
 375, 377, 380, 470
soma, 11, 217, 221, 222, 225, 226
 subaltern, 5, 7, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85,
 86
 sublime, 32, 40, 44, 46, 47, 49, 395
 Sufi, 9, 10, 99, 157, 159
 Sweet, 10, 19, 23, 33, 69, 391, 419,
 528, 533
 Syadvada, 96, 97

T

Tao, 9, 99, 162, 165, 166, 168,
 170, 172, 173, 213, 495
 Taylor, 19, 28, 29, 197, 384, 428,
 528, 532, 537

technology, 26, 28, 90, 91, 172,
245, 246, 248, 249, 254, 276,
291, 296, 355, 356, 357, 433,
445, 496, 498, 499, 510, 512,
536, 541
teleology, 32, 40, 42, 45, 51, 53,
123, 130, 131
Tempels, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64,
66
tolerance, 91, 96, 377, 437, 443,
445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 480,
481, 498, 531, 540, 541, 543
toleration, 447, 531, 540
Tolstoy, 15, 362
traditionalism, 68, 70, 71
transcendence, 8, 26, 29, 31, 33,
37, 38, 47, 56, 72, 113, 115,
116, 118, 119, 120, 145, 150,
151, 152, 153, 197, 211, 212,
223, 224, 247, 317, 318, 357,
385, 398

U

Ubuntu, 16, 418, 425, 431, 432
unity, 11, 12, 31, 39, 41, 42, 43,
44, 48, 53, 55, 72, 74, 75, 77,
84, 92, 96, 116, 126, 146, 147,
153, 177, 183, 191, 199, 202,
216, 217, 220, 223, 225, 226,

228, 229, 234, 237, 244, 247,
272, 341, 350, 351, 354, 357,
366, 372, 373, 374, 375, 377,
378, 379, 382, 393, 445, 449,
450, 456, 457, 479, 546

Universal Declaration of Human
Rights, 16, 17, 418, 471, 472

V

Vedanta-sutras, 199, 200, 201
violence, 17, 91, 96, 98, 264, 265,
269, 271, 332, 344, 365, 418,
434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439,
440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445,
446, 447, 450, 451, 537
Wang Yangming, 207, 210
Wiredu, 7, 68, 69, 70, 79, 518, 520
Wittgenstein, 14, 26, 33, 152, 196,
323, 325, 327, 328, 329, 330,
467
Wojtyła, 11, 216, 217, 218, 219,
220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225,
226

Z

Zhang Zailin, 11, 204, 206, 207,
210, 211, 212, 213



Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change

Series I. Culture and Values

- I.1 *Research on Culture and Values: Intersection of Universities, Churches and Nations*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 0819173533 (paper).
- I.2 *The Knowledge of Values: A Methodological Introduction to the Study of Values*. A. Lopez Quintas, ed. ISBN 081917419x (paper).
- I.3 *Reading Philosophy for the XXIst Century*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 0819174157 (paper).
- I.4 *Relations between Cultures*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180089 (paper).
- I.5 *Urbanization and Values*. John A. Kromkowski, ed. ISBN 1565180100 (paper).
- I.6 *The Place of the Person in Social Life*. Paul Peachey and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565180127 (paper).
- I.7 *Abrahamic Faiths, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts*. Paul Peachey, George F. McLean and John A. Kromkowski, eds. ISBN 1565181042 (paper).
- I.8 *Ancient Western Philosophy: The Hellenic Emergence*. George F. McLean and Patrick J. Aspell, eds. ISBN 156518100X (paper).
- I.9 *Medieval Western Philosophy: The European Emergence*. Patrick J. Aspell, ed. ISBN 1565180941 (paper).
- I.10 *The Ethical Implications of Unity and the Divine in Nicholas of Cusa*. David L. De Leonardis. ISBN 1565181123 (paper).
- I.11 *Ethics at the Crossroads: 1. Normative Ethics and Objective Reason*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180224 (paper).
- I.12 *Ethics at the Crossroads: 2. Personalist Ethics and Human Subjectivity*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180240 (paper).
- I.13 *The Emancipative Theory of Jürgen Habermas and Metaphysics*. Robert Badillo. ISBN 1565180429 (paper).
- I.14 *The Deficient Cause of Moral Evil According to Thomas Aquinas*. Edward Cook. ISBN 1565180704 (paper).
- I.15 *Human Love: Its Meaning and Scope, a Phenomenology of Gift and Encounter*. Alfonso Lopez Quintas. ISBN 1565180747 (paper).
- I.16 *Civil Society and Social Reconstruction*. George F. McLean, ed. ISBN 1565180860 (paper).
- I.17 *Ways to God, Personal and Social at the Turn of Millennia: The Iqbal Lecture, Lahore*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181239 (paper).
- I.18 *The Role of the Sublime in Kant's Moral Metaphysics*. John R. Goodreau. ISBN 1565181247 (paper).

- I.19 *Philosophical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization*. Oliva Blanchette, Tomonobu Imamichi and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 1565181298 (paper).
- I.20 *Faith, Reason and Philosophy: Lectures at The al-Azhar, Qom, Tehran, Lahore and Beijing; Appendix: The Encyclical Letter: Fides et Ratio*. George F. McLean. ISBN 156518130 (paper).
- I.21 *Religion and the Relation between Civilizations: Lectures on Cooperation between Islamic and Christian Cultures in a Global Horizon*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181522 (paper).
- I.22 *Freedom, Cultural Traditions and Progress: Philosophy in Civil Society and Nation Building, Tashkent Lectures, 1999*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181514 (paper).
- I.23 *Ecology of Knowledge*. Jerzy A. Wojciechowski. ISBN 1565181581 (paper).
- I.24 *God and the Challenge of Evil: A Critical Examination of Some Serious Objections to the Good and Omnipotent God*. John L. Yardan. ISBN 1565181603 (paper).
- I.25 *Reason, Rationality and Reasonableness, Vietnamese Philosophical Studies, I*. Tran Van Doan. ISBN 1565181662 (paper).
- I.26 *The Culture of Citizenship: Inventing Postmodern Civic Culture*. Thomas Bridges. ISBN 1565181689 (paper).
- I.27 *The Historicity of Understanding and the Problem of Relativism in Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Osman Bilen. ISBN 1565181670 (paper).
- I.28 *Speaking of God*. Carlo Huber. ISBN 1565181697 (paper).
- I.29 *Persons, Peoples and Cultures in a Global Age: Metaphysical Bases for Peace between Civilizations*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181875 (paper).
- I.30 *Hermeneutics, Tradition and Contemporary Change: Lectures in Chennai/Madras, India*. George F. McLean. ISBN 1565181883 (paper).
- I.31 *Husserl and Stein*. Richard Feist and William Sweet, eds. ISBN 1565181948 (paper).
- I.32 *Paul Hanly Furfey's Quest for a Good Society*. Bronislaw Misztal, Francesco Villa and Eric Sean Williams, eds. ISBN 1565182278 (paper).
- I.33 *Three Theories of Society*. Paul Hanly Furfey. ISBN 9781565182288 (paper).
- I.34 *Building Peace in Civil Society: An Autobiographical Report from a Believers' Church*. Paul Peachey. ISBN 9781565182325 (paper).
- I.35 *Karol Wojtyla's Philosophical Legacy*. Agnes B. Curry, Nancy Mardas and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 9781565182479 (paper).
- I.36 *Kantian Imperatives and Phenomenology's Original Forces*. Randolph C. Wheeler. ISBN 9781565182547 (paper).
- I.37 *Beyond Modernity: The Recovery of Person and Community in Global Times: Lectures in China and Vietnam*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182578 (paper).

- I.38 *Religion and Culture*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182561 (paper).
- I.39 *The Dialogue of Cultural Traditions: Global Perspective*. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Tomonobu Imamichi, Safak Ural and O. Faruk Akyol, eds. ISBN 9781565182585 (paper).
- I.40 *Unity and Harmony, Love and Compassion in Global Times*. George F. McLean. ISBN 9781565182592 (paper).
- I.41 *Intercultural Dialogue and Human Rights*. Luigi Bonanate, Roberto Papini and William Sweet, eds. ISBN 9781565182714 (paper).
- I.42 *Philosophy Emerging from Culture*. William Sweet, George F. McLean, Oliva Blanchette and Wonbin Park, eds. ISBN 9781565182851 (paper).
- I.43 *Whence Intelligibility?* Louis Perron, ed. ISBN 9781565182905 (paper).
- I.44 *What Is Intercultural Philosophy?* William Sweet, ed. ISBN 978 1 565182912 (paper).
- I.45 *Romero's Legacy 2: Faith in the City: Poverty, Politics, and Peacebuilding*. Foreword by Robert T. McDermott. Pilar Hogan Closkey, Kevin Moran and John P. Hogan, eds. ISBN 9781565182981 (paper).
- I.46 *Cultural Clash and Religion*. William Sweet, ed. ISBN 9781565183100 (paper).
- I.47 *Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*. William Sweet, ed. ISBN 9781565182721 (paper).
- I.48 *Philosophy as Love of Wisdom and Its Relevance to the Global Crisis of Meaning*. Patrick Laude and Peter Jonkers, eds. ISBN 978156518 3391 (paper).
- I.49 *George F. McLean: Reminiscences and Reflections*. William Sweet and Hu Yeping, eds. ISBN 9781565183438 (paper).
- I-50 *Philosophy Re-engaging Cultures and Ways of Life*. William Sweet and George F. McLean, eds. ISBN 9781565183384 (paper).

The series is published by: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Gibbons Hall B20, 620 Michigan Avenue, NE, Washington, DC, 20064; Telephone: 202/319-6089; Email: cua-rvp@cua.edu; website: www.cryp.org. All titles are available in paper except as noted.

The series is distributed by: The Council for Research on Values and Philosophy-OST, 285 Oblate Drive, San Antonio, T.X., 78216; Phone: (210)341-1366 x205; Email: mmartin@ost.edu.

