REASONING IN FAITH:
Cultural Foundations
for Civil Society and
Globalization

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

It is something of a truism that the first millennium was focused on God. Under the impact of Christ and Mohammed, a truly new era opened and the thousand years to follow were concerned largely with discovering its implications for human life. This developed both vertically the dignity and spiritual depth of humankind and horizontally as Christianity and Islam spread West across Europe and north Africa, along with the renewal of Hinduism and the spread of Buddhism north across China to Japan.

Correspondingly it is said that the second millennium has been focused on, and by, human reason. In the first half of this millennium reason was invigorated by the rediscovery of the Aristotelian corpus by Islamic and Christian scholars, leading to an unfolding of faith in the great Commentaries and Summas of the high Middle Ages.

In the second half of that millenniumthis was radicalized at the beginning of the modern period by Bacon's call to break the idols which bore the heritage of human experience, Descartes' directive to put all under doubt and Locke's idea of beginning again from a blank tablet upon which only highly controlled clear and distinct ideas could be inscribed. In the Enlightenment reason tended to position itself against the faith. The result was a highly focused, abstractive and anemic structure of technical reason.

Recently this structure has been radically questioned. If the cold war was its natural *reductio ad extremum*, then the implosion of communism in `89 and the radical questioning of the matching free market ideology in `98 suggest that the modern Promethean hubris of reason is no longer sustainable. Moreover, the post modern critique of modernity in the modern terms of power and control threatens to demolish not only reason, but meaning and the value of human life as well.

At this turn of the millennia it now becomes clear that reason alone will not do and that there is need of a new synthesis of the focus of the first millennium on the divine and that of the second millennium on the human—or, more precisely, of faith and reason. The question is no longer whether there is room for faith in an age of reason, but how faith can defend reason by helping to lay firm foundations for human life, its spiritual dignity and hence its range of awareness (see *Fides et Ratio*). In this light reason is seen not as an enemy of faith; instead, faith appears as the context and defender of reason. Reason, in turn, is needed by faith in order to articulate its humane and spiritual vision of life in an ever more complex age.

In this it meets the new reality of globalization, taken not economically and politically as a horizontal subjection and control of the nations of the world, but vertically and progressively as extending through human subjectivity to freedom and creativity, and thence toa flourishing and interaction of cultures and their religious foundations. Here faith as articulated by reason must meet and provide the potential for just and

convergent cooperation between peoples, each in its proper pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain (Isaias).

This calls for a religious renewal of epistemology and anthropology, of ethics and metaphysics. It is this gateway to the new millennium which the present seminar will explore.

For this work there are significant and promising resources. The humanities (history and literature) can uncover the values of the various cultures. The social sciences (psychology, sociology and economics) can contribute understanding of the structures of the world in which we live. Above all, it will be necessary with these to think together philosophically in order to understand the way in which faith inspires reason and reason articulates faith, that human freedom is open rather than closed, and that self-assertion consists in reaching out to others in the solidarity and subsidiarity in which civil society consists.

Part I. Reason and Faith. Chapter I, by Jurate Baranova, "Dostoyevsky's Conception of Guilt: Levinas' Philosophical Interpretation," argues that it is impossible to understand Emmanuel Levinas' ethics, and especially his notion of 'disinterestedness', by simply consulting his Hebraic and (to a lesser extent) Continental philosophical origins. It is necessary to research the influence of Dostoyevsky, whom Levinas often acknowledges and cites. Examples of Dostoyevsky's influence on Levinas are Myshkin's absolute service to the other in *The Idiot*, and Zossima's substitution of the 'other' in the place of his 'own' identity in *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Chapter II, by Donny Gahral Adian, "Reasoning as Engagement in and of Faiths," examines the proper role of reason in relation to one's own religious faith, and in relation to other faiths. The author in particular argues against the 'instrumental' use to which reason is put by religious fundamentalists (whether Muslim, Christian, Hindu, or other). On the other hand, the author also defends rationality against the relativism implied by Wittgenstein's 'forms of life', and by those dialogists who posit a 'common ground' underlying religious diversity.

Chapter III, by Emiliya Velikova, "Faith and Reason in the Contemporary Epoch: Reconciliation between Reason and Faith as a Way of Re-Establishing the Unity of the Human Being," from an 'anthropological' point of view treats the suppression of the transcendental dimension of reality in the global vision of western civilization. The loss of a sense of the sacred in human life induces alienation of the human being from him/herself and from others, and the interruption of meaningful interpersonal and intercultural communication. The author argues that global civilization can be saved only by the "restoration of the status of the universe as symbol pointing to some higher meaning, which it had during the medieval epoch." Human reason must re-discover the significance of faith in order to make more room for love. "[L]ove without reason is eyeless, and reason without love is useless."

Chapter IV, by Bingjiang Gao, "*Cogito* and Being (Illumination and Darkness): Descartes' Phenomenological Description of Ultimate Being," sets out to correct the often heard claim that Descartes establishes the authority of human reason in place of God, and anticipates "Death of God" theology by more than three hundred years. In fact, Descartes held that the idea of a supreme ultimately perfect Divine being cannot arise from the invention of a finite mind: "[T]he more carefully I concentrate on them [the characteristics of infinity], the less possible it seems that they could have originated from me alone ... since I am finite, unless this idea proceeded from some substance which really was infinite" (*Meditation on First Philosophy, III*).

Part II. Critical Grounding of Faith. Chapter V, by John Farrelly, "Critical Grounding of Faith: An Epistemological Question," examines the grounds accounting for continued belief in God in the twentieth century, studying paradigm cases of the conversion of scholars to theism. Farrelly finds that knowledge and affectivity both play a vital role. Their roles in this regard are best explained in terms of Aquinas and modern transformations thereof as found in Rahner and Lonergan. As Rahner puts it, "a risk is of the essence of the self-perfecting of the finite person in the historical freedom of decision. Risk is involved; coming out into the open is involved; committing oneself to what is not totally visible, the hidden origin and the veiled end, a certain manner of not-knowing is essential to the free act of man."

Chapter VI, by Kajornpat Tangyin, "Kierkegaard on Faith: A Critical Reflection," examines Kierkegaard's treatment, in *Fear and Trembling*, of the *Akedah* sequence of Genesis. When studying Kierkegaard's notion of the necessary 'absurdity of Faith', the author aims to demonstrate that Kierkegaard does not mean to remove reason from religion, but rather to preserve God's mystery and transcendence. The implication is, perhaps, that even Kierkegaard's refusal of church-structure should be taken more as a critique of what were contemporary Church institutions than as a rejection of Church community as such.

Chapter VII, by Lalan Prasad Singh, "Reason and Religion: An Analysis and Reflection," argues that there are three possible relations between reason and religion: conflict, cooperation, and harmony. Either cooperation or harmony between them is essential for survival of humanity through the 21st century. The author reviews various historical paradigms and supplies useful references ranging from Nagarjuna to Kant, Heisenberg, and Jaspers. Of particular interest is his treatment of the postmodern scientific breakthroughs, which discover the "irrationality" (in conventional scientific terms) of the cosmic and microscopic universes, and open the door to a 'harmony' (as opposed to mere 'cooperation') of reason and religion.

Chapter VIII, by Merylann "Mimi" J. Schuttloffel, "Education for Reflective Decision-Making: Developing Citizens for a Civil Global

Society," maintains that global accord will be achieved only if there is a means for enabling peoples/cultures of fundamentally different religions, politics, and philosophies to co-exist harmoniously. Towards this end, the author integrates Van Manen's 'three levels of reflection' and Sergiovanni's 'leadership schema' to demonstrate the traits of decision-making by reflective individuals whose goal is harmony.

Part III. Cultures and Faith. Chapter IX, by Octave Kamwiziku Wozol, "African Symbolism of Reasoning in Faith," explains the 'lived philosophy' of the Bantu people of Africa. Explaining how the Bantu chain-of-being is founded on the principle of "we are, then I am," the author treats 'man's six constituent parts' (including the 'shadow' or 'double-person'), the ideal of 'being-with', the social function of the palaver-tree, etc. A case-history of religious crisis, the Bantu legal proceeding (involving reason and faith), and the resultant reconciliation (the *misanga* ritual) are cited in detail. Bantu 'reasoning in faith' is presented as a highly effective model for global reconciliation.

Chapter X deals "The Karmic Reward Doctrine and Its Influence on the Chinese People." In this paper Xia Jinhua attempts to elaborate the Buddhist Karmic Reward Doctrine and how this doctrine has a hold on the Chinese people. The basic principle behind the karma theory is "As you sow, so you reap." If one's actions are good he will reap rewards and if one's actions are evil he will reap punishment. This doctrine also has some negative influences in social life, i.e., disabilities, such as blindness, deafness, etc., are seen as the punishment of a person's past karma. The paper also deals with the new style of modern Buddhism, which follows many folk religious practices; according to the author, this is not good for the genuine development of Buddhism. The author concludes that the karmic reward doctrine is not a fatalism or determinism. By accepting one's evil actions and correcting them one can remove the effects of one's karma in this life.

Chapter XI elaborates the topic "Wittgenstein's Notion of Form of Life and the Possibility of Inter-Cultural Dialogue." Here Tran Tuan Phong clarifies the notions of a language-game and form of life. There are many language-games and corresponding forms of life. The world of meaning continuously unfolds in inter-human transactions in relation to the language-game in the context of forms of life. Every language-game is played in the context of a form of life, by its own rule or grammar. Therefore, no language-game can be given the monopoly of legitimacy so that it can judge the validity of another language-game. Thus, religious discourse, which is played according to the religious-language-game cannot and should not be judged by scientific discourse. The autonomy of each language-game, played in relation to its particular form of life, opens the possibility of genuine dialogue between different nations, cultures, races, etc. In the process each enriches the other and is enriched by the other.

Chapter XII highlights the theme "Formation of Civil Society and Problems of Human Rights." In this paper Maria Rosanova introduces the phenomenon of civil society and elaborates it in relation to the ecumenical movement and international law. The problem of human rights is a significant challenge to civil society, as cultural relativism and various religious perspectives pose difficulties in forming a common theory of human rights in civil society. Attempts to form a theory of human rights goes through three "generations" of human rights, viz., civil and political rights (negative rights), rights for social goods and services (positive rights) and the rights of nations and peoples (collective rights). Various international legislations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights contributed to the formation of the theory of human rights. The paper ends with the consideration of Russian liberal theory regarding human rights in the context of civil society.

Chapter XIII expounds the theme "Civil society as an Arena of Cultural Contestation: Reconsidering Indian Ontological Foundations." In this paper Sebastian Valassery attempts a philosophical review of the phenomenon of culture and its relatedness to civil society, with special emphasis on the Indian cultural tradition that is rooted in certain important ontological concepts of *Yajna, Rta* and *Dharma.* If civil society has to be appropriated properly in the Indian socio-political and cultural arena, then these three ontological principles as organizational principles can provide thematic coherence in the sphere of civil society. The emphasis on diversity and the privileging of differences can adequately legitimize and bring forward new forms of power and thereby level down the existing norms of globalization with its peculiar ways of not tolerating any difference or variety. What we should look forward to is not a uniformity of sameness, but a cosmic garden of unity and variety, identity and difference. Towards that end, the three principles harmonize and regulate our interconnectedness which otherwise defines the fundamental inviolability of persons in a civil society.

Part IV. Faith and Global Vision. Chapter XIV propounds the topic "Faith as Philosophy for Dialogue in a World Cultured by Difference." In this paper Ogbo Ugwuanyi seeks to establish the relevance of faith in a world of divergent world-views and philosophies. Philosophy is basically a cultural achievement and this limits the strength of its mission for mankind. Western philosophy makes man a slave to reason, distances man from nature, and creates a world of opposites where everything is seen as either good or bad, true or false, male or female, positive or negative, white or black. These inherent weaknesses define the poverty of philosophy in the western tradition, which undoubtedly will remain the paradigm for any emergent tradition of philosophy for a long time to come. The effort at alternative world philosophies, such as oriental philosophy and African philosophy, though good attempts, do not provide a worthy alternative to western philosophy becaue of the culturally limited concerns of these

philosophies. By providing a critique of these alternative philosophies the author establishes the urgency of faith as the basis for dialogue and discusses the reasons for this and its manner of being so.

Chapter XV, by Paul Sullins, "Some Reflections on Faith and Reason in Globalization," offers a way of reaching some commonality among otherwise different views, cultures or religions. It explores how particular realities that are socially constructed can reach and glom onto a human core, thereby fostering conditions conducive to relations in a global context.

Chapter XVI, also by Paul Sullins, "Beyond Christendom: Future Demographic Divergence and Political Secularization for Protestants and Catholics," gives an analysis of empirical data concerning the hypothesized decline of Christianity in different regions of the world. It nuances Philip Jenkins' predictions, which were made at a more general level.

Chapter XVII by Zbigniew Wendland, "The Decline of Reason and the Chance of Its Revival in the Light of Contemporary Philosophy and the Necessities of Human Life" exposes the limitations of rationality in either a metaphysical or an instrumental frame: the former subjects reason to the dictates of objective reality; the latter empowers reason to use objective reality. In the face of changes in philosophy, both frames are inadequate to account for subjects acting in the same environment. Thus, there is a need for dialogical rationality that draws on agreements among subjects on the situations they jointly encounter.

George F. McLean

DOSTOYEVSKY'S CONCEPTION OF GUILT: LEVINAS' PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION

JURATE BARANOVA

ABSTRACT: Dostoyevsky's novels are interpreted from various perspectives. The author of this article tries to reveal the peculiarity of Emmanuel Levinas' interpretation. Emmanuel Levinas is, of course, the French philosopher who learned from Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger and was much interpreted by Jacques Derrida. He received the premises of his philosophy of dialogue from the Hebrew Bible and the Jewish philosophers Martin Buber and Franz Rozenzweig. On the other hand, the presupposition of this article relies on the following hypothesis: that is not possible to understand his main concept of disinterestedness (*désintéressement*) from the perspective of the traditions of Western philosophy. The main thesis of the article states: in his reflection upon the philosophical interpretation of guilt, Levinas relied not only on Jewish Scriptures, but also on the sources he found in Dostoyevsky's novels where the Russian writer was searching for his own understanding of New Testament morality. For the arguments the author of the article compares Levinas' texts with the main ideas of Dostoyevsky expressed in the novels *Notes from the Dead House, The Brothers Karamazov, Crime and Punishment* and *The Idiot.*

A Patient, a Psychologist, or a Christian?

One can discern different philosophical interpretations of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's texts. Sigmund Freud in his article *Dostoyevsky and Parricide* on Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov* was searching for the sources of Dostoyevsky's personal illness—epilepsy—and treated the novel as a document for the diagnosis of the writer's secret parricide intentions. Relying on texts Dostoyevsky had written, Freud was eager to express his conclusions about the writer's own personality: "We have selected three factors from Dostoyevsky's complex personality, one quantitative and two qualitative: the extraordinary intensity of his emotional life, his perverse innate instinctual disposition, which inevitably marked him out to be a sado-masochist or a criminal, and his unanalyzable artistic gift" (Freud, 1962: 99).

Friedrich Nietzsche in his work *Beyond Good and Evil*, contrary to Freud, considers Dostoyevsky not as a patient, but as a psychologist, from whom he himself was able to learn something. Nietzsche admired Dostoyevsky because he was, according to his words, "a deep man."

Nietzsche was intrigued by Dostoyevsky's interpretation of criminality. In his novel *Notes from the Dead House (Записки из мёртвого дома),* Dostoyevsky revealed what it feels like to be an object of contempt, rejected and dirty, as a criminal feels.

Reading Dostoyevsky's novels differently than Freud or Nietzsche, Emmanuel Levinas found the core for the conception of ethics upon which he elaborated further, as himself a philosopher. In his reading experience before he began his philosophical studies, Levinas took Dostoyevsky's texts as seriously as he took the Hebraic Bible. Levinas read a lot of novels in his youth: he read Shakespeare, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol's, Tolstoj's works. He read extensively in Russian. The Russian language was the language in which he communicated with parents, at school, with his children and wife Raisa. Levinas' father in Kaunas (the former capital of Lithuania between the two world wars, in the contemporary vicinity of Laisve) had a bookshop where all these Russian classic novels were sold. This pre-philosophical reading seemed to Levinas very important for his further philosophical growth. Our reasoning begins, he said later in his book *Ethics and Infinity* (*Ethique et Infni*), from traumas and searching gropingly, to which we cannot even give verbal expression. When reading books (not necessarily philosophical) these primary shocks are transformed into questions and problems that inspire thought. When reading, says Levinas, we live "real non-existing life." But this life is not utopian. Levinas suggests an interpretation of reading as a mode of being. Levinas never became a literary critic; he became a philosopher. Later in life he intensively read Kant, went on to learn something from Edmund Husserl, and was fascinated by Martin Heidegger. He became one of the first critics of phenomenology in France. He created the conception of ethics before ontology. In his work *Otherwise Than Being* (*Autrement qu'etre, ou au-delà de essence*), Levinas states that responsibility means total acceptance of responsibility for the other person. It means that one is responsible even for the responsibility of another. The main presupposition of *Totality and Infinity* (*Totalite et infini)* is that responsibility is asymmetrical. In this sense I am responsible for the other person even if it costs me my life, and I am responsible not expecting any reciprocity. Reciprocity is the concern of the Other. For this reason my relation to the other is not symmetrical: the relation is based on me.

Why? From what sources does Levinas take these valuable premises of total responsibility for the Other? A main concept at the core of Levinasian ethics is disinterestedness (*désintéressement*). The presupposition of this article relies on the hypothesis that it is not possible to understand his main concept of disinterestedness (*désintéressement*) from the perspective of the tradition of Western philosophy. The main thesis of the article states: in his reflection upon the philosophical interpretation of guilt Levinas relied not only on Jewish Scriptures, but also on the sources he found in Dostoyevsky's novels where the Russian writer was searching for his own understanding of New Testament morality.

In various writings Levinas with some exaltation returns to Dostoyevsky's interpretation of guilt in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov* (*Братья Карамазовы*) expressed by the monk Zossima's teaching: *Chacun de nous est coupable devant tous pour tous et moi plus que les autres* (Lévinas, 1978: 228). As Marie-Anne Lescourret notes, Levinas maintained fidelity to this phrase to the end of his life (Lescourret, 1994: 43). Even in the late book *About God Who Came to Reason (De Dieu qui vent)* he states again *"Chacun de nous est coupable. ..."* This phrase constitutes the core of Levinas' ethics.

Spontaneity of Freedom and Consciousness of Guilt

This phrase *Chacun de nous est coupable …* in Dostoyevsky's novels does not mean real guilt of those who have knowingly sinned. It does not signify the transgression of moral or legal law. One cannot find this phrase in Dostoyevsky's novel *Notes from the Dead House)*, in which he as a curious anthropologist investigates various types of real criminals, considering them only as different types of persons and by this gaining Nietzsche's respect. On the contrary, the narrator of the novel during ten years observed different types of real sinners. He tells the reader about Shishkov, who constantly and habitually—sometimes from morning till night—used to beat his wife Akulka until one day he took her to the pine forest and with the words "this is the end for you" "I am sick and tired of you" (Dostoyevsky, 1989: 251), slit her throat with his knife. He tells about the recruit Sirotkin who was too sensitive to stand the difficulties of military service, so one day killed his commander. The narrator of the novel reflects upon their sins as possible different phenomena of life. He does not blame or judge. He considers that in Russia common people never reproach a prisoner for his crime—however awful it may be—but forgive him everything in the light of the punishment he has suffered and in acknowledgement of his general misfortune. "Hardly surprisingly, the common people all over Russia refer to crime as 'misfortune' and to the criminals as 'unfortunates', concludes Dostoyevsky (Dostoyevsky, 1989: 64). On the other hand, the narrator of Dostoyevsky's novel observes that over the course of several years he did not witness any illustration of repentance nor of painful brooding in the alleged criminals about the crimes of which they had been accused. The majority of them inwardly considered themselves to be right. The time spent in prison and forced hard labor developed only hatred, a craving for forbidden pleasures and a terrible irresponsibility. The narrator notices that a prisoner who is in rebellion against society obviously hates it, and almost always considers himself as right and society as wrong. Because the criminal has been punished by society, he thus considers himself cleansed, and quits that society (Dostoyevsky, 1989: 20-21). To talk about one's crime among criminals is considered also as rough tactlessness. Somebody tried to tell a story about how he had stabbed a five-year-old boy to death, but he was shut up,

because everyone in the barracks started shouting at him. But they were not shouting from any sense of outrage, notes the narrator of Dostoyevsky's novel, but just because people *were not supposed* to talk *about that* (Dostoyevsky, 1989: 16). The silence as if wipes out the past deed and the guilt. The convict is not able to live discursively with his guilt. But about his crime the main narrator of the novel does not utter a word either. For ten years he was a convict because he killed his wife within the first year after their wedding. One can infer that her name was Katherine, because he used to attend Church on Katherine's Day. But her personal picture is never mentioned in the remembrances of the narrator. Reflecting his loneliness among other convicts he is more complaining than judging himself. Suddenly he confesses that this solitude was like a blessing for him. It allowed him to review his former life to the smallest detail. Without this solitude "neither this trial of myself nor this harsh revision of my previous life would have come about" (Dostoyevsky, 1989: 322).

One can say that the narrator gains from this extreme existential situation: his self-consciousness experiences a deep change: he is able to experience and evaluate the meaning of this change as his fate. Yet one thing remains unclear: what was the meaning of Katharine's life? Was her premature death necessary for the narrator's bliss because of the changes in his own personality? The narrator does not ask such a question himself. Nor does Dostoyevsky mention it as a writer. But the question "Have I a right?" remains very important for Dostoyevsky. It follows on into his other novel *Crime and Punishment* (*Преступление и наказание*).

The Other as a Faceless God

Dostoyevsky sought to create a hero, for whom religiosity would have been as self-rejecting service for the other person. Sonia Marmaladova from *Crime and Punishment,* Prince Myshkin from *The Idiot* (*Идиот*), Alyosha from *The Brothers Karamazov* were all deeply religious personages. They are not sequestered in a monastery as is the character Monk Zossima. They are secular saints, whose religiosity has the ability to bow before others as a revelation. Sonia hearing Raskolnikov explain his crime, considers it as a terrible misfortune—as her own suffering. She is not able very clearly to understand Raskolnikov's motives. Words, with the help of which he tries to explain to her his idea, tell her nothing. But suddenly she understands—clearly and distinctively: from the very depth of her being, that Raskolnikov distanced himself from God, so God punished him and gave his soul to the Devil. Yet she is not judging Raskolnikov. She pities him with tears and believes that there is no unhappier person than he in the whole world. She follows after him without any doubt to Siberia, not expecting his gratitude, not with a hope to convert him to real faith. One can say following the concept of Levinas, that Sonia is vulnerable. What is the vulnerability (*vulnabilité*) of a person? Vulnerableness occurs when one becomes obsessed by the other and allows the other to approach him, but

not by consciousness of representation or proximity. To become vulnerable means to suffer for the other (*souffrir pour autrui*), to be able to stand for the Other, to take the place of the Other, to allow the Other to destroy oneself. This is the suffering of the heart, *miséricorde*, which, according to Levinas, is the supposition of every love and every hatred for the Other. This is a preliminary vulnerability (*vulnabilité préalable*). The responsibility for the Other is a service (*servitude*), passivity or prelogical submission of oneself to the Other. This value cannot be thematized. Her name is God, says Levinas in the text *The Humanism of the Other Person* (Lévinas, 1972: 87).

Levinas in this particular place refers not to Dostoyevsky, but to the Bible as the source of his insight—indicating the word *Rekhem* as analogous to a Biblical term for suffering of the heart, connected with motherhood. He refers to this suffering of heart as expressed in the words of Jeremiah (31.20). Was Levinas' concept of a Face as Faceless God more influenced by Dostoyevsky's conception of Christianity or by the Jewish Hebraic Scriptures? Levinas concludes that ethical truth is common to all religious texts. Yet he does not imply one meaning of all Scripts. In this aspect he judges like a hermeneutist suggesting that the reader enter into a dialogue with the text. When a reader addresses tradition, subjective understanding becomes a necessary condition for reading prophetic texts. Ethics, according to Levinas, has a meaning even without the promise of a Messiah. Different from philosophy, religion gives consolation, "but for consolation is worthy only such a humanity, which can manage without it" (Lévinas, 1972: 125). According to Levinas, ethics structures the meeting with God.[1]

Similar events of the soul are experienced by Dostoyevsky's secular saints. Through the character of Myshkin, Dostoyevsky tries to express his own religious views, his hostility towards Catholicism and his adoration of Russian orthodoxy. But spontaneous expression of Myshkin's religious views at a final party, organized because of his engagement to Aglaia, seems very clumsy. It was unforeseen and stirring from the very depth of the Prince's feverish consciousness, destroys what little he had established of his social stability. His expression of religious conception remains unconvincing, exaggerated and unnecessary. Myskhin, as Dostoyevsky's saint, teaches by his attitude and example of actions more successfully then by mere utterances. Myshkin does not judge the egocentricity of Nastasia Philippovna, nor Aglaia, or Rogozhin. As usual he concludes: "Indeed, it's all my fault! It's most probably all my fault. I don't know where my fault lies, but it's all mine" (Dostoyevsky, 1971b: 287). When Rogozhin arranges the death of Nastasia Philippovna, the Prince remains with him to moan for her and for his loss as well. This infinite compassion for both—for the

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[1] It structures not only religion, but philosophy as well. So morality is not, says Levinas, a part of philosophy, but first philosophy. One of his texts has the title *Ethics as First Philosophy* (*éthique comme philosophie première*).

victim and her murderer at the same time—destroys his sanity. Myshkin of all the Dostoyevsky's personages, most symbolizes Levinas' concept of preliminary vulnerability. He passively allowed himself to become obsessed by the others. Service for the Other destroyed him.

At the end of the book Dostoyevsky draws a picture of a sacral scene showing the possibility of absolute service to another person: "Meanwhile, it had grown quite light. At last, he lay down on a cushion, as though overcome by helplessness and despair, and he pressed his face to Rogozhin's pale and immovable face. Tears were flowing from his eyes on to Rogozhin's cheeks, but he probably did not even feel his own tears, and was already past being aware of them" (Dostoyevsky, 1971b: 317). Myshkin's experienced anguish and despair by losing his sanity there—together mourning with and for Rogozhin—is the same suffering of the heart (*miséricorde*) that Levinas was writing about. Myshkin maintained total fidelity to his utterances, similar to Sonia Marmaladova; in his extreme empathy he was able to suffer for the Other without preserving oneself. He tried to convince Rogozhin that he remembers the one Rogozhin who exchanged crosses with him, not the Rogozhin that raised his knife against him. For the sake of this brotherly solidarity he plunges into Rogozhin's madness together with him, watering his face with his own tears. Dostoyevsky created the scene as an expression of the moment of absolute solidarity. Rogozkin was not a saint. He recovered. Myshkin remained in his own oblivion forever.

Why did he become like that? One could not understand his behavior regardless of how Levinas expressed it, "which summons me from nowhere unto a present time." This is guiltless responsibility (*responsabilité sans culpabilité*), as Levinas would have said in *Ethics as First Philosophy* (Lévinas, 1998: 98). This is responsibility for the Other, for the naked face of the first individual to come along. A responsibility that goes beyond what I may or may not have done to the Other or whatever acts I may or may not have committed, as if I were devoted to the other man before being devoted to myself. "Or more exactly, as if I had to answer for the other's death even before being" (Levinas, 1989a: 83). This responsibility is like fraternity existing in extreme separation. Responsibility for my neighbor dates from before my freedom in an immemorial past, an unrepresentable past that was never present. "A responsibility for my neighbor, for the other man, for the stranger or sojourner, to which nothing in the rigorously ontological order binds me—nothing in the order of the thing, of the something, of number or causality" (Levinas, 1989a: 84).

What does Levinas have in mind, speaking of the unrepresentable past that was never present? One can notice that the same radicalism of the love for one's neighbor instructs the Sermon on the Mount by Christ in the Gospel: "If you shall lend to those from whom you hope that you will receive, what kindness will it be to you? Lend for sinners, also lend to sinners, that they may receive the like. Lend ye, expecting nothing back, and your reward shall be great" (Luke 6: 34-35).

Levinas in his work *Totality and Infinity* concludes that a relation with a Transcendent is a social relation. It is here that the Transcendent, infinitely other, solicits us and appeals to us. His very epiphany consists in soliciting us by destitution in the face of the stranger, the widow, and the orphan. Metaphysics is an ethical behavior and not theology, not a thematization, be it knowledge by analogy of the attributes of God. God rises to his supreme and ultimate presence as correlative to the justice rendered unto men. There can be no "knowledge" of God separate from the relationship with men. A God is invisible not because a God is unimaginable, but because he is such an Infinity, as the face of the Other, approaching us from the dimension of high, from above. *Autrui est le lieu meme de la vérité métaphysique et indispensable à mon rapport avec Dieu*, says Levinas (Lévinas, 1971: 77). The Other is not incarnation of God, but precisely by his face, says Levinas, in which he is disincarnate, he is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed. It is our relations with men, according to Levinas, that give to theological concepts the sole signification they admit of. The primacy of ethics in Levinas' thought is an irreducible structure upon which all the other structures rest. He considers metaphysics as enacted in ethical relations. Without the significance they draw from ethics, theological concepts remain empty and formal frameworks. One can conclude that it is exactly the same conception of God that Sonya Marmalodova and prince Myshkin are intuitively confessing.

Compassion as Asymmetry of Responsibility

Morality starts at the time when one begins to question one's freedom as an absolute value, says Levinas. This occurs with Raskolnikov in the novel *Crime and Punishment*. But Raskolnikov as a character is not so important to Levinas. In the texts *The Humanity of the Other Man* (*Humanisme de l'autre homme*) and *The Trace of the Other* Levinas reflect upon this same episode from Dostoyevsky's novel, but from a different perspective. He is interested in the attitude of Sonya Marmaladova. Levinas distinguishes two concepts: need (*le besoin*) and desire (*le désir*). The need always returns one to oneself. Even in the case when one feels the need for the absolute, it is only anxiety for oneself, only return to oneself. Levinas calls such identification with oneself as egoism. Need leads to the individual's appropriation of the world and to happiness. The other man becomes an obstacle to "my" needs. He becomes an enemy, a pretext for the permanent struggle, as indicated in both Hobbes and Hegel and we can add: in Raskolnikov or Rogozhin as well. But Levinas uses the other concept also—the concept of desire, which is not determined by any previous lack. Desire is independent; it does not need anything, it does not want to appropriate, and it longs for nothing for itself. Some relation to another person can be called a desire of the Other (*Le désir d'Autrui*). Such a desire turned to the Other makes his appearance a revelation. In such a desire I long for the Other refusing my sovereign identification with myself.

The Other for which I am desiring does not satisfy my desire; he only deepens it, awakening new hunger.

How is it possible to create a phenomenological description of such a desire? Levinas answers very simply: the desire is goodness. Such a case of paradigmatic goodness he discerns in the attitude of Sonya Marmaladova. Levinas notices, that Dostoyevsky defines Sonya's compassion not in a customary manner such as—"inexhaustible compassion" (*inépuisable compassion, неиссякаемое сострадание*), but instead as—"insatiable compassion" (*insatiable compassion*, *ненасытимое сострадание*).[2] The more Sonya becomes aware of the depth of the unhappiness possessed by Raskolnikov, the stronger her compassionate response towards him becomes. She accepts his suffering as her own. But she is not trying to save herself from this suffering by escape. On the contrary, she showed the impulse of emotional devotion and swearing never to leave him and follow after him anywhere. At the same time she also felt a terrible horror because of his crime. Sonya is not a corroborator. She is judging. She is above the situation. For this reason she can indicate to Raskolnikov how to resolve the deep problem he faced. She suggests that he accept suffering for himself and thereby reach atonement. What is the strength that allows her to transcend her personal disgust and shocked reaction to Raskolnikov's crime? What allows her to discern in the midst of all emotional chaos the most important thing—the suffering of the criminal? What are the sources of her compassion?

This desire and this hunger for the Other is not comprehensible without the concept of *désintéressement*—disinterested responsibility—as derived from Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. More exactly these words are taken from the sermon of Monk Zossima. The first time Zossima had heard such words expressed were from the lips of his dying elder brother, who in his agony started to speak about the vision of a possible Paradise in the world. How could Paradise in the human world become possible? This question was important for Dostoyevsky's religious views. "We are all in Paradise," announced Zossima's brother feverishly, "we won't see it. If we would, we should have Heaven on Earth the next day. If people would have stopped quarreling, stopped trying to outshine each other and keeping grudges against each other and if they started to glorify life, a real paradise on earth would become possible. For this, everyone should remember that "every one is really responsible to all men —for all men and for everything" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 344). In the original Russian language this phrase looks like: *Да ещё скажу, тебе, матушка, что всякий из нас пред всеми во всем виноват, а я больше всех* (Достоевский, 1963: 357-358). In English the phrase became shorter:

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[2] The author of this text could not find exactly the same words in the original text of Dostoyevsky. Here she in relying on Levinas' text. Emmanuel Lévinas. *Humanism de l'autre homme* (Paris: Fata Morgana, 1972), p. 49.

"Mother, ... little heart of mine, my joy, believe me, everyone is really responsible to all men for all men and for everything" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 344). The English translation (interpreter Constance Garnett) omitted a very important term (the second part of the sentence after the comma): *а я больше всех*. Strangely enough in the Lithuanian translation of the novel this essential term is omitted as well. This little phrase means: "and me most of all." For Dostoyevsky's as well as for Levinas' ethical views this aspect *а я больше всех* was of extreme importance. When citing Dostoyevsky, Levinas never omitted the second part of the sentence; he always repeated *et moi plus que les autres*. In this little phrase one can find the core of his ethical beliefs. It stresses assymetry of responsibility and the core of personal identity of the utterer of the phrase.

Alternatively, the Russian word *виноват* has a meaning of *guilty*, not *responsible*. Direct translation of *responsible* is *ответственный*, not *виноват*. The English translator prefers *responsible*. Levinas uses terminology that is closer to Dostoyevsky's. He says *guilty—coupable—виноват*. Nevertheless this concept of *guilt* leads to the *responsibility without guilt* (*responsibilitè sans culpabilitè*), which means always-asymmetrical responsibility, preferring the other's face (*visage*) as a revelation, as a sign always coming from above.

This phrase encouraged Zossima's conversion from a secular existence to a monk's life. In his youth he had spent eight years in the military cadet school at Petersburg, but insulted his "rival" in the presence of a large company and challenged him to a duel. On the eve of the duel he had beaten his servant but the morning before the duel, he suddenly understood his fundamental guilt. Rhetorically he asked himself: "What am I worth that another man, a fellow creature, made in the likeness and image of God, should serve me?" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 356). Without any self-pity he then understood the words of his brother who had died, and repeated to himself: "In truth, perhaps, I am more than others responsible for all, a greater sinner than all men in the world!" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 356). In the Russian language Dostoyevsky wrote: *Господи, да неужто же и это неправда, плачу я и думаю—воистину я за всех, может быть, всех виновнее, да и хуже всех на свете людей*! (Достоевский, 1963: 368). In the English translation the phrase *guilty more than others (всех виновнее)* is changed again by the use of the term *responsibility*, but the word *sinner* shows the link between responsibility and guilt.

Finally this new teaching of Zossima was strengthened by the words of a mysterious visitor, who repeats one more time: "… We are all responsible to all for all, apart from our own sins …" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 362). This visitor explained to Zossima what follows from this fundamental phrase. What follows is the understanding that the world could be changed only by changing each individual's personality. This change allows an abandonment of fundamental solitude, in which, one can remember from the novel *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov was submerged. This solitude leads to the point where everyone as much as possible tries to mark

out his own personality without comprehension that this intention kills himself, leading to helplessness and insanity. Dostoyevsky by the words of the mysterious visitor expressed his own teaching: ."... True security is to be found in social solidarity rather than in isolated individual effort" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 363). Echoing this, Dostoyevsky's concept of social solidarity could be discerned in the social utopia of Levinas as well. Levinas writes about desire for the Other as a sociality (*la socialité*) (Lévinas, 1972: 49), brotherhood in extreme separation (*fraternité dans l'extreme séparation*) (Lévinas, 1998: 98).

As a monk Zossima teaches radical disinterestedness— *désintéressement* in Levinas' terms. He teaches to the extreme point a purified and an absolutely authentic New Testament morality. "If the evil doing of men moves you to indignation and overwhelming distress, even to a desire of vengeance on the evildoers, shun above all things that feeling. Go at once and seek suffering for yourself, as though you were yourself guilty of that wrong" (Dostoyevsky, 1955: 362).

Love as Compassionate Disinterestedness in Dostoyevsky's Novel, The Idiot

The main character of the novel *The Idiot* is the Prince Myshkin. His love for Nastasia Philippovna is very similar to the insatiable compassion Sonia Marmaladova felt towards Raskolnikov. To his rival Rogozhin Myshkin says: "... I love her, not only with love but with pity" (Dostoyevsky, 1971a: 225). The pity becomes more intense, as Nastasia Philippovna seems to become more insane. Pity turns into horror when he understands, that this woman is deranged. This pity sometimes becomes even unbearable. To his interlocutor in open discussion Myshkin confesses that sometimes he could not bear the sight of Nastasia Philippovna's face. Even he saw it for the first time in a portrait. "I'm afraid of her face!" (Dostoyevsky, 1971b: 287),—he adds with stark fear. But this insight causes him deep pain as if he himself suffered an injury. It arouses desire to protect her and to take care of her—to protect her from a dangerous marriage, to send her abroad to restore her physical and mental health, even if this desire transgresses the limits of his capabilities and possibilities. Myshkin, as Levinas would have said, looks at Nastasia Philippovna's face not by merely gazing, but as if he hears her secret calling. The category of Face (*Visage*) in the ethics of Levinas is very important. The Face is not one I can contemplate or investigate with my aggressive gaze. To meet the face of the Other is to understand its absolute nudity (*nudité*). "The nakedness of the face is not what is presented to me because I disclose it, what would therefore be presented to me, to my powers, to my eyes, to my perceptions, in a light exterior to it. The face has turned to me—and this is its very nudity" (Levinas, 1968: 74-75). Relation with the face, says Levinas, is not an object-cognition. I am not able to appropriate the face of the Other. The Other, the free one, is also a stranger. He (she) always remains strange. In

comprehending the strangeness of the face of the Other I am recognizing his (her) freedom as well. To recognize the other is to recognize hunger. "To recognize the Other is to give," concludes Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* (Levinas, 1968: 74-75).

Levinas says this as if he is speaking about Myshkin from Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot*. In the crucial scene of confrontation between two rivals—two women Myskhin loved—Aglaia and Nastasia Philippovna,—the Prince must reveal his fundamental devotion to only one of them. At this moment his "insatiable compassion" for Nastasia Philippovna overweighed his healthy happiness-promising love for Aglaia. Aglaia lost him because she played an aggressive role, an attacking side. Her attack induced the Prince to see more acutely not only Nastasia Philippovna's madness but also her deep despair. He could not endure witnessing her despair and thus he lost Aglaia forever, and with her—the possibility to be saved himself when he reproached her with the words: "How can you? She's so—so unfortunate!" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 275). The Prince demanded much from Aglaia. At this very moment he demanded her disinterestedness as a brotherly love, he demanded her ability to see in Nastasia Philippovna not only a hateful rival but also a suffering being. Although Aglaia was the closest and most understanding person to Myskhin—she also adored him with her brave heart—nonetheless she was not created for such a task. She was fascinated by the uniqueness of Prince Myskhin. She was intrigued by the fact that he is so different from the others. But one can conclude that it was more the longing for eccentricity and originality—actually the desire to escape from her own boring environment—than embracing his deeply Christian views. She was not as compassionate as was the Prince, the apostle of Christian love—she was just a normal woman seeking her love, longing that her beloved man's thoughts would veer away from a hated romantic rival. The Prince hoped to explain to her something very important, but his effort was in vain. As noticed in conversation with the Prince, the benevolent interlocutor, Aglaia would never understand him any more, because "Aglaia Ivanovna loved you like a woman, like a human being, not like an abstract spirit" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 287). On the other hand, the Prince demanded from Aglaia such compassion because was able to feel it himself. He was able to love "like an abstract spirit," e.g., to love his enemy, his unfriendly rival, without expecting the same love in return. Even on the contrary—understanding that with his love he provokes his rival's hatred. Rogozhin did not hide his hostility towards the Prince. On the contrary—precisely and openly he states: "I dislike you" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 48). Dostoyevsky depicts Myshkin —as he used to say himself—as a positively excellent human being. So he granted him even more capacity for forgiveness than was provided in the Gospel with instruction: "If another believer sins, rebuke him; then if he repents, forgive him. Even if he wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, forgive him." (Luke 17:3-4). The Gospel encourages us to forgive if the sinner repents.

But what should one do if the sinner does not repent? Myshkin quickly forgave Rogozhin's intention to kill him even before Rogozhin asked for his forgiveness or made an attempt to repent for his criminal intent—even without certainty that he would ask for it some time; even without expecting his repentance; even with the knowledge that he would never ask.

With his brotherly forgiveness the Prince hastened seemingly to protect Rogozhin from any possible suffering, which could be caused by realizing one's fault as a terrible sin. He sends him a letter convincing him, that he had cast everything out of his mind and remembers only the Rogozhin who exchanged crosses with him, not the Rogozhin who raised his knife against him. Dostoyevsky granted his beloved character Myshkin with an ability to see and to evaluate the best side of people and very cautiously approach them with compassion, understanding their weaknesses, even justifying their faults. Rogozhin was not in any hurry to gratify him. With a mocking rhetorical question: "But what do you really know of my feelings?" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 48). He rejects the Prince's forgiveness. He says he never repented for his action, yet Myshkin already had conveyed to him his brotherly forgiveness. After expressing his intention to kill Myshkin he then began thinking about quite different things—the things he was interested in 'he continued to seek Nastasia Philippovna'. Yet this straightforward confession does not weaken the disinterested responsibility of Myshkin for him, for Nastasia Philippovna and for the whole situation that was happening. He is not surprised at Rogozhin's confession—it appeared he had predicted it would occur. He even understood in advance that Rogozhin was going to kill him—exactly at the moment when they as brothers exchanged their crosses and when Rogozhin took him to his mother for a blessing. But it then appeared that even Myskhin was not expecting Rogozhin's repentance. He understood even more deeply the sources of his inability to repent: "Why, even if you wished to, you probably wouldn't be able to repent, because you dislike me into the bargain. Even if I were blameless as an angel in respect of you, you wouldn't tolerate me so long as you think it's me, not you, whom she loves. So it all comes from your jealousy" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 49). Myskhin makes an attempt to help Rogozhin emotionally depart from this gloomy state of hostility. In stating: "Why should there be hostility between us?"—Myskhin attempts to create and maintain a brotherly relation.

Myshkin signifies the assymetry of responsibility with his attitude; Levinas, in his text. "This responsibility," says Levinas, "is love without concupiscence." "It is like return to the interiority of non-intentional consciousness, to *mauvaise conscience*, to its capacity to fear injustice more than death, to prefer suffering to committing injustice, and preferring that which justifies being to that which assures it" (Lévinas 1998; 105-106).

Self-Identity as Passive Service to the Other

Is not this requirement for absolute responsibility formulated by

Zossima and constantly repeated by Levinas 'utopian'? Does the bearer of such an unconditioned responsibility in reality have the ability to uphold this guilt without guilt? Does this unconditional responsibility not lead to self-destruction; to humiliation of one's personality and its loss? The character of Myshkin in Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot* seems doomed to such an end. Those surrounding the Prince do not accept his attitude as an ordinary matter. "Why do you humble yourself and make yourself out to be beneath everybody else? Why are you distorting everything within you? Why do you have no pride?"—eagerly Aglaia asks him (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 24). But, on the other side, she says this only because she thinks, that: "nobody here is worth your little finger, your mind or your heart! You have more integrity and nobility of heart than all of them put together. You're better, kinder and wiser" (Dostoyevsky 1971b: 275). Aglaia is not able to evaluate truthfully that the most excellent qualities of the Prince are qualities inseparable from his capacity to humble himself and reject his pride. Even more—Agalaia would never truly become interested in Myskhin, if he would have been of the nature of "others." One question is: why does she appreciate his qualities and yet still try to persuade Myshkin not to be the sort of person he is? Why does she condemn him or feel shame because of his humbleness? It seems as if she is continuing a tradition of understanding of personal identity as coinciding with oneself in one's consciousness. Dostoyevsky with his character Myshkin creates a personal identity different from the traditional conception of personal identity. Myshkin realizes the standpoint, which Levinas later would call "infinite passion for responsibility" (*passion infinie de la responsibilité*) (Lévinas, 1978: 179).

Levinas in his text *Substitution* (*La Substitution*), which later was included in a book *Otherwise than Being or beyond Essence* (*Autrement qu'etre ou au-delà de l'essence*) discusses the possibility of personal identity as a substitution of the other as oneself. The uniqueness of a subject, says Levinas, is his ability to feel accused of what others do or suffer, or responsible for what they do or suffer. The uniqueness of the self is the very fact of bearing the fault of another. It is passivity and vulnerability. It is the ability to feel being obsessed by the other, persecuted by the other. On the other hand, to bear something from the other, according to Levinas, is absolute patience only if by this from-the-other is already for-the-other. "To give his cheek to be smitten and to be filled with insults, to demand suffering in the suffering undergone (without exposing the other cheek) is not to draw from the suffering some kind of magical redemptive virtue. "In the trauma of persecution it is to pass from the outrage undergone to responsibility for the persecutor, and, in this sense from suffering to expiation for the other" (Levinas, 1989b: 101). Levinas opposes Hegel and Sartre, whose identity of the self was posited on the basis of the for-itself. According to Levinas the identity of the self could not be reduced to turning back its essence upon itself. The "I" is not reducible to the abstraction taken from the concrete process of self-consciousness.

The identity of the self could not be thematized and appear to consciousness. According to Levinas, the "oneself" is hypostasized in another way. "In the exposure to wounds and outrages, in the feeling proper to responsibility, the oneself is provoked as irreplaceable, as devoted to the others, without being able to resign, and this as incarnated in order to offer itself, to suffer and to give" (Levinas, 1989b1: 95). The more I return to myself, the more I divest myself, under the traumatic effect of persecution, of my freedom as a constituted imperialist subject, the more I discover myself to be responsible. "… The more just I am, the more guilty I am" (*plus je suis juste—plus je suis coupable*),—such is the formula of the personal identity created by Levinas (Levinas, 1989b: 178). I am 'in myself' only through others. I substituted the other by myself. Levinas considers this responsibility as the core of personal identity and is not an accident that happens to a subject. It precedes any essence, any freedom, any discourse. I have not done anything and I have always been under accusation—persecuted. The ipseity is a hostage. The word "I" means here I am, answering for everything and for everyone, concludes Levinas. This responsibility never allows the self to come back to itself from all things and concern oneself only with his own self. In the substitution of me for the others "self" becomes irreplaceable. I exist through the other and for the other. I gain my identity in sacrifice for the other (*sacrifice pour autrui*). It is sacrifice, states Levinas, outside of any mysticism. In this sacrifice, activity and passivity coincide (Levinas, 1989b: 182).

The self receives its identity only in substituting the other, only in ability to say, as Rimbaud used to say: "The I is the other" (*Je est un atrui*). But this utterance does not negate my identity. It constitutes the self's identity. I am irreplaceable only to the extent that I am responsible. The subjection is neither nothingness as Sartre presupposed nor the product of transcendental imagination. To be oneself means—according to Levinas, to be otherwise than being—is to be disinterested. At this point Levinas once more repeats the sacred phrase of Dostoyevsky without mentioning his name: " to be oneself, the state of being a hostage, is always to have one degree of responsibility more, the responsibility for the responsibility of the other" (Levinas, 1989b: 107). In the reference Levinas explains this idea in more detail as an ability to experience suffering and pain over the suffering of the other: "The vortex—the suffering of the other, my pity for his suffering, his pain over my pity, my pain over his pain, etc.—stops in me. The "I" is what involves one movement more in this iteration. My suffering is the cynosure of all the sufferings—and of all the faults, even the fault of my persecutors, which amounts to suffering the ultimate persecution, suffering absolutely" (Levinas, 1989b: 122).

It seems that Levinas was writing these words while envisioning the ultimate idea of Dostoyevsky's secular saints. Following an examination of the interpretation of responsibility by Levinas, it is easier to comprehend what Dostoyevsky had in mind with the idea of his characters of secular saints. The shadow of Zossima—Aliosha, Sonia and Myshkin are gliding

over the concept of personal identity created by Levinas. In his late book *About the God Coming to Reason* Levinas refers to Zossima's famous phrase once more by relating it to an issue of personal identity and would notice that this disinterested responsibility does not allow the constitution of oneself only as reasoning. This substitution of oneself for the other makes the subject a hostage, permanently responding to the other person's calling. To be the keeper of one's brother—means to be his hostage. I cannot share with anyone this responsibility. Never stopping to remove myself from myself, I at the same time cultivate my guilt, my sacredness and my new identity. Namely, by this concept of personal identity elaborated by Levinas one can explain also the consciousness and self-consciousness of the personal identity of Prince Myshkin.

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CHAPTER II

REASONING AS ENGAGEMENT
IN AND OF FAITHS

DONNY GAHRAL ADIAN

The believer rests in the divine. Beliefs in the world are founded upon an ultimate being as the ultimate cause or principle. Some said that this ultimate being emanates into many and others said it creates the world out of nothing. Whatever one believes, a note must be underlined: the ultimate being reveals itself in a spatio-temporal world. It reveals itself in a heterogenic—not a homogenic—world. As a result we have not only revelation but revelations. God remains a mystery, but its revelations spread around the globe. So we have many communities with different faiths. However, many are not aware of the contingency of their faith. They are trapped into absolutism and try to mold the world into the emporium of their true faith. Fundamentalism is rising. Blinded by their isolated faith, they use any means necessary to attain their highest ideal, including violence. Is there reasoning in that kind of attitude? I believe there is. It is an instrumental kind of reasoning combined with a high dose of encapsulated faith. This paper will explore the relation between faith, way of life and value, and what kind of reasoning in faith is appropriate in a world of many faiths.

FAITH AND PLURALISM

What is Faith?

Everyone says that he or she believes in God. In short, he or she has faith. But what is really meant by the word "faith"? Is it the same if I say "I believe in God" and "I believe that there are two molecules of hydrogen and one molecule oxygen in water?" Is faith the same kind of belief as scientific belief? Roger Trigg in his book, *Reason and Commitment* (1973), denies such a connection. He said that scientific belief is a detached belief. Meanwhile, religious belief or faith is a committed belief. It means that religious belief, different from scientific belief, is always followed by commitment of action. It is a living belief, not just a belief that is supported by reliable evidence.

Wittgenstein said that religious belief is not belief in religious propositions. A proposition can be judged as true or false by reason in accordance to some objective measure. It has an epistemological content. However, religious belief has no epistemological content. It has only axiological content. So, it is nonsense to talk of right or wrong about our

religious belief. The only way to adjudicate between different religious beliefs is to adopt one and discard the other. Any religious commitment does not entail a belief that certain things are true. Different religious beliefs are different forms of life each with its own language game. It means that each provides its own criteria of truth and it is impossible to stand outside to adjudicate between them.

Wittgenstein's argument leaves us a question about the role of reason in faith. Because if each faith has only practical impact and cannot be adjudicated independently from its conceptual scheme, reason is permanently prohibited from entering the realm of faith. The problem is nowadays we witness the emergence of religious sects with their own bizarre beliefs. If that is also regarded as a 'form of life' that we cannot adjudicate reasonably, what can we say about religious sects that endorse mass suicide as a welcoming ritual for the apocalypse? It follows that religious belief must have some propositional content that can be adjudicated rationally.

What is the nature of religious propositional content? Is it metaphysical? People in worldly activities usually do not argue about the metaphysical component of their faith. Confucians put high value on filial relation whereas Buddhism can disregard it as the expense of enlightenment. I believe the nature of religious propositional content is much more axiological than metaphysical, since our understanding of the divine is always associated with some values by which we must live devotedly. Hans Frei in *Faith and Ethics* (1957) said that religious knowledge has been shown (i.e., by empirical theology) to be unique and this uniqueness has been shown to be due to the fact that it is a type of value knowledge or valuation—as indeed all knowledge probably is (Frei, 1957: 69).

Roger Trigg also said that faith is always connected with a way of life. It is not only a descriptive account of reality but something that will make a difference to one's life as it will govern the way one reacts to situations. In short, it is a way of life in accordance with values that one's belief prescribes. Belief in such and such value must have a truth-claim since if it does not, why should one bother to commit oneself to it. If I committed myself to Islam, I have to believe that the values which it upholds are true values. It is also the same with Christianity, Judaism and eastern religions.

In the end faith must contain two elements: belief and commitment. One is theoretical and the other practical. One cannot be without the other. The one committed to the value of Christianity must base his commitment on the value being true. It follows that he also must believe in how God incarnated in human form to teach the values that lead humanity to salvation. So, a metaphysical proposition is involved in our belief. Not only that, a historical proposition is also involved. As a Christian, one must believe in the historical Jesus. He must believe that Jesus truly lived in a particular century within human history. However, as I said before, the

world of practical concerns is not a world of theory but of action. The clash is not between one believer defending his metaphysical belief against another. It is a clash of value beliefs. When reason is forsaken, it becomes a clash of fundamentalisms.

Faith and Value Pluralism

The world of multi-faith is the world of multi-value, since faith always means a value commitment. As a result, we are confronted with a value-pluralist world. Instead of one ultimate end of being human, we are entertained by several ultimate ends. Fundamentalists ignore such a reality. They think that their faith-based value is the highest one. Globalization of value under the name of modernization triggers that kind of attitude. Rather than try to communicate and enrich their own values, they use any means necessary to universalize their own value. They are insensitive to the idea of value pluralism.

What is meant by the notion of value pluralism? First, we must differentiate it from ethical pluralism. Ethical pluralism is a thesis that there is no single ethical standard to which all principle of conduct must conform. According to ethical pluralism, a number of ethical principles are equally fundamental. Value pluralism means to go beyond that. Originated from Isaiah Berlin's thought, it is a thesis that denies the existence of one super-value that can harmoniously integrate all other values. In other words, values can be in conflict with one another and there is no rationally determinable answer to the question which should take precedence. Value conflict is not liable to arbitration. The value of utility can be inarbitrably in conflict with the value of care, liberty or impartiality. There is no way we can appeal to a super-value to integrate them. Berlin wrote in his major work *Four Essays on Liberty* (1969):

> If as I believe, the ends of men are many, and not all of them are in principle compatible with each other, then the possibility of conflict—and of tragedy—can never wholly be eliminated from human life, either personal or social. The necessity of choosing between absolute claims is then an inescapable characteristic of human condition. This gives value to freedom as Acton had conceived of it—as an end in itself … (Berlin, 1969: 169).

I believe that different faiths must give birth to different value-schemata. Faith is, as I said, always related to way of life and there is no singularity in the way people live their life. It can be concluded that instead of a universality of faith-based value, we are presented with a plurality of it. Some scholars talk immediately about the value consensus among different faiths. They, according to me, are building castles in the sky. Reality *bites*. The world of practical concerns is the world of competing or even

conflicting values. For instance, in the province of central Java, Indonesia there is a conflict between Islam and local belief on what they value the most. Javanese local belief puts high value on aesthetics manifest in dances and other performance arts. The dances are performed by a woman wearing dress called *selendang* that does not cover her shoulder. However, some Islamic leaders said that it has violated Islamic value which prohibits women from showing some part of their body. What happens afterward is not a harmonious consensus between those values but an aggressive integration by Islam using political apparatus. As a result one religious tradition is becoming an endangered species.

Value pluralism is an axiological fact that needs to be carefully apprehended. The failure to apprehend this could lead to two extremes. One is totalitarianism and the other is relativism. When one believer tries to subordinate all values under his value-schema, the result is totalitarianism. Isaiah Berlin traced the roots of totalitarianism to the situation in which all values, desires and interests, and ultimately all persons are subordinated to a single overriding goal—whether it is secular or religious. Fundamentalism has this kind of ideology in mind. They use instrumental types of reasoning for imposing their faith-based value-schema as the official one regardless of the heterogeneity of faiths. The value-schemata that they held remain unexamined and never enriched dialog with the other.

The other extreme is relativism. Value pluralism can lead to an anti-reason relativism. It means that judgment of value can never be judged independently from one belief. Every belief has its own rationality. There is no overreaching rationality that can objectively measure any belief. If two people disagree about some value-claim, they do not just have different reasons for their claim. They even disagree about what is meant by "reason." This kind of relativism is an obstacle to communication, since relativists can never engage in communication due to their success-oriented action. Under the heading of multi-rationality, every communication held by relativism hides what is truly real: instrumental reason. What they are trying to do is imposing their value by any means necessary. Still, their value remains unexamined under the vague mask called relativism.

Beyond Relativism

Globalization has its own irony: it strengthens sectarianism. Sectarianism itself is a religious attitude that denies the multiplicity of values by looking on one's own faith-based value-schema as the ultimate one. They transvalue alien value as evil in order to call themselves good. They do not use reason to argue about their belief, but attack alien values and entertain their own. It is an anti-reason value-pluralism that they are trying to advance.

However, the world of multi-faiths and values must not be defined as a world free of reason. God said in the Koran that He creates the world in heterogeneity so that men can engage with one another communicatively

for mutual understanding. Communication presupposes reason. In communication one does not impose his or her belief on the interlocutor, but tries to enrich his own by remaining open to rational criticism. This means that one must use reason to explain his belief and at the same time listen to the reasoning of his or her interlocutor. This way one's belief can be enriched and not encapsulated within a relativist cubicle.

A question arises. Can our faith-based value schemata really be measured by an objective standard? Or is it, as relativism says, just an expression of one's tradition with its own unique rationality? This is then a question of objectivity of values: are values only a subjective expression or an objective property that we can argue about?

John Gray defends what he calls objectivist value-pluralism. He first differentiates between value relativism and pluralism. Value relativism is the claim that values cannot be rationally assessed and must therefore be taken to have equal value. In contrast, however, pluralism is the claim that though there is a multitude of values and though these values might well be incommensurable, they really exist in some sense such that one can be right or wrong in uttering propositions containing value predicates.

In response to Gray's category, Daniel Weinstock categorizes value pluralism in terms of a radical thesis and a moderate thesis (*Critical Review,* Vol 11, No. 4). The radical thesis claims that there is no way of knowing what values and combinations of values an objective value pluralism should recognize until different cultures actually take them up and embody them in their institutions and practices. The moderate thesis, in contrast, claims that we can come to some understanding of what values and combinations of values are, independent of their actually having been taken up by particular communities and cultures. As a result, there must be a constraint on ways of life. Human nature can be one of them.

I believe that values are objective and we can use reason to argue about them. This instance might help. Consider a red object. Red object tends to cause us to believe the object is red. It is the property of the object that makes us believe it is such and such. However, objectivity does not depend on the location of the attributed property, or its supposed conceptual tie to human sensibilities. Objectivity depends on there being a systematic relationship between the attitude-causing properties of things and events and the attitudes they cause.

What makes our judgment of the "descriptive" properties of things true or false is the fact that the same properties tend to cause the same beliefs in different observers, and when observers differ, we assume there is an explanation. The same holds true for values. If two people disagree about the worth of an action or an object, they must have in mind the same action and object and the same aspects of those actions and objects. The considerations that prove the dispute genuine—the considerations that lead to a correct interpretation—will also reveal the shared criteria that determine where the truth lies. This is what is presupposed in communications across faith and values. Communication is conditioned by

the fact that the values being talked about are not some subjective expressions but objective realities that can be argued about. If not, there is no communication. One does not want to become involved in communication if he or she knows that an interlocutor's argument is based on his or her subjectivity.

A believer can use his or her own rationality to explain his or her value commitment to the interlocutor. No matter what, he is trying to say something to the other. It is a movement out of isolationism. It is what may be called an epistemological delivery to the other. One's reasons are not an imposition upon, but an invitation to, the other for enriching the latter's own view. This means that it is also an invitation to be measured by his or her interlocutor's rationality. Rationality is not a hiding camp for apologists, but an invitation for enrichment.

FAITH AND SPECULATIVE REASON

Spectrum of Reason

Stephen Toulmin in his book *Return to Reason* (2001) argues about how reason nowadays has lost its balance. According to him, reason has played a central role in the speculative pursuit of knowledge for 2,500 years. Reason which is embodied perfectly in philosophy referred to systematic and methodical treatment of any subject. It covered the range of inquiries that lent themselves to systematic investigation and debate regardless of whether the twentieth century categorizes them as science and technology or not. The spectrum reached from geometry to astronomy at one pole, and to autobiography and historical narrative at the other. The role of reason in all human activities was given equal consideration. No field of investigation or speculation was dismissed as intrinsically irrational or unphilosophical.

However, from the mid-seventeenth century on imbalance began to develop. Certain methods of inquiry and subjects were regarded as rational and the others were not. As a result, some kind of rational favoritism emerged which privileged scientific and technical rational inquiry. Instead of a free-for-all of ideas and speculations—across competition for attention and all realms of inquiry—there was a hierarchy of prestige, so that investigations and activities were ordered with an eye to certain intellectual demands. Issues of formal consistency and deductive proof came to have special prestige, and achieved a kind of certainty that other kinds of opinions could never claim. This loss of balance in reason is actually a reduction of what we call reason to scientific and technical notions. As a result, reason has been separated from being and became reasoning of being that had lost its primordial engagement with life.

So, instead of one ultimate notion of reason, we have a spectrum of reason. We are not dealing with the essence of reason, but with many faces of reason according to its use. The first use of reason is metaphysical which

I call this speculative reason. This is used by humans to seize the metaphysical or divine truth out of multiplicity of worldly concerns. We are in fact capable of seizing divine truth since we have something divine within us: reason itself. It is based on the old epistemological principle: the same recognizes the same. Gilson wrote in *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (1967) that of all the beings God created on earth, only man is capable of belief, because he is endowed with reason which is God's image within man (Gilson, 1967: 29). Man is God's image inasmuch as he has a mind which, by exercising reason, acquires more and more understanding and grows progressively richer. In this notion, reason and divine being are not strictly separated. Reason in its classical notion has a divine origin. It means that by cultivating it to contemplate eternal or divine truth, we humans become more and more divine. Reasoning is not so much about contemplating Being as about becoming one.

Reason is also used for practical concerns. What is meant by practical concerns here is not the same as the technical. Practical concerns are worldly concerns about how to lead a good life and at the same time live together in a pluralistic community. I call this reason practical reason. Different from speculative reason, practical reason is not so much concern about metaphysical truth as it answers the question of how to act virtuously in the world of practical concerns. In the Aristotelian notion, reason is used to regulate our actions to find the median between two vices (either lack or excess). However, the main difference between practical reason and speculative reason is the embodiment of the former in worldly concerns. Speculative reason is disembodied reason, whereas practical reason is embodied. Speculative reason asks man to escape from worldly concerns to seize metaphysical or divine truth, while practical reason draws man to engage rationally within worldly concerns. Speculative reason has an upward movement, while practical reason has a downward one.

Meanwhile, the mid-seventeenth century notion of reason reduced practical reason into one which is technical. Instead of answering the question of a virtuous life, technical reason responds only to instrumental concerns. In short, it only answers a question of the most efficient means to an end. This notion of reason kept the question of value unexamined. Every value is reduced to an economic one. This has brought human life to what Max Weber called an Iron Cage made by human beings themselves. It is a cage of technical reason imprisoning human beings from the question of value—the question of how to lead a good life is abandoned totally. Of course, technical reason has contributed much by way of technological advances, but its contribution is only technical and indifferent to ethical evaluation. Technical reason has made us live economically, but not virtuously.

Augustinian Perspective on Speculative Reason

Speculative reason has its root in the Platonic criticism of sophism.

Sophism claims that reason can be used only for furthering human interest. Reason can never unravel reality objectively because our knowledge of reality is anthropocentric by nature. Plato, on the other hand, claims that reasoning is an intellectual enquiry which is not simply to advance theses and to give one's rational allegiance to theses which so far withstand refutation; it is also to understand the movement from thesis to thesis as a movement toward a kind of logos which will disclose how things are, not relative to some point of view, but how things are as such. The activity of speculative reason has its own *telos*: metaphysical truth. It can unravel this metaphysical truth or logos since it is itself logos by nature.

Augustine Christianized this notion of reason by saying that reason is God's image in man. This image of God must not be forsaken but be used appropriately for an understanding of God as the ultimate being. However, the fact that reason is God's image in man means that it is not enough to exercise it toward understanding God. The fact that reason is God's image in man means that it is only a potentiality for understanding Him. It helps us to understand God due its divine nature. However, it must be based on faith for confirming its goal. Reason's goal of understanding God cannot be initiated in a theological vacuum. It must be based on belief. The formula is "believe that you may understand" (*Crede ut intelligas*).

Augustine holds strongly that unaided reason cannot understand the ultimate truth, which is God. Its *telos* would be diverted if we did not start with belief. Of course we can get truth without faith. However, it is just truth like mathematical truth but not the ultimate truth. For getting at ultimate truth we need faith as the starting point. Faith acts like a navigator to our reasoning. It is said that faith seeks but understanding finds (*Fides quaerit, intellectus invenit*). It is faith that navigates our reasoning in order to find the true one.

Faith in God is necessary for the main goal of our reasoning, since God is the ultimate source of truth. God is a light that illuminates reason to bring about its divine potentiality and acquire an understanding of the divine. Without illumination reason as "eye of mind" cannot see the ultimate truth. Like Plato's prisoner only when he escaped the cave did he see things clearly with the illumination of the sun.

Descartes takes a different stance. He sees reason as the capacity with which humans can intuitively confirm ideas about physical reality, self and a perfect being. Descartes does not take reason as potentially divine but takes the divine as epistemological guarantee for the right judgment of reason. He reasons about God ontologically, not to contemplate beatific wisdom but to justify man's knowledge of himself and physical reality. For Augustine, on the other hand, rational understanding of the divine gives the foundation for theodicy which is an explanation of the origin of evil, and the discipline for avoiding it. Reason's understanding of God is not just for the theoretical rightness but also for their practical rightness of our actions.

Half-Way Reasoning

In terms of practical concerns, speculative reason is half-way reasoning. Reason's capacity to contemplate beautify and wisdom needs to be brought down to earth. Nevertheless, we live in a world of competing, or even conflicting, values. Speculative use of reason may find metaphysical or divine truth but what can it say about practical concerns? Another kind of truth needed for our practical concerns. It is not only truth about how to live one's life, but truth of how to live together harmoniously.

Aquinas mentioned that we reason theoretically about the ultimate end which is the *arche* of practical enquiry and reasoning, but from that *arche* it is by practical reasoning that we are led to particular conclusions as to how to act. Speculative reasoning than half-way reasoning; we need another reasoning which is practical to finish it off.

Kant also plays an important role in this concretization of reason. His major contribution is his critique of metaphysics by limiting the field of reason to the realm of phenomena. He criticizes the medieval way of philosophizing that forces reason to reach realities beyond phenomena for which the only justification is not ontological but ethical.

When we use reason to argue about God, it is not for God *an-sich* but for practical concerns. We argue about God as a regulative idea that gives teleological sense for the world—sense that is needed for morality. His second critique concretizes speculative reason, which had been limited in the previous critique. Kant advances the notion of the highest good as the union of duty and happiness. It is also an unconditioned by which all conditioned goodness must be judged. By this concept, Kant brought the divine back into the realm of reason as one of the postulates of practical reason in order to retain the notion of the highest good as the perfect integration between good will and happiness can be solved only by postulating the existence of God. As man is not the cause of nature and therefore his will is unable to ensure that nature metes out the happiness which he deserves for the fulfillment of his duty. Hence the existence of the relation between good will and happiness is postulated by the moral law and the latter's requirement that we should seek to further the highest good. In effect, the moral law must postulate the existence of the supreme cause of nature which otherwise can bring about the required correspondence of good will and happiness—a correspondence which would not exist.

However, Kant's practical reason answers only questions regarding how to lead one's life. Kant's God is a Christian God whose divine imperative of treating another as oneself becomes secularized in his ethics. The question about how to lead a life in a multi-faith and multi-value world remains unanswered as Kant's practical reason prescribes only the singular value, duty implied as a categorical imperative in every situation while disregarding care and utility as alternative values. Thus, Kant's practical reason hides a value commitment which is historically contingent. This

value of duty is based on a humanist culture which originated among the Greeks and is emphasized by the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The main problem of Kant's practical reason is that there is no room for discussion about values. As an imperative of practical reason, the categorical imperative works in any situation whatsoever to impose the value of obligation without considering other values. As a result, Kant's practical reason is inapplicable in the multi-faith and multi-value world of today. In terms of that problem, Habermas' revision of Kant's practical reason and Taylor's notion of 'strong evaluator' are true breakthroughs.

FAITH AND PRACTICAL REASON

Hutchenson and Hume on Practical Reason

The word "practical" in practical reason has many senses. First, it is the capability to act impartially and transcend one's self interest; second, it is the capability to act in such a way as to achieve the ultimate or true good of being human; and third, it is the capability to act on the basis of calculations of the cost and its consequences.

This third sense of reason has its root in the Sophist notion of reason as tool for furthering human interests. The main concern of practical reason in this sense is only finding the best means for a prior end. The end itself is out in question but is judged by desires only. Practical reason focuses only upon the most efficient way to fulfill them.

This sense is also brought up by the Scottish philosophers Hutchenson and Hume who made an epistemological break with the classical notion of practical reason. Hutchenson's notion of practical reason rests on three major theses. First, it is that sense to which we apply the name "conscience" as making us aware of particular objects which elicit a specific type of approval and disapproval. Second, in being moved by what the moral sense makes us aware of, we are delivered from a kind of difficulty which the rest of nature otherwise imposes. Third, the perceptions of those objects cause pleasure and pain, but the objects themselves are not to be identified with those pleasures and pains.

Based on these theses, Hutchenson's notion of practical reason is very much instrumental in nature. We do not reason about ends, they are approved or disapproved by human desires. Hutchenson maintains that reasoning as power of reflecting—comparing and judging—judges only about the means or subordinate ends; there is no reasoning about ultimate ends. According to Hutchenson, we prosecute the ultimate ends by some immediate disposition which in the order of action is always prior to all reasoning, for no opinion or judgement can move action where there is no prior desire of some end.

Hume follows Hutchenson's line of thought by proclaiming that reason is slave to passion. Rationality is not exercised in its specific forms of activity with its own goods or its own ends internal to that activity. A

human being does not pursue ends specific to that rationality for reasoned ends are impossible according to Hume. The ends to which rational activity of any kind whatsoever is directed are and must be set by some passion prior to the rational activity. The speculative function of reason, which is to seize the ultimate truth or end, can no longer be maintained because we cannot reason about ultimate ends which are dictated by human desires; reason but adjudicates the best means to obtain them.

According to Hume, reason has two practical roles. First, it is to answer a type of question for which the passions provide motives for asking and answering. These questions concern the existence and nature of those things which the passions move human beings to seek and actions or characteristics which the passions move human beings to want to do or to be. Second, it is to prescribe means for the achievement of such ends set by the passions. It judges those means as more or less efficient in terms not only of the particular end in view but also of other ends which the agent is moved to pursue.

Of course, this practical role differs from what Kant has in mind. The main concern of Kant's practical reason is basically to transcend human desires and interests. The categorical imperative of practical reason is to do good regardless of our interests or desires for only those ethical maxims which can be universal are true. Maxims imbued with desires and interests are in diametrical opposition to practical reason. The view of reasoned good—without admixture of desires or interests—is a common characteristic of philosophers who follow Kant.

Aristotle on Practical Reason

Some philosophers tend to think that Aristotle's practical reason deliberates only about means, not about ends. However, Aristotle does believe that we reason about our ultimate ends and not only about desires for it is that kind of reason that moves our actions. Desire itself must be put under the strict control of reason and serve ends that are proposed by reason. Accordingly, failure of reasoning about ends and the control of our desires can lead to two types of person: one is *akratic* and the other is *encratic*. The *akratic* person is one whose desires are not yet under rational control, since in one way or another his knowledge of what is good is not brought to bear on them. The *encratic* person is one who knows what it is good and is rational to do, but whose passions have not yet been fully transformed.

Practical reasoning is formed on the basis of the practical syllogism. It starts with a major premise on the good at stake, followed by minor premises on the situation. Given that this good is at stake, that action is required. The conclusion is the action, the major premise is not about desires but is a true judgment of what is good. Aristotle believes that sound practical syllogism is the immediate precedent and determinant of rational action.

Sound syllogism must be grounded on true premises which can be achieved only by the process of deliberation. This ensures that our desire is ordered rationally by arguing from the ultimate end to what means must be adopted. Aristotle called such reasoned desire *prohairesis*. However, note that *prohairesis* can issue only from deliberation by those whose character had been formed by the systematic disciplining and transformation of their initial desire by virtue. One might say then that *prohairesis* is made up by desire and virtue; without virtues desires cannot be informed by reason and hence transformed into, and be effective as, desires.

Aristotle holds the view that there is no practical rationality without virtues of character. Practical reasoning is not a detached activity like theoretical reasoning. Ultimate end is not its concern, which is how to argue from the ultimate end to concrete action. Only the virtuous are able to argue soundly to those conclusions which are their actions. What must be underlined here is that the question of practicality is not just a question of cost-benefit calculation; nor is it a theoretical question. Practical reason must involve virtues as modifiers of desire, since untamed desire can divert a person from the nobility of the ultimate end. In other words, we cannot simply justify any means necessary to attain a noble end. Deliberation by a rational agent must issue from a conclusion as to what goods can be achieved immediately and in a rationally well-founded desire for precisely those goods. So, it is not only ultimate end that one must reason about, but also the desires by which we attain that end.

Aristotle associated reason with moral character by noting that we cannot reason appropriately if we are not supported by a moral character habituated by ethical discipline —which is found in many religious traditions. The fact that many religious fundamentalists use vicious means to attain their noble end shows that something has been corrupted within their faith, since their faith in the divine should cultivate a virtuous character whereas their practical reasoning is nothing but means-end reasoning.

There is a question then: can Aristotle's practical reason work in a multi-faith and multi-value world? There are some reservations. First, Aristotle put contemplative life as the highest mode of life compared to practical life. The true end of human life, according to him, is contemplation by which we arrived at what is truly real. It discloses the nature of the good and we live accordingly. Like Kant, this way of thinking is only an answer to what is needed to lead a good life. The question of how to live together is left out.

In a multicultural society, we cannot just live under the knowledge of the ultimate end or value. We also must be in dialogue with other ultimate ends or values for mutual understanding and enrichment. Aristotle's practical reason is based upon *arche*, which is unraveled by speculative reason. This *arche* is the highest good under which other goods must be ordered, that is for the domination of the highest good over particular

goods. But living together is based not on domination but on mutual respect and understanding.

Aquinas's Practical Reason and Pluralism

Aquinas followed the Aristotelian notion of practical reason with a slight revision. He also held the Aristotelian view that practical reason is not detached reason but reason which connected to moral character. He followed the Aristotelian notion of *prohairesis* as reasoned desire disciplined and directed by right moral habit which accords with reason. However, Aquinas introduces the will as a component of action which expresses *prohairesis*. The will is always free in the sense that it acts on the basis of contingent judgment as to what is good or bad and is always open to some alternative contingent judgment. The key point here is that the will is not moved to any end by necessity. This means that it is moved by a rational understanding of an end which is contingent and always open to other rational understandings.

This notion of Aquinas steps out from Aristotle's solipsism. Though he followed Aristotle in claiming that we reason deductively from an *arche* found by speculative reason, the judgment of what is good or bad is a judgment of values—a judgment which must be separated from an ontological understanding of God. God is infallible but our judgment of ends or values is not. There is not only one ultimate judgment of good that leads the will: there are many. This means that there is always room for discussion on the level of judgment about a true end.

Aquinas also held the view that the ultimate end of the human being is contemplating of the beatifying wisdom in God. It is the first premise of all fully rational practical reasoning, and we must reason practically from our understanding of God. However, our contingent judgment of end or value can never be a true end as our ultimate end transcends this present life which rests in God. In his opus magnum, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Alasdair Macintyre wrote.

> Aquinas extended Aristotle's arguments not only so as to exclude other particular items such as worldly power, but also so as to exclude every finite state which can be achieved in this present life, even finding some confirmation of this in Aristotle himself. For every such state will be less good than it might be; it will not adequately exemplify the universality of good or its self-sufficiency. So the ultimate end of human beings is outside and beyond this present life (Macintyre, 1988: 192).

By disqualifying judgment about ends or values in this world as contingent, Aquinas appreciates the plurality of ends or values. We may

believe in one God and rest our practical judgment on him. However, our faith does not necessarily mean that our judgment of value is absolute. Since we live in the world of practical concerns, our judgment of end or value is always situated. In no way do we act simply on the basis of an absolute claim of value. That would result in ethical solipsism which is closed off from dialog and enrichment.

How to act in such a multi-value world? Aquinas pointed to four cardinal virtues that must accompany our practical reasoning. First is prudence: prudence is virtue by which we arrive at a particular judgment from a universal moral precept. By having this virtue, we are aware of the multiplicity of situations which may need different moral precepts. In contrast to Kant, Aquinas' virtuous practical reason is situation-sensitive and does not subsume every particular situation under one universal moral precept.

Second is justice: justice is first of all an application of reason to conduct and is concerned with how the will may be rationally directed toward right action. In this world of many faiths and values this virtue of reasoning is very important. It tells us not just to act rationally based upon our faith-based values but to do justice to others. The right action is not just an act according to our own values but also takes others into account. This virtue is much needed whenever our values collide with those of others.

Third is temperance: temperance is the virtue by which we restrain whatever passions are contrary to reason. It is a virtue of self-criticism by which we must disclose and evaluate whatever passion motivates our noble end. If it is contrary to reason then it must be corrected.

Fourth is courage: courage is virtue by which we hold fast to the passions that reason requires when fear of danger and hardship would urge otherwise. By this virtue we are encouraged to use reason practically even in this world full of terror. We must put some trust on reason —otherwise we will be drawn into a culture of apathy that lets the world be overtaken by fundamentalists.

Toward a Multicultural Practical Reason

As said above, we have now to face a social reality that is based on many faiths. The classical notion of practical reason which is technical (Hume), insensitive to the particular (Kant) and solipsistic (Aristotle) is unable to solve current problems which are to engage one faith-based value with another. We need not only a virtuous practical reason, but an engaging one. Therefore, let us review some contemporary notions of practical reason.

The first is Charles Taylor's notion of practical reason very much associated with his notion of strong evaluator. Strong evaluator is one who has the strength of character to produce good from constant evaluations over time. One who would not do so is regarded as a 'simple weigher'. According to Taylor, practical reason becomes a tool for strong evaluators

to engage one another in the moral discourse by which moral change is produced. Implicit within this notion are two simple claims: first, practical reason arbitrates moral differences; second, rational inarbitrability between moral differences is rejected.

Taylor divides practical reason into apodictic and ad-hominem. The Apodictic is modeled from scientific epistemology whose main feature is 'proceduralism'. Its task is to establish a neutral set of rights and liberties designed to allow maximal choice about what constitutes a good life or a proper end. Apodictic practical reason attends not to what is good, for that is individually determined, but what is fair. The problem of this version of practical reason according to Taylor is that morality then can no longer be conceived as a guide for action. As concerned only with what is considered fair in pursuing each conception of the good it is insensitive toward the particular.

Taylor proposes the notion of ad-hominem practical reason. This practical reason is sensitive to the particular by speaking to someone in his or her particular moral situation. The task of ad-hominem practical reason is not to change someone's moral position completely by imposing some abstract principles but rather by increasing his or her self-clarity and understanding. In short, the ad-hominem model of practical reason is not a heavy-handed approach. It protects the dignity of persons by shifting their positions on the basis of principles they already accept to something that makes more sense or has a better explanatory power.

In terms of ad-hominem practical reason, one can convince another if he or she speaks to the other personally: either by articulating what underlies other moral intuitions or perhaps by moving her to the point of making her description like that of others. It is an argument from within by imposing general precepts. This is done by an error-reducing move which is sensitive toward contradictions and uneasiness. For instance, someone who would like to argue about freedom of speech does not appeal to some external standard of fairness to justify that freedom—but simply solves the conflict between freedom of speech and the right of privacy. If one can convince the 'right of privacy' proponents by making his descriptions their own and solving the contradictions, he succeeds in using ad-hominem practical reason.

By proposing the notion of ad-hominem practical reason, Taylor suggests two things. First, we do not subscribe to any principle whatsoever unless it makes sense within the context of our own lives. Second, we do not change our actions unless they seem to make sense based on our experience and world-view or picture of how things work. Those two suggestions are a strong challenge to the Kantian tradition which upholds a quite solid notion of disembodied, formal and insensitive practical reason. The idea is not judging other moral positions by some general standard approved by reason, but speaking to others in their particular moral context and handling the contradictions that may appear. In that way, ad-hominem

practical reason provides a means for discussion even in the absence of shared moral ground.

The second contemporary notion of practical reason comes from Habermas. He proposes that practical reason answer to three questions: pragmatic, ethical and moral. The pragmatic question is about the technical issue of an appropriate method for satisfying our contingent desires. The ethical question is about the prudential issue of developing plans for life in the light of culturally conditioned self-interpretation and claims of the good. The last, moral question is about the right or just regulation of social interaction conditioned by a plurality of goods that may conflict with one another. This question's implicit message is that how we should live is not an individual problem but a social one.

The third question, according to Habermas is best handled by the principle of universalization. The task of practical reason is not to find some formal criteria in solitary reflection like Kant. However, its task is to find valid norms which are capable of meeting these three criteria:

(a) only those norms may claim to be valid that could meet with the consent of all concerned, in their role as participants in practical discourse;

(b) for a norm to be valid, the consequences and side effects of its general observances for the satisfaction of each person's particular interests must be freely accepted by all; and

(c) an ethics is termed 'universalistic' when it claims that a moral principle, far from reflecting the intuitions of a particular culture or epoch, is valid universally.

Habermas maintains that the task of practical reason, in terms of the moral question, is still to find an impartial and neutral ground for the plurality of goods. In order to be impartial, it is a necessary to adopt the principle of universalization. This principle holds that valid norms should be capable of getting the rational assent of all potentially affected by its observance. Some say that this put Habermas in the formal tradition of Kantian ethics. In Taylor's perspective, Habermas' practical reason is still apodictic concentrating upon fairness arther than guidance for action. What it lacks is sensitivity toward particulars.

Responding to that kind of criticism, Habermas introduces another notion which is "application." Impartiality according to Habermas is not only a matter of universal justification by meeting those three criteria of universalization based on the ideal speech situation. Impartiality must also be conceived as applicability. What Habermas means by this is that all conclusions concerning valid norm are open to reinterpretation in the light of an unforeseen situation of application, and that the question of their appropriateness to particular situations must be answered separately from the question of justification.

Habemas separates the question of justification and application. When confronted with the question of which norm should govern an

interaction, we should look for public norms to which all rational agents could freely assent. However, a public norm is inappropriate in discerning the ethical question of 'who I am' and 'who I want to be'. Habermas maintains that what Kant meant by the maxim can be judged separately in terms of ethics and moraltiy. On the one hand, our maxim or situational rule of action can be judged ethically when it answers the question whether the rule is good for me and appropriate in current situation. On other hand, our maxim can be judged morally when it answers the question whether I can will that a maxim should be followed by everyone as a public norm. By doing so, Habermas saves his Kantian position from criticism coming from neo-Aristotelian philosophers. He wants to stress the point that universalism does not necessarily mean the annihilation of the subject's ethical identity as the questions of the ethical and the moral can be separately posed and answered.

However, Habermas' separation between the question of the ethical and the moral is still problematic. The question of what I should do in the ethical realm already contains the moral question. In today's pluralistic world, one's ethical decision always involves a conflict among different conceptions of the good. Whether I should help my brother to get accepted in my office or remain strict to the value of fairness is a clash between the value of care and duty. Moral concerns are continuous with ethical ones and there is no need for them to be discretely separated.

The ethical question is not only to solve conflicts between my present and my ideal moral identity. It is also a question of solving conflicts between different conceptions of the good. That the immediate universalization proposed by Habermas in the moral sphere cannot be the answer leads to the notion of "engagement." When a conflict of ideals takes place, we do not just immediately step into the moral sphere to find a universal public norm. Instead, we must keep our moral position open to one another's conceptions of the good or ideals to find any possibilities of enrichment. By "enrichment" I mean more or less the same as Taylor's notion of "arguing from within." My value commitment is enriched when it can take another's commitment into my account by solving both apparent and unapparent contradictions. It is enriched when it gains more explanatory power within my own moral context. It is the same process vice versa for the other's value commitment.

The question of engagement is also a departure from the solipsistic stance of practical thinking. In engagement, the question of what I should do is already recognition of the other. We cannot self-evaluate but we can open our position to other ideals and explore the possibility of enrichment. This is another task of practical reason. The first is pragmatic and deals with how we must intervene in the objective world in order to bring about a desired state of affairs. The second is ethical: it is to advise us concerning the correct conduct of life and the realization of the personal life-project. The third is moral: it is to justify and apply norms that stipulate corresponding rights and duties. Engagement is the fourth task of practical

reason. Its task is not to find shared moral ground for a plurality of ideals or good, but to foster mutual enrichment and evaluation which is open to each other and particular-sensitive. This fourth task of practical reason is the most appropriate task to be achieved in the current multi-faith and multi-value world.

ENGAGEMENT IN FAITH

Reasoning is a kind of engagement. In terms of faith, we reason not just about God as the ultimate being but also about how to live accordingly. However, many types of reasoning involve a disengaged kind of reasoning. A relativist kind of reasoning, for example, imprisons reason in one conceptual scheme. It means that we do not have to explain our belief rationally to the other since we reason within a different conceptual scheme. As a result, we are disengaged from one another so that we are not welcome to any mutual understanding and enrichment.

History also shows how a rich notion of reason has been reduced to mere technicality by which reason is severely detached from being and becomes an instrument to serve whatever human passion or desire proposes. The question of our being as part of a larger Being is left unscrutinized. We treat being not as mystery, but as a standing reserve waiting to be manipulated. In terms of faith this type of reasoning also prohibits mutual engagement among believers. Despite communications with one another, a believer uses this type of reasoning to promote his or her faith-based value schema as the ultimate one at the cost of other belief systems.

Medieval philosophy, especially Augustinian philosophy, draws upon the classical notion of reason as a speculative way to understand God. This understanding of God is the ultimate end of human living. However this mode of reasoning has disengaged not only man from practical concerns but also from one another in multi-faith or multi-value society. This mode of reasoning may answer an epistemological, ontological or even axiological question about God but it does not tell how we should live together in a pluralistic world. Whether each believer comes to his or her ultimate end in understanding God, the question of how to live together remains unanswered. Each will concern only his or her ultimate end disregarding the fact that we live in a world of multiple ends.

So we arrive at practical reasoning as a mode of reasoning for engagement among faiths. However I would like to draw a distinction between monistic and pluralistic practical reason. Monistic practical reason deduces from one supreme end or value. It is basically rooted in the Aristotelian conception which subsumes practical reason under the *arche* contemplated by speculative reason. This *arche* found by speculative reason is the highest good and others must be ordered below it. This monistic tradition of practical reason continues up to modern philosophy. Kant's notion of practical reason, for example, is also founded upon a 'categorical

imperative' value commitment indifferent to a world of different faiths and values. However, what is necessarily important from Aristotle is his claim that it is not only the end but also the desire to get to that end which must be justifiable. Practical reason is a non-detached reason that involves moral character or virtue; a non-virtuous individual cannot bring about sound practical reasoning.

The above interpretation of Aquinas prepares the way for the contemporary notion of pluralistic practical reason. Aquinas' practical reason recognizes not only the necessity of virtues but also the plurality of human ends. He claims that the ultimate end or value resides only in God. This involves a certain constraint in terms of what we value in this world, but it also renders all worldly ends or values contingent.While he appreciates the multiplicity of human ends or values, his conception that the highest good measures contingent goods is still quite solipsistic (regardless of the metaphysical problem it infers) because in this current multi-faith and multi-value world we are faced with a plurality of highest goods or ideals which are not necessarily in harmony with one another.

This reading of the contemporary notion of practical reason concludes that practical reasoning must become an epistemological site for dialogical relationship among values. This is not an impositional but rather an expansive reason. Practical reason for practical concerns in the world of many faiths and many values must be an ongoing process of answering not only questions about the art of living but also question about the art of living *together*. In terms of reasoning in, between, and among faiths, it must open our faith-based value to the *other* for mutual enrichment and evaluation. It is meant to engage faiths for working together in this colorful and beautiful world.

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RECONCILIATION OF FAITH AND REASON: RE-ESTABLISHING THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN BEING

EMILIYA VELIKOVA

ABSTRACT: The present paper is conceived from an anthropological point of view. Its main thesis is that in the contemporary epoch the human being has lost his inner unity as well as his external unity with the universe. The deepest reason for this is the suppression of the transcendent dimension of reality in the global vision of Western civilization and with it the suppression of the presence of the sacred in human life. As a result the human being in the contemporary epoch is exposed to three fundamental alienations, namely (a) from himself, in other words from his real essence; (b) from others, and, as a consequence of this an interruption of interpersonal and intercultural communication; and finally; (c) from the universe, which provokes a feeling of abandonment and dereliction of the human being in a hostile world, and as a consequence of this a desire to control and subordinate it to his own needs and desires.

This present situation is a consequence of the widespread acceptance of the human as the unique center of the universe, and human reason as the unique criterion of truth. This global vision or mental paradigm differs completely from that which was characteristic of antiquity and medieval times. This can be essentially represented according to two opposite mental paradigms, reflecting the place of the transcendent and with it of the sacred in human life. In the first mental paradigm the transcendent has a major place in the life of the human being and the discovery of transcendent truths is the main topic of human thought. In the second paradigm—namely that of modernity—the transcendent, in its vertical dimension, gradually loses its place in human life and its interest for human thought. This spiritual attitude leads to alienation, which characterizes the present state of the human being, as well as to this actual situation in which human reason is incapable of exercising its universalizing function.

Hence in the contemporary epoch the human being is at a crossroads, such that the Western civilization needs a new mental paradigm—a paradigm which re-establishes the unity of the human being, re-discovers the significance of the transcendent and with it of the sacred. This assures to human existence unity and centeredness it needs in order to obtain existential meaning and ontological significance. Only this new spiritual attitude, in which reason is not separated from faith and religion is no

longer considered an outdated delusion can assure the unity of the human being and the future of human civilization.

In all of human history, from its beginning to our time, there has never been so challenging a period as the contemporary epoch. The crucial line between the second and third millenna challenged human reason to provide meaning for human existence and thereby to assure the future of humanity. The 20th century was the most exciting and contradictory— a century marked by great discoveries and serious threats, by the impetuous bursts of human thought and unparalleled moral failing, by the greatest hopes and the most crushing despair. No other century in the history of humanity has been racked by such profound crises and such a deep-seated and painful loss of direction. Man has never been at such a distance from himself, from Being, and from the universe conceived as a cosmos. On no other century has in the future of humanity been so problematic, so much in flux, in which the profanation of life has been so truly all-pervasive, without hope of remedy. No other century has been so characterized by the transformation of nonsense into meaning, and of the absurd into the "essence" and ultimate purpose of human existence.

In this respect most of the greatest thinkers of the 20th century agreed in asserting that the contemporary epoch is marked by deep crisis. For some of them this crisis finds expression in the crises of knowledge and ways of thinking—in other words, in a crisis of human reason and the loss of its universalizing power; for others, in a crisis in the relation between the individual and society, or of human existence as a whole.

Already at the beginning of the 20th century the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, pointed out the deep crisis of European culture, understood by him as a crisis of knowledge and way of thinking. According to Husserl this crisis was most strongly expressed in the fields of science and philosophy; but as far as it puts into question the power of reason, it actually affects all of cultural life and the foundations of human existence for European humanity. For some social philosophers such as Adorno, Marcuse, Erich Fromm, etc., this crisis finds expression in the relation of the person to society as a whole and the loss of a human sense of freedom within society; its total power overwhelms the individual, exerting an alienating and destructive influence on his/her free will and ability for spontaneous self-realization.

Existentialist philosophers such as Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, Sartre, etc., point out another dimension of the present crisis, namely, that of human existence as related to its sense of loneliness, abandonment and neglect tormenting the modern person. These lead to the loss of the meaning and the unity of human life and to an alienation of the person from himself, from others, and from the universe, perceived as a negation of the human being.

Many philosophers point out the crisis of values and of the rationalist notions of human nature, society and history, indicating that all the socio-historical events of the contemporary epoch put into question the rationalist

idea of the dominant position of reason in the constitution of the human,[1] as well as the rationalist belief in the inerrant Logos of the historical movement. Due to this, the progressive development of humanity, considered in modern times as incontestable, reveals itself to be uncertain and human history to be deprived of its supposed inerrant sense and progressive direction. From the perspective of the fundamental metaphysical distinction between the spiritual and the material, the different dimensions of the crisis, pointed out by different philosophers, can be reduced to one—namely the *loss of spirituality in the contemporary epoch and the predominance of the material over the spiritual.* This loss of spirituality is related to the elimination of the transcendent dimension of reality and with it of the role and place of the sacred in human life, as well as to the narrowing of the notion of reason in our days, and to the establishment of the domination of instrumental rationality over metaphysical thought.[2]

This loss of spirituality is at the basis of the suspension of the relationship between man and Being and the submergence of human existence into hopelessness and despair, sadness and absurdity. As G. Marcel pointed out, we live in a "broken world"—a world whose "heart has stopped beating": a world deprived of soul and vitality, and as a result of this of love and hope; a world which "resonates emptiness" and in which the mystery of human existence is reduced to the comfort and security of everyday life. In this broken world, dominated by the spirit of abstraction and objectivation by the function and power of technology, human life appears not to be centered in the mystery of Being, which gives meaning to existence, but rather scattered in the mechanical repetition of actions that lack creativity and whose the unique purpose is to accommodate human life to the expectations of an objectified and mechanized society which treats human beings as if they were machines. Hence, in the contemporary epoch human life is filled with boredom and emptiness—instead of joy and satisfaction; with the weariness of this mode of existence, deprived as it is of meaning and of "ontological weight." The mystery of human existence disappears, overcome by boredom, emptiness and sadness, and the pursuit of comfort and external pleasures removes the desire for internal development of personality, for thinking, imagination and creation. To the extent to which the all meaning of human life is reduced to such security of

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[1] This questioning of the rationalist idea of human nature is related also to the development of the psychological sciences (and especially psychoanalysis), which discovered the power of the sub-conscious, its significant influence on human behavior, as well as the constant presence in the human being of such destructive impulses as aggressiveness, the inclination to self-destruction (or in Freud's terms the attraction to *Thanatos*), violent tendencies, and so on.

[2] For more details see Z. Wendland, "The decline of reason and possibility of its revival in the light of contemporary philosophy and necessities of human life."

everyday life, human existence sinks into absurdity and desperation, and the human being faces the question of his real essence. In other words, the broken world is a world deprived of the sacred and the transcendent, or a world in which "transcendence becomes transdescendence," (*la transcendance devient transdescendance*), as Marcel wrote, borrowing this expression from Jean Wahl.

The loss of the place of transcendence in human life and—related to this—the oblivion of the significance of the sacred in human existence is at the basis of this characteristic crisis of the contemporary epoch, which in its essence can be defined as an insufficiency of spirituality. In other words, the crisis from which Western civilization suffers in our days is produced by the separation between reason and faith, between humanity and divinity, between the secular and the sacred. It is difficult to say that today the human being is still considered as an image of God, and human life as a path of spiritual development and of humanity's approach to the divine, or of the revealing of the inner divinity of humanity.[3] It is difficult to say that religion in the original meaning of this word as derived from the Latin verb *religare*, that is to say a relation between man and God, still has significance for the contemporary human life of Western civilization. "God is dead," proclaimed Nietzsche at the end of the 19th century, and in his view it actually was man who "killed" Him. But if the "death of God" was still a problem for the philosophical reflection of the 19th century, for the major philosophical thinking of the 20th century it lost all significance. In other words, the "death of God" was followed by the death of the "death of God"[4] and Nietzsche's vision was just a prophecy of this state of total profanation, which characterizes human life in our days. Concerning the past or the development of the modern attitude of mind Nietzsche's proclamation was nothing more than an acknowledgment of this real interruption of the relation between man and God, of the complete "emancipation" of human reason from faith, of the establishment of the human being as the unique center of the Universe, and of human reason as the unique criterion of the truth. Nietzsche's proclamation was just a recognition of the fact that the transcendent had lost its place in human life.

In fact, modern times as a whole represent this gradual but constant retreat of the presence of the transcendent from human existence and from the aspiration of reason to reveal it. This is related to the change of the global vision of the world and the establishment of the new mental paradigm of modernity, in which the universe as a whole and the place of the human being therein are conceived in a fundamentally different way from what proceeded. The whole development of Western thought from

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[3] Namely this de-sacralization of the human being explains how the unimaginable crimes against humanity during the entire 20th century became possible.

[4] Only at the end of this century can we see some kind of renewal of philosophical reflection on the place and role of religiosity in human life.

antiquity to the contemporary epoch can be represented by two different mental paradigms or two different general perspectives, according to which the essence of the universe and the human condition in it are perceived in fundamentally different ways which determine the differences in the presence of the transcendent in human life.

Produced by the simultaneous integration and differentiation of four historico-cultural periods—ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary—these mental paradigms reflect two divergent attitudes of spirit. They are marked off by their reference to the Renaissance, the period in which a radical transformation in the understanding of the world took place. This landmark era thus proves to be relevant for the analysis of the two paradigms in question and allows us to distinguish between, on the one hand, the "pre-Renaissance" paradigm, based on ancient and medieval conceptions, and on the other hand the "modern" one, articulating the spiritual attitude of modern times and of the contemporary epoch.[5]

THE PRE-RENAISSANCE MENTAL PARADIGM

The essential characteristic of the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm is to conceive of the universe as divided into two hierarchically ordered levels of being. On this account, the world is situated at the intersection of two ontologically distinct realities: that of existence, which can be grasped by the senses and unfolds on a horizontal dimension, and that of Being which is vertical and in dimension and the creator of meaning. Although ontologically distinct, these two realities constitute a single and identical unity of being, inasmuch as the first always points back to the second as its sign, imperfect image, or symbol, while the second gives the first its existence and significance. This is equivalent to saying that existence emanates from Being and that it's meaning results from its participation therein.

This ontological conception implies a dual sense of the status of cognition, and imparts a bi-level quality (sign—signified) to perception. It therefore leads to a bifurcated approach to knowledge, whereby attaining the truth of being would amount to realizing the untruth of existence and to perceiving the light that leads upward as contrasted with the dazzling glare that is mired in the horizontal dimension—in short, to acquiring a wisdom that rises above *doxa*. However, as in the case of the ontological unity, this two-directional and bi-level quality is merely evidence of a unified

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[5] The reasonableness of this unification of modern times and the contemporary epoch under one mental paradigm is supported by Mircea Eliade, who writes: "By the notion 'modern world' we understand contemporary Western society, as well as a definite state of spirit, which remains after the end of the Renaissance and the Reformation." In *Mythes, reves et mysteres* (1957), p. 19.

disunion, since the two directions of knowledge intersect at a common point—namely, the symbol, a doubly-signified bearer of meaning, but one which can express the truth only as a whole. This is more clearly observable in the medieval vision in which all the phenomena both of nature and of history were referred back to a symbolism that reflected the truths of divine transcendence. Its presence in the sense of a sign of another reality that is higher and uniquely veridical comes through likewise in the vision of antiquity. There the world was a cosmos, a supernatural vital organism, and knowledge was a force that took off from the visible in order to attain to the Invisible, the only being possessing the attributes of the One and the True, whereas history and the events of human life resulted from the intervention of the gods.[6]

This understanding of the world as a sign of higher reality, the bearer of all meaning in which the world receives its own significance, determines the other important characteristic of the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm—namely the presence of the sacred in the universe and human life. This understanding of the world as a sign of a higher reality confers on the sacred the status of the "center" that gives meaning to the universe, and of the "thread" that weaves the content of man's spiritual comprehension, hence of his existence. By the very fact of belonging to this higher reality as bearer of all meanings, the world itself takes on a sacred character. Imperceptibly present within the real and constantly serving as the aim of spirit, the sacred becomes at once the world's unifying support and the ultimate goal of its movement. It determines the meaning of the whole of being and that of human existence as a particular kind of being. Ever-present and sought after throughout life, the sacred gives the pre-Renaissance conception a further specific characteristic: the ethical nature of a worldview wherein every appearance, every happening, and every activity assumes a value with moral connotations. This is a world suffused with moral significance, in which everything—natural phenomena, human acts, historical events—is marked by good or evil, grace or punishment. It is also a world in which the very transparency of the transcendent within reality gives it the higher function of serving as ethical guide. Lastly, it is, a world of which the order and organization are such that man is integrally incorporated within the totality. Hence the principal notion that defines the pre-Renaissance paradigm is that man and world are in a harmonious relationship—a harmony that is based as much on the image of a universe unified from beginning to end, as on the inseparability of Being and

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[6] It is worth recalling here that the medieval thinkers used the word "*symbol*" in the same sense as it was given in antiquity. The difference between the spiritual attitude of antiquity and the medievals consists not in the content, but in the accent and quantity—the Middle Ages elaborated a very rich and deeply developed system of symbols, the purpose of which was to attain and reveal the enigma of God and the presence of the Divine in world.

existence that gives rise to the perception and comprehension of the world as cosmos.

At the epistemological and existential level, in order to safeguard the ontological oneness of being, a hermeneutic mediator is inserted between the two hierarchically ordered realities: this classificatory and explanatory system for the spirit of antiquity is wisdom; for the medieval spirit it is theology. Ancient art and philosophy were imbued with wisdom; in the Middle Ages, religion connected the significance of the two disparate realities, and theology was regarded as that system of signs capable of signifying, of discerning appearances, and of deciphering the hidden meaning of phenomena. Thus, in the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm, the unity of the universe is brought about by virtue of this hermeneutic mediator which joins together the horizontal and the vertical, the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the eternal.

Precisely because the intersection of the horizontal and the vertical puts human existence in "touch" with transcendence[7], enabling it to possess a sacred meaning, which thus elevates it above existence in order to reveal Being to it, the fundamental existential state of the pre-Renaissance spiritual attitude is humility. This is also the principal value in which all human acts, initiatives, and desires that are capable of being judged morally have their basis. The presence of the transcendent in the temporal, which finds expression in the symbols, rituals, sacred holidays of life or in the word, capable of engendering being,[8] valorizes the spiritual dimensions of human existence. This assures the supremacy of the spiritual over the material or of the aspirations of the human spirit over the needs of the body. Thus human life acquires at once both a meaning and purpose: living becomes a means of purifying and perfecting the spirit, of elevating it to transcendence in order to merge finally with it. This existential aspiration towards the transcendent, as well as its presence in the world, defines the mystic-symbolic character of the pre-Renaissance vision, in which the miraculous is often considered as natural, and the natural as supernatural. There is not a strict separation between natural and supernatural insofar as the natural is viewed, in general, as emanating from the supernatural.

It is precisely this mystic-symbolic character of the global vision which is completely changed in the modern mental paradigm, which establishes itself as an attempt at rationalization of all the phenomena of the

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[7] Transcendence is understood here in the sense given to this concept by religious philosophy, hence as a vertical transcendence, and not in its phenomenological meaning, which concerns transcendence at the horizontal level.

[8] The word is able to engender being precisely because the vertical and horizontal dimensions of reality are interconnected. So the effects of the word on the horizontal level of reality are consequences of the correlation of the word with the vertical dimension, in other words with the transcendence through which everything exists.

Universe learning no longer any place for anything which could be considered super-natural.

FROM THE PRE-RENAISSANCE TO THE MODERN MENTAL PARADIGM

Within the framework of the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm itself, one can see the allurements leading to the decline of this worldview; these appear first as efforts to rationalize the understanding of nature, and then of the world as a whole. Thus begins a process of the progressive elimination of mystic-irrational elements in the direction of an increasingly rationalist vision. However, it is only the scientific discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo that definitively put an end to the hitherto prevailing model, thus instigating a decisive turn in the spiritual attitude concerning the understanding of the world. Thenceforth one observes another type of mental paradigm taking over, one that is connected with a fundamentally new vision of the world and of the place that man occupies within it, as well as of the capacities of human reason and the limits of the intelligible, of the meaning of human existence and the *telos* of the human history: namely, that of modernity.

This new vision, wherein scientific knowledge is accorded primacy, is essentially connected with the rise of the sciences. What follows therefrom is that the representation of reality, the relationships that man establishes with it and the manner in which he perceives it undergo a profound modification. Thanks to the sciences, new ideas insinuate themselves into this general vision: science introduces the idea of a natural evolution of the universe which follows its own logic, of intrinsic laws that govern its development, and of the intelligible nature of every possible universe. From now on man considers himself capable of grasping these laws through the power of his reason alone, and hence of controlling and dominating the world, of subordinating it to his own objectives, desires, and needs. To the extent to which this conceptual transformation is carried out, certain convictions are asserted: human reason is possessed of unlimited capacities, man has control over his own destiny and history, and he can give the world the order and harmony that will lead to universal and social perfection. In other words he is able to establish the "Celestial Jerusalem" in his own world.

On the ontological-existential level, these conceptual presuppositions reinforce the notion that man is the center of the universe and the measure of all things. On the psychological-existential level, they proclaim the state of *Hubris*, which is totally opposite to the humility that had been experienced and given value within the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm. On the epistemological level, one of the major consequences is the suppression of the mystic-symbolic character of the global worldview and an opening to a progressive rationalization that, to the extent to which science succeeds in appropriating every object of knowledge, whether

nature, man or spirit to itself, is imposed as the only way of understanding the world.[9]

The growing prestige of scientific knowledge, due in particular to its undeniable achievements, gives scientism such a dominant position that many thinkers begin to doubt philosophy as metaphysics, the object of which is the knowledge of Being (regarded as the primordial condition of every existence), as a result of which metaphysical questions henceforth are proclaimed meaningless.[10] Moreover, philosophy itself seeks to adapt to the criteria of scientific thought by striving to construe its truth-value and its method in accord with a scientific model as is most clearly expressed in neo-positivism, structuralism, analytic philosophy, and some other contemporary currents. Thus, in the modern mental paradigm, science serves as the universal explanatory scheme, as did wisdom or theology in the pre-Renaissance model: science replaces religion in order to become itself the religion of modern times.

This radical change in worldviews has as a major consequence the elimination of the transcendent dimension of reality, the extent and development of which henceforth is located only on the horizontal plane. The world in the vision of the modern mental paradigm is simply matter in the process of transformation, an incessantly evolving transformation, the sense and direction of which often remain obscure, but which in any case are viewed as understandable only on the horizontal level of reality.[11] To be sure, from Descartes, passing by way of Leibniz and Hegel, to Wittgenstein, the philosophical thinking of the modern era has continued to reflect on other-worldly dimensions of the real. Nevertheless, it ends finally by eliminating the transcendent from the world either by reducing it to immanence (Spinoza, Hegel), or by distancing it so far from reality, that it is beyond any possible knowledge—absolutely unintelligible (Spencer) or totally opposed to reason as the mystical whereof one cannot speak (Wittgenstein). By virtue of having been removed so far from all reality and from all rational comprehension, the transcendent reaches a point at which

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[9] If in the beginning of its development modern science took as the object of its analysis only the "world of nature" and left the world of the human spirit with its own abilities to philosophical reflection, since the 19th century with the growth of the human sciences of sociology, psychology, social history, etc., even this properly philosophical object of knowledge is absorbed by science.

[10] That is how Husserl speaks about the crisis in philosophy, seeing in this philosophical refusal of metaphysical thinking a crisis which reflects on the foundations of human existence.

[11] This vision is completely opposite to the pre-Renaissance one, in which nevertheless the idea of the transformation of the world was also known, but with the latter being related to, and even subordinated to, the dominant metaphysical conception of the True as the Same. The latter produces a vision of the universe as stable, insofar as the mutable is subordinated to what is immutable and the temporal to what is eternal.

it disappears. Thus, the modern mental paradigm deprives reality of its vertical dimension and of the presence, in mystic-symbolic form, of the transcendent.

With the transcendent thus disposed of, the sacred that organized time and space, which gave life its meaning and justified it likewise disappears from reality. ("It is a fact of culture," writes Paul Ricoeur, "that we live in a desacralized world. Our modernity has been constituted as modernity by voyaging out of the sacred cosmos. "[12])

Desacralized, deprived of its "axis mundi," the world loses its qualities of order and harmony, of unity and vitality, and even its foreordained role as the "hearth" prepared for man; it is transformed from cosmos into chaos.[13] Whence there comes about in man that feeling of abandonment, of being left derelict in a hostile world, of absurdity and of the weightlessness of human existence, which existentialism takes as an object of its analysis. For, in a world deprived of its own sacred meaning and in which the "cosmos became silent" (Ricoeur) and the human being became unable to "decipher" "les grandes correspondances" human existence loses its grounds and orientation, its center and supreme significance. Or, as Ricoeur notes, in a world without memory of the Sacred, a world deprived of its sacred time/space, human existence sinks into homogeneity and into "in-difference," and becomes "de-centered, ex-centered, and un-centered."[14]

The fact of having lost the key pointer to its own center gives to human existence this quality of ex-centricity and dictates a radical change

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[12] In *Sacré: Etudes et recherches,* ed. E. Castelli (Aubier, 1974), p. 70.

[13] It is interesting to note here one of the most recent scientific theories, which attempts to explain not only the birth and evolution of the universe, but also all the natural and social processes in terms of organized chaos. This idea engenders a new scientific discipline, named chaos theory. It explains the universe as a whole, its origin and its development by means of chaos, though which organization appears. According to this theory the universe originated from one chaotic explosion, namely the *Big Bang,* and then organized itself into galaxies; life appears as a result of connections of chemical elements and its evolution is a consequence of accidental mutations, which lead to more complex and high-organized biological systems. On the social level chaotic social events such as social cataclysm, mass-agitations or revolutionary crises, etc. lead to the establishment of a new social order. In economics individual activities form a uniform market, which seems to have its own mechanisms of self-organization and self-regulation.

This theory, which takes its inspiration from quantum mechanics and the related notion of "weak causality," is applied also in mathematics (Edgard Lorenz), history, chemistry, oceanology and other sciences. For details see: J. Gleick, *La theorie du Chaos* (Flammarion, 1989).

[14] In the original: "*décentrée, excentrée et acentrée.*" See: P. Ricoeur, "Manifestation et Proclamation," in *Le Sacré: Etudes et recherches,* ed. E. Castelli (Aubier, 1974), p. 71.

in the values orientation of human life, thus bringing about a domination of material values which connect man, through his body, to horizontal reality as the only one remaining. Whereas the spiritual would elevate the human being above this reality, unifying him with his own self and with the source of his own existence.[15] As a result of this human existence loses (to use Marcel's expression) its "ontological weight" and the human being becomes alienated from himself, from his authentic vocation. Rather than recognize himself as a source of spirituality and creativity, he strives for material possessions, and thereby subordinates his existence to the mode of having, rather than to that of being.[16] In other words, the elimination of the vertical dimension of reality and with it of the place of the sacred in human life destroys the unity of the human being and makes way for the absurdity of human existence. This present state of a lost unity of the human being finds expression in three fundamental alienations of man, pointed out in existentialist analyses:

1. Alienation from the universe and as a result of this the attempt to control and dominate it;
2. Alienation from oneself and from questioning and looking for one's real identity;
3. Alienation from others and interruption of interpersonal (and intercultural) communication.

The basis of the first alienation is the interruption of the relation between man and world, due to its de-sacralization and the loss of the feeling of a harmonious relationship between them. The development of the positive sciences (and especially of modern cosmology) removed man from his place at the center of the universe ascribed to him in the pre-Renaissance vision, which conceived the world as specially designed for the human being. Pushed to the periphery of cosmic space, the human being loses his special place in the universe and appears to himself only as an insignificant link in the whole development of cosmic matter or, as Pascal says—only as a "thinking reed," situated between two infinities of the infinitely big and the infinitely small and exposed to the influence of powers that infinitely surpass him. Thus, in this world deprived of divine providence the human being appears to himself as accidental and derelict in a Universe that denies him and is foreign to him. Hence there arises this feeling of abandonment in a hostile world, of loneliness in it and alienation

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[15] The rapid development of industry in modern times as well as the predominant role of the economy in the social world of the same period also contributes greatly to projecting material values into the position of greatest prominence in the modern mental paradigm.

[16] I have in mind here the two modes of existence, analyzed by G. Marcel, which characterize human life in the contemporary epoch.

from it. From this in-difference or dis-respect toward the world on man's part comes the desire to subordinate it to his needs.

Deprived of the sacred, which gives it a higher meaning, the universe loses its mystery and is transformed into a desert of no interest to the human being. Bereft of symbols which, through their connotations point to another order of reality, it becomes a matter of indifference for man, because, as transparent and univocal for him, it is no longer a source of admiration and fascination, of provocations and inspirations. Having lost any symbolism it loses also its capability for wonderment. Thus it is transformed from a "totality of signs," possessing some hidden/higher meaning, to a "totality of objects," which are matters only for investigation or utilization. In this perspective it is not astonishing that man no longer feels himself a part of this universe, that he no longer feels integrated into it and, on the contrary, feels it to be so foreign that the material world in its entirety provokes in him "nausea" (Sartre) rather than wonder. Treating this foreign world as denying his being, as a threat to his existence, he attempts to control and dominate it, not taking into account that, the further he goes in this direction, the more he goes against himself.

Feeling no longer a part of this universe, man feels also completely disoriented about his real essence, about the sense of his existence. Thus arises the question "Who am I, what is the meaning of my existence and of my presence in this world?"—a question which, for Marcel, becomes actual precisely in the contemporary epoch. Man has never before been a problem for himself and philosophical reflection has never before been so concentrated on the problem of meaning—the meaning of Being as a whole and the meaning of the human being-in-the world (*Da-sein*). In Marcel's view this questioning of human identity is closely related to the imposition of the scientific way of thinking as dominant and its connection with technology. The scientific invasion into all domains of knowledge and the prevailing position of the spirit of scientism impose an objectivizing vision in accordance with which all phenomena in the world are treated by this model as objects of scientific investigation or as things belonging to the material world. To the extent to which the scientific way of thinking reaches a dominant status in the contemporary worldview, the human being comes to be treated in the same perspective.

Reduced to a problem for the positive sciences, he is transformed into an object of investigation, similar to all others, that is to say, that with regard to him the same approaches and techniques are used as are applied and are applicable to the world of objects. This leads to his "dissipation as subject," because, as Marcel emphasizes, "what is at the basis of my reality as a subject is a participation" and this "participation cannot be, by definition, an object of thought, which deals with problems.… It goes beyond the domain of problems" and is meta-problematical. Thus, conceived and treated according to the model of objects, the human being is deprived of his real essence, that is to say of what inheres in him specifically as a subject, which is related to freedom and spontaneity, to the

intimate and spiritual, to the presence of a sacred zone in him, which never should be violated. This objectivating vision has several dangerous consequences: on the one hand, insofar as man is considered according to the model of objects, it allows for the manipulation of man, for his being treated as an eventual object of any possible technique. On other hand, and that is the more dangerous consequence, this vision reflects on his own self-understanding and provokes a kind of "self-objectivation," which thereby leads to the alienation of man from his real essence. Faced with a reality which contains only objects, the human being begins to accept himself in accord with the model of objects, to understand his own being in their light, and ceases to consider himself as a spiritual source, as a "principle of radiance" for the world. Enmeshed in this vision imposed by science and technology, which treats everything in an objective way, and mired in a social world that is centered on the idea of function, man becomes inclined to consider himself only as a sum of objective connotations, corresponding to his functions, and his existence only as a necessary adaptation to the mode of functioning which assures the best standard of life. Thus human existence loses its own mystery and sense and is reduced to the mechanical repetition of functions, related to everyday life or dissipation in pleasures and possessiveness. It is from these that the feelings of boredom and ennui appear—of the meaningless and absurdity of existence which torment contemporary men. As far as human existence has lost its reference to transcendence, which can provide a hope that it has some other, higher meaning beyond simple social functioning, man denies himself any further expectations and faces the threat of nothingness.

To the extent that any higher expectations of life have disappeared, replaced by weariness; to the extent that the subordination of human existence to everyday comfort and external pleasures has removed the desire of the human being to develop himself as a personality; to the extent that the mystery of the human being is reduced to the security of everyday life, human existence sinks into emptiness, and man finds himself faced with the problem of his essence—of his real identity—as well as with the problem of the meaning of his existence. Thus the question "Who am I?" is closely related to the question "What is the meaning of human existence?," and the latter refers to the problem of the relation between the human being and the universe, or, in Sheller's words—of the place of man in the cosmos. The basis of the interruption of this relation is the loss of the transcendent ground of human existence, which before had given it meaning and orientation and which, once lost, left the human being alone—alienated from the world himself, from his real essence.

On the horizontal level this inner alienation of the human being from himself finds expression in the external alienation from others—an alienation described by some existentialist philosophers (such as Sartre) as the ontological impossibility of inter-subjective communication. Conceiving himself in accordance with a mechanistic model the human being begins to see others and his relationship to them through the prism of

function and utility, thus denying their own personality. Subordinated to function and utility, human relationships sink into egoism and indifference and result in a self-closedness and "unavailability" (*indisponibilité*) of man, putting into question the very possibility of interpersonal communication. Closed within himself, concentrated on his own problems and interests, man seems less and less capable of receiving and giving love, of comprehending and sympathizing with others, of experiencing compassion and helping them. That is the way in which, in this atomized social world, subordinated to function and objectivation, "the word with (*avec*) more and more loses its significance, personal communication seems more and more impossible,"[17] and "real human community becomes unimaginable." In this lack of love, of warmth and compassion, of spiritual depth and interpersonal communication lies the greatest tragedy of human life in the contemporary world in which man feels alone and becomes aware of the emptiness of his existence, deprived of authenticity and happiness.

In sum, the objectivation of the human being and his transformation into a "thing among other things" (Marcel), the mechanization of life and the submergence of human existence in the banality of everyday life, the homogenization of the personality and the loss of individual uniqueness, the subordination of the person to the anonymous and irresponsible world of 'on' (das man), the meaninglessness of human existence and the impoverishment of the inner spiritual capacity of man—these are the main characteristics of the human being in a world deprived of its transcendence and sacredness. The "death of God," which was welcomed at the beginning of the 20th century as man's verdict and was met with such enthusiasm and admiration from many writers, poets and philosophers of the same period, seems to lead rather to the possibility of the "death of man," than to a real fulfillment of the human being and real happiness of human life. As a result of the suppression of the transcendent (vertical) dimension of reality and the subordination of all rationality to the scientific-technological way of thinking, the human being has lost not only his inner unity, but also his external unity with the universe; not only his real essence, but also the fullness of his life; not only his relation to Being which gives higher meaning to his existence, but also his relations to the others which can saturate it with joy and satisfaction. And this present situation poses the question: how long can the human being continue in this way without destroying himself, without rejecting his inner calling to invent and to create beauty and to spiritualize his own world?

"Can we desacralize everything, without completely degrading man into a tool, without ceaselessly giving him over to a manipulation which will end with the elimination of a bit of debris?"[18] asks Ricoeur. Questions like this can easily be multiplied. In the light of the alienations of the

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[17] G. Marcel, *Mystère de l'etre* (Nouvelle edition, 1997), p. 36.

[18] P. Ricoeur, "Manifestation et Proclamation," in *Le Sacré* (Paris: Aubier, 1974), p. 73.

human being in the contemporary epoch, one has a right to ask: Can we give a significance and depth to our existence without relating it to Being, without transforming it into a revelation of the sacred? Can we assure a constructive direction to our history, without referring our actions to an absolute point of orientation, which supports and makes possible a hierarchy of values? Can we re-establish a harmonious relation with the world without re-discovering it as a manifestation of transcendence, as a super-vital-organization, of which the human being is an inseparable part?

All of these questions, which from the perspective of the terrible socio-historical events that occurred during the 20th century seem more rhetorical than disputable, show that the human being today is at a crossroads, and must choose a different direction for his own development. In other words the new millennium needs a new mental paradigm, which can re-establish the full unity of the human being and assure the future of human civilization. The post-modernist deconstruction of modern rationality and denial of the principal claims of modernity prove that the modern vision has exhausted its inner potential, that it is time to go beyond the modern world-view and to invent a mental paradigm in which reason is not separated from faith, human life is not alienated from Being, and humankind is not divided into center and periphery, into superior and inferior civilizations.[19]

BEYOND THE MODERN MENTAL PARADIGM

"Either the 21st Century will be mystical or it will not be at all," said Karl Rahner. Berdyaev foresaw in the new millennium the onset of a New Middle Ages. Heidegger called for the re-discovery of the ancient intuition of Being, smothered as it has been under the rule of the sciences and technology. Marcel pointed to the death of the "inner soul" of the contemporary world and sought to restore the mystery of Being in human existence, finding its supreme meaning and "ontological weight" in the participation of the latter in the former.

What is the meaning of these calls for a return to a mystical way of understanding, to the ancient or medieval attitude, if not as revealing indications of the cross-like character of existence in the contemporary world? What is the significance of this dissolution of the unity of human existence in Western civilization, if not as a warning of the need for a new spiritual way, which would assure the ascending development of humanity? Is it not time to re-conceptualize the two mental paradigms which, from antiquity to the present time, have governed man's perspective on the

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[19] The post-modern attitude can be considered as a logical end of the modern vision. With the negation of the main ideas of its worldview and of its theoretical conclusions the post-modern attitude proclaims the insufficiency of the modern vision and announces the necessity of its replacement with a new one.

world, as well as his presence within this world? Is it not high time to re-evaluate the merits of the one paradigm along with the weaknesses of the other in order to form a synthesis of the two and arrive at a new mental paradigm which would open before man the road back to himself, to his true essence, and thus assure a future for his civilization?

The ground and main characteristics of this new mental paradigm should be based on three main notions—relation, person and transcendence. In their mutual complementarities these notions can contribute to the re-establishment of the internal and external unity of the human being, as well as to the horizontal unity of humankind. The notion of relation as basic to the physical aspects of our existence or to any scheme for conceiving natural reality would contribute to the re-enforcement of the ancient idea of the universe as interconnected and interpenetrating on all its levels, as a vital super-organism inter-related in all its parts.[20]

The notion of person as basic in the understanding of the human being holds out the prospect of rationally grasping in another manner the essence of the human being and the meaning of human existence. As far as the person in him/herself is conceived as a spiritual being this notion seems the most appropriate for defining the real essence of the human being and the authentic aim of human existence, related as it is to the development of man as a person and to the elevation of humanity as personality. But insofar as the person is also openness, that is to say intentionality and "movement toward…" ("mouvement vers"…), as the analyses of Mounier and Marcel show, the foundation of social life in the notion of Person indicates the possibility of overcoming the alienation of the human being not only from himself , but also from the others.

The notion of transcendence, which is well known, but which in the contemporary epoch has lost its meaning in the vertical sense and come to be understood only on the horizontal plane, opens up the possibility of connecting human existence with a reality which surpasses it, which supports and orientates it and which gives it its ultimate meaning.

The new mental paradigm should also be based on the re-conceptualization of the notion of reason and its abilities, of the aims of knowledge and the limits of application of rational activity, on the place of the human being in the Universe and his relation with it. If the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm can be defined, in general, as theo-centric and the modern one as anthropocentric, in the new mental paradigm human thought should discover the relation between man and God, between transcendence and the human universe, between the sacred and the secular,

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[20] In this respect it is important to note that contemporary thought grasps the importance of the notion of relation. Due to the development of quantum theory this notion is attaining more and more significance. In the contemporary philosophy of nature, holistic theory plays a major role, and more and more philosophers accept the idea that nature is a vital entity, rather than simply matter in the process of transformation.

between reasoning and being, between the rational and mystical dimensions of human life—in other words, re-discover the unity and multi-dimensionality of being. If in the pre-Renaissance mental paradigm reason was subordinated mainly to faith, insofar as its activity ends in certain beliefs or is used to prove religious affirmations, and if in the modern paradigm reason gradually emancipates itself from faith in order finally to confirm itself as a unique source of truth, by contrast to both the new mental paradigm should be based on the re-conciliation between reason and faith, between science and religion, between the human and the divine. This re-conciliation would lead to the re-establishment of the unity of human existence, which has been lost in the present age. For the human being is not only mind but also soul, not only reason but also heart; and religion in all the diversity of its manifestations emphasizes the need to purifying the human soul in order to reveal the inner divinity of humanity. This underlines the significance of the human heart as "leaving place" for God in Man and the importance of love, forgiveness and compassion for the spiritual ascent of man and the establishment of harmony in human life.

Insofar as religion is more related to the emotional and volitional dimension of human existence than to the rational one, faith should not be opposed to reason, but regarded as complementary to it. In other words, the relation between reason and faith in this new mental paradigm should not be considered according to formal logic—A or not-A, that is to say, if reason then not faith and if faith then unreason. Reasoning and faith are complementary activities, which could support each other while retaining their own authenticity, because faith without reason becomes a fanaticism and reason without faith falls to the level of a simple pragmatism, which means that it loses its universalizing functions and its inner mission to provide a meaning for human existence and to illuminate the direction of human development in the future. On the existential level this means restoring the unity between intelligence and love, between mind and heart, between the rational and emotional dimensions of human life.

At the ontological level this re-conciliation between reason and faith, which should characterize the new mental paradigm, means a restoration of the status of the universe as symbol pointing to a higher meaning, which it had during the medieval epoch. The possibility for this is related also to the human being as an intersection between the natural and the supernatural, the material and the spiritual, the phenomenal and the trans-phenomenal. For in the human being the transcendent reveals itself as immanent, that is to say as accessible to human thought. This opens up the possibility for philosophical activity to emancipate itself from the scientific model, to go beyond it and to restore its role as the search for wisdom, which it had in antiquity. This means that mystical experience, which is often at the basis of faith, could also be made into an object of philosophical reflection, which would seek to understand its significance, as well as the conditions that allow it.

In other words, in this new mental paradigm human reason must rediscover the significance of faith in order to make more room for love. This is so because, following and reformulating Kant, one can say that love without reason is blind, and reason without love—useless.

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CHAPTER IV

COGITO AND BEING AS ILLUMINATION AND DARKNESS: DESCARTES' PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF ULTIMATE BEING

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It has long been discussed in the history of philosophy whether there is an ultimate being beyond the *cogito* (consciousness and language), or whether the ultimate being is but the constitution of the *cogito* as its own supposed supporting base, as Heidegger thinks: "It is true that 'being' is 'presupposed' in all previous ontology" (M. Heidegger: *Being and time* [State University of New York Press, 1996], p. 3). If there is an ultimate being, how can what is beyond consciousness and language reveal itself in consciousness and language and be thought and spoken of? If not, why does human thought keep on searching for this being, as Kant says where he acknowledges that there exists this instinctive metaphysical impulse in human consciousness. Ancient philosophy declares an ultimate being without concern about the way by which it is manifested, viz., consciousness and language; modern philosophy concentrates on consciousness and language and abandons ultimate concerns. Descartes stands between them and gives great enlightenment.

People usually think that Descartes established the authority of the human reason in place of divine authority; some even thought that Descartes was the first to kill God prior to Nietzsche, so it is natural to think that a secular modern period of history began with Descartes. Indeed, with Descartes' epistemological turn, modern philosophers keep silent about anything beyond self-evident consciousness, and especially about ontological being unless it is supported by epistemological proof. Apart from his followers, however, Descartes seems never to have intended to abandon God's authority and the issue of ultimate being, but only to establish it in a new way befitting modern thought. This is clearly demonstrated in the subtitle of his famous work *Meditation on First Philosophy*: "In which are demonstrated the existence of God and the distinction between the human soul and the body," and in fact, among the six meditations in his work, two of them, meditation III and V are on the establishment of God. In setting up the self-evident principle for modern philosophy Descartes stepped into egoism, but did not remain there and soon stepped out.

LIMITING KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE REALM OF THE LIGHT OF INTELLIGENCE: THE STEP INTO EGOISM

In ancient Greece Parmenides raised the question of "being" and "non-being." Though his original intention was to emphasize the existence of object of reason and the non-existence of the object of sensation, and to emphasize the illumination of intelligence rather than that of sensitive light, he actually opened an important dimension which 2000 years later Descartes revealed with clear self-awareness. Just as Parmenides said, "being" is what can be logically thought and spoken of in the light of intelligent illumination, "non-being" is what cannot be meaningfully thought or discoursed about. But Parmenides seemed not to be clearly aware that what he called non-being is just beyond the light of intelligent illumination and in absolute mental darkness. He claimed that "being" was infinite and left non-being nowhere, not aware of what is said in Descartes' epistemological dimension that "non-being" (nothingness) is just the negation of "being" just like mental darkness as the negation of intelligent illumination. The principle of modern philosophy set up by Descartes is: speak of what you can meaningfully speak, namely, about what you can clearly see in broad daylight. This, I think, is just what Parmenides wanted to say but did not do so clearly. For Parmenides, being was boundless and unlimited with nothing beyond, it is impossible for anything to exist beyond something which is boundless and infinite. But for Descartes, self-evident consciousness is limited by pure darkness surrounding it; something beyond it in darkness has not yet been revealed but is waiting to be revealed. So after Descartes in his *Meditation I* and *Meditation II*, putting everything in doubt and abandoning everything without self-evidence in order to find a solid base, he searched deeper and proved (in *Meditation III*) that the *cogito* itself is not to be self-explained and self-sufficient (as was Parmenides' being). It needs something else to be its ultimate support and what is beyond the *cogito* is always a problem for him to explore. Accordingly, Descartes' philosophy can be mainly divided into two steps, stepping into self-evident egoism, and stepping out of egoism.

Here the first thing Descartes does is to lead modern philosophy onto the egoist subjective road. Descartes discussed the issue of ultimate being in terms of the existence of God. As we know, the main problem of theology criticized by philosophy is its dogmatic tradition without reasoning. Descartes tries to establish human faith in God on the basis of reasoning instead of dogmatic belief. His first task is to sweep away all dogmatic declarations with his Cartesian doubt, "I have always thought that two topics—namely God and soul—are prime examples of subjects where demonstrative proofs ought to be given with the aid of philosophy rather than theology" (*Meditation on First Philosophy* [Cambridge University Press, 1986], p. 3). Hegel commented: To doubt everything is the first principle of Descartes' philosophy and to doubt is to judge with rational criteria, not to believe in blindness.

Now let us follow the clue of Cartesian doubt. Descartes doubts everything, in the order of cognition; he doubts first sensation, then reason, and then faith. In *meditation I,* Descartes listed many sensitive things by which we are deceived; also in *meditation VI*: "sometimes towers which had looked round from a distance appeared square from close up … I found the judgment of external senses were mistaken … every sensory experience I have ever thought I was having while awake, I can also think of myself as sometimes having while asleep" (*Meditation*, p. 53).

He spends a lot of time discussing the issue of dreaming. Rethinking the situation of dream is the best way for us to shake the foundation of empirical realism, which claims that through experience we can reach objective reality. From common sense we think that once we experience something, we experience something else as the cause of our experience and beyond our experience. In dreams we experience something which is not objective reality, and which we believe without doubt to be real. This phenomenon has enlightened most philosophers both in the West and in the East. Plato once said "all men are living in a dream, except philosophers at least try hard to wake up." Zhuangzi, an ancient Chinese philosopher, once dreamed he was a butterfly feeling vividly as a butterfly; but when he awoke he felt vividly that he was a man. This puzzled the Chinese philosopher whether he was originally a butterfly which in a dream became a man, or he was originally a man which in a dream became a butterfly. Descartes also thinks in such a fashion: "I see plainly that there are never any sure signs by which being awake can be distinguished from being asleep…suppose that I am dreaming, and that these particulars—that my eyes are open, that I am moving my head—are not true. Perhaps, indeed, that I do not even have such hands or such a body at all" (*Meditation*, p. 13).

If sensation is not reliable, what about reason, Descartes goes on. It seems that physics, astronomy and medicine which depend on the study of empirical things, are doubtful, but the class including nature in general, such as arithmetic, geometry are indubitable, for "whether I am awake or asleep, two and three added up together are five, and a square has no more than four sides" (*Meditation on First Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press 1986, p. 14); but, "since I sometimes believe that others go astray in cases where they think they have the most perfect knowledge, may I not similarly go wrong every time I add two and three or count the sides of a square?" For once we think about "2+2," it spontaneously comes in my mind "4," "It was not invented by me, for I am plainly unable either to take away anything from it or add anything to it" (*Meditation*, p. 35). Where does it come from? We are just like computers which cannot reflect and judge the program input, according to which our mind operates.

Then finally, what about faith? Descartes goes on: how can I guarantee it is a good-willed God and not a supreme-powered demon who is deceiving me? From here, Descartes finds his purpose, even if "I have conceived myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no

earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist? No, … if there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me …let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing as long as I think that I am something (*Meditation*, pp.16-17). This means that even if I am now being deceived, the 'I' who is being deceived can never be nothing. Gilson thinks that Descartes based this argument on Augustine's "I am mistaken, I exist. Certainly one who does not exist cannot be mistaken, consequently, if I am mistaken, I exist" (E. Gilson, *Saint Augustine* [New York, 1967], p. 42).

And in another work—*Principles of Philosophy* in Principle VIII, he manifests this as more reasonable: Everything I can doubt, but I cannot doubt I am doubting. Thus "*Cogito, ergo sum*." Gilson comment on this in Augustine: "Everything can be doubted, but not the mind, without the mind it would be impossible to doubt" (*Saint Augustine*, p. 43). It would be a contradiction to have thinking without a thinking agent. M. King said: "Broadly and roughly speaking, 'I think therefore I am' means that as the subject of 'I think', I am indubitably, necessarily present (as the absolutely unshakable ground of truth) in my representations" (M. King, *A Guide to Heidegger's Being and Time* [State University of New York, 2001], p. 15). That leads to Descartes' claiming of ego as a substance. What is a substance? Gilson said it was "What exists independently." Although Descartes, who wrote in Latin and came out of the mediaeval tradition, often used the term "substance," he never described any substance beyond self-giving consciousness. He just talked about the manifestation of ego, even as he searched more deeply behind the manifestation of the ego.

He inverts the common order to I am, therefore I think—Being based on thinking—from thinking based on being. Based on this Archimedean point of modern philosophy, a new period of the philosophy of epistemology instead of ontology begins: this is the trend from dogmatic declaration to self-evident description, from ontological substance to self-giving consciousness. This is also the trend towards subjectivism, egoism, and somehow solipsism. As a consequence, the world is no longer the independent world presupposed by dogmatism, but a world within subjective horizon, not the world itself but the world present before us. Here again Parmenides' saying is made clearer, "It is the same thing —that which can be and that which can be thought of." The general principle of modern subjectivism is: how can you talk about something beyond language and how can you see something beyond sight and light?

This trend dominates western philosophy after Descartes. John Locke reinforced the empirical principle: all things existing in reason with no exception existed previously in experience, and no one can go a step beyond his experience. The ultimate being is just what is presupposed by thought to be the logical support of the experience. And Berkley too, declared: "To be is to be perceived," and if perception is understood to be more than sensation—including possible and future perception—this proposition is significant, when asked while you are kicking at a stone, do

you not feel the stone? Berkley answers, I feel only the ache of my foot, I feel no stone (of course Berkley later spoke of an absolute perceiver—God). The founder of 20th century linguistic philosophy—Wittgenstein firmly believed that the limit of language was the limit of the world. At the end of his *Logical Investigations*, he says: what you can say, say clearly; about what you cannot say, keep silent. Continental philosophy holds the same opinion. E. Husserl in his *Cartesian Meditations* says: "Transcendence in every form is an immanent existential characteristic, constituted within the ego," and in the introduction to his *Idea of Phenomenology*: "The world melts in consciousness." Whether Husserl's consciousness with its efforts at intentionality and transcendental intersubjectivity has escaped solipsism is still a question, but Husserl remains in subjectivism.

Then nothing but language, nothing but consciousness exists for modern philosophy: no substance, no ultimate being, except the subject (the ego); and the question of the existence of God is bracketed. In these terms the problem of ultimate being cannot be explored; and the existence of God is a question that cannot be answered.

SEARCHING FOR THE ULTIMATE SUPPORT OF EGO—STEPPING OUT OF EGOISM

If our knowledge is strictly limited to the realm of intelligence, should we then totally abandon the absolute concern which philosophy so painfully engaged before and after Plato? Should we try our best to restrain our so-called metaphysical impulse (Kant) and be satisfied with what is manifested in our consciousness? Descartes does not do that. Descartes strictly follows what some 300 years later Husserl's "Zu den Sachen selbst" describes: speak of nothing beyond the self-giving consciousness. Thus Husserl highly praised Descartes: "One might almost call transcendental phenomenology a neo-Cartesianism" (E. Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations* [The Hague, 1977], p. 1).

When science explains something, it usually uses an invisible substance to explain visible things. When explaining what is red, the answer given is: red is the light between this wavelength and that wavelength. In Descartes' phenomenological way of thinking when exploring 'what I am', Descartes says: "What is a man? Shall I say 'a rational animal?' No, for then I should have to inquire what an animal is, what rationality is, and in this way one question would lead me down the slope to other harder ones…Instead I proposed to concentrate on what came into my thoughts spontaneously and quite naturally whenever I used to consider what I was" *(Meditation* p. 25). That is quite exactly what "Zu den Sachen selbst" meant. Not from an abstract principle, not from a supposed substance, but from what presents itself spontaneously in consciousness. This is quite different from our prevailing scientific explanation where wavelength is a kind of photon; whereas follows the question: "what is a

photon?" Then comes the term "particle" and then "substance," finally the puzzled inquirer has to pretend to understand what substance is, which no one understands. Thus as an intuitive thing like red is explained by more and more abstract terms, one moves farther and farther away from red. For Husserl, red is just the thing (*Sachen*) present when perceiving by the light of the sun blood and tomato as when you transcend those substances such as sun, blood and tomato, and move to an eidetic series of similar perceptions, you get the intuition of red. In the same way, Descartes set up his cognitive principle as a phenomenological principle, "I lay it down as a general rule that whatever I perceived very clearly and distinctly is true" (*Meditation,* p. 24).

This seems inadequate to define Descartes as using a phenomenological method because Descartes has received too much blame as the representative of imagism and psychologism. The two things criticized by Husserl are: Descartes' *cogito* without thorough phenomenological reduction leads to substance, and his *cogito* without the notion of intentionality is totally closed in egoism. To the second question Robert Sokolowsky in his *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Chapter 1 says that Husserl's phenomenology uses its intentionality to open up *ego* to the world. He corrects Descartes' and Locke's shortcoming regarding a mind closed to itself, and proves that what was once thought by Descartes and Locke to be psychological is in fact ontological. That is indeed the real devotion of Husserl to human cognition; and the trend which leads modern subjectivism from the concern over *ego* to being. But Husserl is only on the way of turning away from the phenomenology of transcendental consciousness to Heidegger's phenomenology of basic ontology. Husserl insists on the absolute reduction of phenomenology in order to stay within a phenomenology of pure consciousness: "do not touch the issue of metaphysics until the consciousness has been fully clarified." This is really a contraction in Husserl' thought, as John Sallis says: in Husserl's returning to things themselves, he tries to return to the ultimate original base of consciousness, but "to expose the *arche*, to uncover the underlying identity-positings, is to deprive the position of its aura of self-evidence" (John Sallis, ed., *Husserl and Contemporary Thought*, [Humanity Press, 1983], p. 114). In his theory of "appresentation," in which he constitutes the unfulfilled intention with imagination—imagination is in turn corrected by future perception when the aspect of the subject changes. Husserl touches something beyond our own perception and consciousness, but he refuses to admit the things themselves in their ontological aspect. Just putting ontological being within parentheses does not absolutely deny it: the issue of being remains the core question of philosophy, and Husserl leaves this question to Heidegger.

Descartes would not put anything in parentheses. Descartes does not stop where self-evident consciousness is present; he goes further behind it, asking in a traditional metaphysical way what the base of this consciousness is. For him the so-called self-evident consciousness is not

sufficiently self-sufficient and self-explained to be the base itself, but needs something else to support it. Instead of going outward to search for the ultimate being, he goes deeply inwards like Augustine. Ego is not enough to be the only source of all our knowledge and it is not self-supporting; it needs to be illuminated, but needs something to be its ultimate source. With Husserl's subjective intentionality pointing outwards to some *noema*, Descartes' *cogito* draws back, "I will now shut my eyes, stop my ears, and withdraw all my senses" (*Meditation,* p. 24) trying to explore in the inner self for something to be a root to support it. His *cogito* seems to be closed outwards, but it opens inwards.

Descartes then describes and analyses the ideas in our consciousness, thinking that all our ideas came from three sources: A) Innate ideas, ideas which precede learning; B) Adventitious, ideas coming from external experience; C) the Invented, ideas generated from my own *ego*. From the phenomenological perspective, in the intuition of our consciousness just like the absolute straight line and the round circle present directly we know certainly and clearly there is an idea of an ultimate being—"supreme God, eternal, infinite, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent and the creator of all things" (*Meditations*, p. 28). This idea has "in it more objective reality than the ideas that represent finite substance" (*Meditation* p. 28).

But where did these ideas come from? Descartes has firmly opposed the empirical trend via his Cartesian doubt; for him, ideas—especially those infinite, absolute ideas—cannot arise from experience because everything we experience in actuality is finite and imperfect. Then, do they arise from the invention of my ego? If these absolute ideas come from the invention of my ego, then my ego must be an infinite and perfect cause; otherwise there will arise the problem of how a finite cause can produce an infinite effect. Descartes then describes in detail all the imperfections of a human being, the lack of self-sufficient elements of the *cogito*, to show that *ego* is not the infinite and perfect cause of the ideas of an almighty God. "I am a thing that thinks, that is, a thing that doubts, affirms, denies, understands a few things, is ignorant of many things, is willing, is unwilling" (*Meditation,* p. 24). As a consequence, "How can I understand that I doubted and desired—that is, lacked something—and that I was not wholly perfect (to be the origin of an absolute idea), unless there were in me some idea of a more perfect being which enables me to recognize my own defects by comparison?" (*Meditation,* p. 31).

The idea in me of a supreme perfect ultimate being—of God— cannot arise from the invention of my finite mind because it is so clear that "Something cannot arise from nothing and also that what is more perfect— that is, it contains more reality in itself—cannot arise from what is less perfect." *(Meditation,* p. 28); then "the more carefully I concentrate on them (its characters), the less possible it seems that they could have originated from me alone…when I am finite, unless this idea proceeded from some substance which really was infinite" (*Meditation,* p. 31).

If I derived my existence from myself, then I should neither doubt nor be in want, nor lack anything at all, for I should have given myself all the perfections of which I have any idea, and thus I should be God myself" (*Meditation* p.33), and this is impossible. Indeed, "I am now experiencing a gradual increase in my knowledge, and I see nothing to prevent its increasing more and more to infinity…(but) to the idea of God, which contains absolutely nothing that is potential…this gradual increase in knowledge is itself the surest sign of imperfection (*Meditation,* p. 32).

In conclusion, Descartes declares, "It must be concluded that the mere fact that I exist and have within me an idea of a most perfect being, that is, God, provides a very clear proof that God indeed exists" (*Meditation,* p. 35).This really makes us reflect on many things, not only the idea of a religious God—for example, where does the idea of absolute straight line come from; an absolutely round circle? We have never experienced anything like that in our external experience; we never experience the being of our life and that of the universe. Why then do we keep on asking such questions? We have never experienced anything that is absolutely good and perfect and infinite. Why do our minds keep on seeking them? It is easy to say that we abstract from the approximately straight line such as the trunk of a tree to an absolutely straight line, and abstract from the approximately round circle of the moon to an absolutely round circle, and cannot we do so from our relative good to the absolute good—God, as Hume says. But the problem remains, as Descartes observes, "It is manifest by natural light that there must be at least as much reality in the efficient and total cause as in the effect of that cause" (*Meditation*, p. 28). When we heat water to 100 degrees centigrade, the temperature of the fire used to heat it must be at least 100 degrees centigrade. An absolutely straight line in water is easy to be made to an approximately straight line by waves, but it is impossible in the same case to make an approximately straight line into an absolutely straight line. Even if we had that kind of abstracting ability, where does the ability come from? Can any archetype of it be found in nature? Thus the questionr remains: what are the origins of mathematics, logic and religion? Even if Hume himself declares clearly that from the induction of experience, no absolute proposition can be drawn, we do have these kinds of ideas in our consciousness.

This makes us recall St. Anselm's ontological verification of the existence of God. His real intention is that at the exhaustive limit of our mind's effort—beyond its very limit —something exists as the support of the mind. This is also the thinking route of Plato—from Idea to existence—and very different from Aristotl's from existence to idea. Thomas Aquinas argues from experience to the existence of God; trying to exclude God from

experience, Kant criticized Aquinas: what is valid of experience is valid only within experience—not beyond.

The idea of the ultimate existence of God used as the ultimate support of our consciousness cannot come first from external experience because all external experiences are uncertain. Nor can it come from an invention of mine, for I am imperfect. When we use our ability of calculating and reasoning, we are not

> inventing the principles of mathematics and logic. We are just like computers spontaneously using the program input into us, and we cannot reflect it. For example, when we calculate '2+2=4', 'the part is less than the whole', the result comes spontaneously and not under our control, "It was not invented by me either, for I am plainly unable either to take away anything from it or to add anything to it. Thus it is clear that "the only remaining alternative is that it is innate in me (*Meditation* p. 35).

It is very important for us to notice Descartes saying, "By 'God' I mean the very being the idea of whom is within me, that is, the possessor of all the perfection which I cannot grasp but can somehow reach in my thought, who is subject to no defects what so ever" (*Meditation,* p. 35). The ultimate being is manifested by human consciousness, but it is greater than human consciousness, just as St. John Chapter 8 says: "God is greater than my heart." Then God as an ultimate being, the ultimate support of the *cogito*, is present in Descartes philosophy. Descartes' God is the God in a phenomenological dimension, within me and beyond me, but not the traditional substantial God. Some have thought that Descartes was the first to destroy God, whereas Descartes found a new way suitable to the modern way of thinking to present God.

For Descartes, both doubting everything (see *Meditation* I) to find the solid foundation which cannot be doubted (*cogito*) (see Meditation II), and searching more deeply for the ultimate base of *cogito* (God) (see *Meditation* III) are strictly linked to each other logically. For Descartes and modern philosophy, the question of the existence of God is not only of religious significance, but also of ontological significance. Only when this has been resolved can modern philosophy escape the fate of solipsism. Where Husserl tried the way of intentionality and intersubjectivity and Habermas tried the way of sociology, Descartes' way was traditional as well as modern.

THE ABSOLUTE BEING AS NOTHINGNESS AND BEYOND LIGHT—LIGHT AND SEEING

Being manifests itself in various ways: first sensitive beings are present to our sensation, then abstract genus and categories are present to

our intelligence, but being itself is wholly unpresent: as Kant says, we have no cognitive ability to be its counterpart. The ultimate being is not the beings that are present, not in the realm of sensation or intelligent light, not the object of reason. It is somehow "nothingness" to our sensation and reason, but just from this "nothingness" in the epistemological dimension, every being in the ontological dimension derives its existence. Though we cannot sense it, we cannot reason it, we do feel its existence. In a religious sense, it is a problem of faith. It is the unpresent which supports the present. I Timothy 6:16: "God, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see, to him be honor and might forever."

Although since Parmenides and Socrates the paradox of speaking about what cannot be spoken of has somehow been noticed by philosophy though not until Descartes did human reason become fully aware of this the issue of ultimate being has always been in the mind of philosophers. Socrates in the *Apology* firmly distinguished himself from the Sophists who were concerned only with skill in speech and argument. The Sophists, in somehow the same way as modern linguistic philosophy, held that everything was only language, while Socrates sought truth behind language. Russell comments on Plato's idea, thinking it has two dimensions: one is its logical or language dimension; and the other is its metaphysical or ontological dimension. Also Kant's "Ding an Sich," though outside of our experience and knowledge, can somehow be felt as the source of our experience and knowledge—beyond language and consciousness it is still something that exists unexplored in pure darkness. Wittgenstein denied anything beyond language, but still admits that there does exist something mystical, about which we cannot speak. By putting ultimate being in parentheses Husserl means to say that before conscious phenomena are fully presented and clarified, they do not touch metaphysics. Parmenides speaks of non-being in the ontological dimension, while modern philosophy after Descartes speaks of nothingness in the epistemological dimension. For modern philosophy nothingness denotes what is invisible to human intelligence.

In modern philosophy, nothingness whether it is substance or essence or something else retreats behind the beam of intelligent light, and it can only be meaningfully thought of and discoursed about. What reveals themselves in broad daylight, what beings are present (paradoxically, this is what Parmenides calls "non-being") and being itself are outside of the presentation. When Hegel says "Pure being and pure nothingness are the same," he notes that they are all without any concrete character which can be brought under intelligent light. As for Heidegger, being itself, which is peeled of its concrete content, retreats behind language as somehow semi-"non-being," being and non-being are all without any concrete character which can be brought into intelligent light. Thus Heidegger reversed Parmenides' thought: Parmenides thought of concrete things—beings, as non-being; but Heidegger thinks that being itself, which is behind the

presentation of beings, is somehow non-being. "Being is nothing like beings; it cannot be brought to definiteness and clarity by having beings ascribed to it. As Aristotle clearly saw, being is not the highest genus…while everything that we can know, feel, experience in any way is understandable to us in its being, being itself can in no way be explained from or by beings. Its universality transcends, goes out beyond any possible beings or classes of beings" (*Guide to Heidegger's* 'Being and time', p. 16). For Heidegger language is the homeland of existence. "We can conclude only that 'being' is not something like a being" (*Being and Time*, p. 3). In the same work p. 10, Heidegger says, "[an] understanding of being is itself a determination of being—of Dasein (ontology based on epistemology). But in this case being is not only the being of human being. Being-in-the-world includes in itself the relation of existence to being in the whole: the understanding of being." Having reflected on ancient Hindu and Chinese thoughts, Heidegger regards nothingness as one of the important themes in his fundamental phenomenology. For Heidegger, the negation of life—death, the negation of being—nothingness provides much significance to life and being. He implies a synonymity between the relationship of life to death and the relation of being to nothing. To Heidegger, the only end is death: it is completely absolute, and so it is a gateway into nothing. This proposition makes Being and nothing the two halves of a whole. Heidegger thinks that if you make a deeper study of the history of philosophy, "Nothingness does not remain the indefinite contrary to Being, but is revealed as belonging to the 'Being of Being'. Heidegger thinks the sentence of Hegel 'Pure being and pure non-being are the same' to be true. Being and nothing belong together, because Being is essentially finite and becomes manifest only in the transcendence of being taken into the realm of nothingness" (excerpted from *What Is Metaphysics*). Heidegger thinks that without nothingness, being would cease to be and even goes so far as to say that being itself actually becomes nothing via its essential finiteness. In order to define being, it is mandatory to step out of it.

Heidegger's Sein is manifested in his Dasein; Dasein is being here and there, is presenting and understanding. "The question of being will fully come to light only when that question is sufficiently delineated with respect to its functions, intention, and motives" (*Being and Time* p. 7). "The fact that we live already in an understanding of being and that *the meaning of being is at the same time shrouded in darkness* proved the fundamental necessity of repeating the question of the meaning of 'being'" (*Being and Time*, p. 3).

Throwing light on the realm of intelligence somehow becomes the base of being and there are many examples here. In Hinduism, *Rig Veda* X .129 writes: in the beginning of the world, "There was not the non-existent nor the existent then…darkness was in the beginning hidden by darkness, indistinguishable." Here nothingness means just invisible, and "Everything is made up of the 3 elements—Sattva: knowledge, which also means light; rajas: action, and tamas: state of indolence and ignorance, also means

darkness. In Christianity, Genesis I, before God created anything, the first word he said was: "Let there be light." In Ephesians 5, "Everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for light makes everything visible." And in Thessalonians 5, "You are son of the light and son of the day; we do not belong to night or darkness." Plato's allegory of the cave manifests that besides the subject who sees and the object which is to be seen there needs to be light enabling the eye of the subject and lighting the object idea of Good. When Plato sticks to what is eidetic manifestation, making it the characteristic of metaphysics, what is beyond the finite manifestation becomes a problem: the invisible behind the visible world (eidetic) becomes the ultimate significance of the world.

Descartes in his *Meditation on First Philosophy* says many times, "It is manifest by natural light," regarding this as the highest principle of human cognition. Here he is clearly influenced by Augustine's theory of illumination. Then within light is what is present to the human mind, what we can see with our eyes (including our mind's eye), and what we can reason to with our intelligence. But according to Descartes' phenomenological description, that realm is not infinite, self-supporting or self-given. It is an area beyond which is the dark of our intelligence, which we cannot see with our mental eyes, which we cannot reason about with our rationality. Thus it necessarily becomes a topic of our mind, but as an object of faith. We somehow feel its existence by what intuition or revelation, but as we cannot define it it is faith.

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PART II

CRITICAL GROUNDING OF FAITH

CHAPTER V

CRITICAL GROUNDING OF FAITH:
AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUESTION

JOHN FARRELLY

Around the time of Vatican II, I sought to make my theological work a dialogue with the difficulties and resources of our time and culture, rather than, as it had been, an intramural dialogue among Catholics. I began preparing myself for this by studying modern philosophers and the reasons they had for disbelief in God. Then I studied how some major twentieth century Catholic theologians from a Thomistic background interacted with modern difficulties. I began my dialogue with the question of belief in God, and used a phenomenology of conversion to belief in God from disbelief in the twentieth century to show that such belief continued to have sufficient grounds and reasons to justify it for multitudes of men and women. One person I gave attention to here was Thomas Merton who described his conversion in his first book, *Seven Story Mountain*; he seemed to me a paradigmatic figure in this regard. Then I sought to critically evaluate the basic reasons he gave for his conversion in view of modern philosophical objections to such a change. I recall a major part of this critical evaluation in this article.

Here we are not reflecting on belief in God specifically as Christian revelation makes him known to us, but in God as transcendent personal being, believed in as such by Christians, Jews, Moslems, and many others as well. Christians believe that God made himself known as transcendent personal being before making himself known as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and in the twentieth century some converts come to believe in him as transcendent personal being before believing in him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As a Christian then I am in this article treating only a part of our full belief in God. Also, we are reflecting not on the most proper grounds for this belief, because that proper basis is God's historical revelation, but rather on meaning and grounds that are accessible also to those who do not yet accept this historical revelation—grounds which Scripture and tradition affirm and part of the modern world denies.

Scripture states that, "Without faith it is impossible to please [God], for anyone who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Heb II : 6). Such faith means more than an intellectual act, for as Scripture also states, "You believe that God is one. You do well. Even the demons believe that and tremble" (Jas 2: 19). Without dealing with other questions raised by these texts, we note that by faith we mean a personal knowledge that includes both a belief that God exists and a commitment to him. This faith is a response to God's making

himself known and to his grace. Christians believe that God's grace is operative in people's coming to this faith, for they hold that people do not come to faith in God without God acting within them, giving them by the Holy Spirit the desire to turn to God and illuminating their minds so that they will be responsive to his testimonies to himself. This is true of the process by which people come to believe in God as well as the process by which they come to believe in God specifically as Christians believe him to be.

Thus we are not in this article primarily giving grounds for a philosophical knowledge of God or a constraining demonstration of the existence of God. Rather, we are reflecting critically on the meaning and grounds of faith in God. Is faith a reasonable and free human act? Is this faith without grounds and an abdication of reason, or is it a fidelity to God's manifestation of himself and invitation to us? While vast multitudes of people in our time accept such belief as consistent with what we should appropriate of modern values and knowledge, many reject it because of what they conceive modern values and knowledge to be. Here we shall deal directly with some difficulties that come from current interpretations of human knowledge and the world by raising an epistemological question relevant to our project of grounding faith. This is an introductory treatment of this large and critical theme.

Granted that many in the twentieth-century still come to believe in God, we ask whether in principle one can show such faith to be perfective and reasonable. We will (1) reflect briefly on how faith as a personal act supposes a form of knowledge of reality that is mediated by symbols, experience, and creative imagination; (2) defend a larger horizon of our human knowledge than is acknowledged by much of modern philosophy; and (3) show how the knowledge involved in the turn to faith in God is related to the epistemology we propose.

A FORM OF KNOWLEDGE FOUND IN FAITH

Faith in God is indeed a personal act, an act in which the whole person is involved. It is an act of mind and heart by which persons accept a certain interpretation of reality and themselves and commit themselves to live in accord with it. In our world today it is not simply a growth or development from earlier personal acts; rather, it is a paradigm shift in people's values, knowledge, and commitments. It is an acceptance of reality and self that is in part a rejection of a previous acceptance of reality and self, and in part a subordination of an earlier self-acceptance within a more inclusive whole. Through faith one accepts a larger horizon for one's personal life and a larger environment—namely, God and communion with him; and one rejects an earlier fixation on immediately human values and reality to the exclusion of God from one's life. This involves a basic restructuring of the self.

Such faith is a response to God's testimony, and this testimony is mediated for the person through experiences, symbols, and a creative imagination, as exemplified in Thomas Merton. Experiences of the inadequacy of life as one is presently living it call into question one's present attitude and viewpoint, and lead one to desire something more out of life. After this, one may, as Merton did with the help of a book by Gilson and people of faith around him, encounter an understanding of God that seems coherent and indeed answers a heart-felt need in one's life. Believers who really express their faith in prayer and action may mediate to the searcher the reality of God and a kind of self that calls into question the way one who still does not believe interprets reality. They and the Church or the community of believers of which they are a part thus mediate God and a kind of indirect experience of or relationship to God. They do so symbolically. We can say of them what Ricoeur says of a linguistic symbol such as myth, namely that there is a double meaning in their action "in which a first meaning points to a second meaning which is alone intended, without however it being able to be reached directly, that is, other than through the first meaning."[1] The non-believer sees the action of the believer, which symbolizes both the believer's belief and, indirectly, the Sacred's or God's presence and reality to him or her. "Logos" and life are both involved in this symbolic mediation. Tradition too mediates the Sacred or God to the person who is searching for belief. Thus truth and values are present to the person not nakedly but by way of mediations such as these.

For many people today, as in the past, experience of the self and of the world also symbolically mediates a possible or real Other. Antoine Vergote summarizes the results of a sociological study:

> The intellectuals interviewed by our research-workers deny religious experience but acknowledge certain personal experiences which we have defined as pre-religious. The direct object of these experiences is not God—neither the divine nor even the sacred in the strict sense of the word. Thus the terms "religious experience" and "experience of the sacred" are inadequate. ...
>
> These pre-religious experiences refer to the world and to existence—to the world as a totality; to existence seen as

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[1] Paul Ricoeur, " Poetique et symbolique," in Bernard Lauret and François Refoule, eds. *Initiation a la pratique de la theologie*, I, *Introduction* (Paris¨Cerf, 1982), 44.

This article is reprinted with only a few changes from a section (pp. 218-234) of my book, *Belief in God in Our Time. Foundational Theology I* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992) with permission of the publisher. In an earlier chapter, I analyse Merton's and others' conversion experience (see ibid., 166-178). See Merton, *Seven Story Mountain* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1948).

something supported and penetrated by a transcendent. Scientific thought is conscious of its natural limitation. It does not explain the existence of the universe. The enquiring mind is led to the ultimate question: why do things exist? ...

Existence is not felt to be in complete possession of the principle of its own being; this is something it has received. ... Nature has been desacralized. But the universe as a whole and existence as such have become indices of an Other, which is not just pure negativity, but rather the foundation, giver, perfection, and inspiration of the good.[2]

These experiences stimulate the creative imagination of those who are open to them, so that in a sense these searchers "indwell" the symbols that are presented to them and the symbols have a transformative influence on them. They present an alternative way of being, an alternative world to live in which these people may find more inclusive and healing than the one they presently inhabit. Symbols may reveal to them how much they exclude of reality and of themselves by the way they structure their world and selves and by the criteria they accept for judging what is true and valuable. Thus before accepting this new way of being, one can by creative imagination project oneself into it. This self-projection happens, at least frequently, not so much through a deliberate shaping of the imagination, but through a semi-conscious or even unconscious reconfiguration of the self-in-reality. We see something analogous happening in many areas of life, for example, when young people fall in love and imagine themselves married to the loved one, or when people confront the challenges of a new stage of life, or when people have a sense through literature, an encounter, or a day-dream of a way of being more fully human than their present one. Erik Erikson speaks of this process as occurring through the dynamism of the ego, but the social environment and the individual's human potential are involved as well. Yet this is not wholly unproblematic because for it to be possible, the new way of being has to be seen as integrating what is good and valued in the present self, as Merton was helped by Jacques Maritain's writings to see how the artist could be integrated into the fuller human being. Through such experiences, one can creatively imagine oneself in a new way of being, subsuming one's present "selves" into a larger context and no longer accepting one's present horizon or self as all-inclusive. Once more, as we said earlier of symbols, values and truth are not accepted nakedly but through the mediation of creative imagination in which they are integrated. The person responds not simply to fact or to value but to these as made concrete in persons and community. One does not come to faith by evaluating what is presented as reality without the involvement of one's affectivity, nor does one come to faith by simple attraction to the values it

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[2] Antoine Vergote, *The Religious Man. A Psychological Study of Religious Attitudes* (Dayton: Pflaum, 1969), 76-78.

presents without questioning the validity of the view on which they are based arising in one's mind.[3] People come to faith through accepting that the symbols presented to them as mediating God and a way of relating to him do indeed mediate reality, and through surrendering to this understanding of God, thus restructuring the self within this relationship.

AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUESTION

However, one may say that this supposes an epistemology widely rejected in our time. One may have intimations of God through other people and one's self and the physical world which are a religious reading of the self and the world, and are in accord with the epistemology of Thomas Aquinas and other classical philosophers, but not with much epistemology since then. As long as people accept certain modern strictures against metaphysics, they can scarcely have confidence in the objective validity of intimations of God that come to them through experience. I will not give an extended treatment of this matter here because such a study may easily be found elsewhere,[4] but we must deal with it briefly. I will recall an interpretation of Thomas' view on how we know reality as being, and then a few modern difficulties raised against our capacity to know reality metaphysically. Following this I will present a contemporary phenomenology of our human knowledge relevant to this issue, using data from the work of some developmental cognitive psychologists, and ask whether an epistemology that accepts our capacity for metaphysical knowledge or one that rejects it is better able to explain this data.

Thomas Aquinas has a psychology and epistemology to explain our experience of knowledge. In accord with Aristotle and others he discusses the senses, such as seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting. But, also in accord with Aristotle and others, he finds these inadequate to account for our knowledge of reality, since in many cases we know what things are and not only their physical or sensible characteristics. For example, we can distinguish a human being from a beast as a "rational animal"; we can distinguish a thing's change in some characteristics (e.g., size) from its change in being (e.g., in death). This is to know something at least of the nature or essence of a thing, what makes it be the kind of thing it is. This

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[3] See John Henry Newman, *Grammar of Assent* (New York: Doubleday, 1955) passim, and specifically 84-85.

[4] See my more extended treatment of this in *God's Work in a Changing World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985; now distributed by Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy), ch. 9, " Developmental Psychology and Knowledge of Being," 287-314. This article can also be found in Tran van Doan, Vincent Shen, and George McLean (eds.), *Chinese Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development* (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1991), 45-66.

we do by intellectual penetration into what is offered us through the senses; besides our senses we also have a power of understanding which we call the intellect.

But more than this, we know the distinction between something be-ing and something as merely possibly be-ing. To be is not identical with being a particular kind of thing. The constitutive principles of a thing at its deepest interior dimension include both one that determines its kind of being (nature or essence) and one that makes it simply to be (*esse*—to be or existence). To know a thing specifically as be-ing then, it is not sufficient to know what kind of being it is by direct intellectual apprehension mediated by sense knowledge. In fact, for Thomas, to be is more directly an object of the human will than of the human intellect, because of the way the good, which is the object of the will, is related to the actualization of the being of the one who acts. He writes: "The good is that which all desire ... but all things desire to be (*esse*) actually according to their manner, which is clear from the fact that each thing according to its nature resists corruption. To be actually then constitutes the nature of the good."[5]

This is reflected in our language, for we say "I want to be" or "I want to eat," etc., thus expressing in many cases the direct object of desire, love, and will by the infinitive form of the verb. We generally signify the direct object of knowledge by a noun or noun phrase, such as "I know him," or "I know how to swim." If we place an infinitive after a word signifying knowledge, it means not the direct object that is known but the pur-pose of our knowledge, as in "I study to learn." The point of this excursus is that it seems we know being through, in part, the mediation of our desire and action for be-ing—initially for our own be-ing. As we intellectually know color through the mediation of the sense that has color as its direct object, so too we know be-ing through the mediation of the power by which we desire and love to be, namely our will or "rational appetite." Thus our knowledge of being, which is systematically investigated by metaphysics, is mediated both through our direct knowledge of what things are in the world about us and through our desire to be, or our response to our own be-ing through desire, love, etc. This we know more through presence than through the intellect, as we know the things about us.

In this classical view, knowledge of God is mediated through both knowledge of self and knowledge of the world, for God is the fullness of being in which our being shares and he is the source of the world. Knowledge of God is mediated not only by objective knowledge but also by the presence that comes through a desire and love of being that extends beyond our immediate self and the selves of fellow human beings as such. Conversely, God can communicate to us through our interiority and the physical world or, more properly, through both within the context of history.

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[5] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 37, 4. Also see his *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 1, ad 4; q. 21, 2; *De Potentia*, q. 3, a. 6.

How can we evaluate this view, given the fact that most modern philosophers deny such scope to our knowledge? As John E. Smith writes: "The modern problem of rationality in religion has been set largely by the decline, beginning in the eighteenth century, of the classical philosophical traditions, coupled with the rise of a new conception of rationality which has been determined by three factors; first, the norms operative in experimental science; secondly, a logic which purports to be entirely formal and thus independent of particular philosophical commitments; and, finally, a technical and instrumental as distinct from a reflective and speculative, reason."[6] Many people in our time take their understanding of what knowledge is from what is found in the physical and human sciences. Some who reject this position accept one such as that of Heidegger who acknowledges our awareness or knowledge of Being but rejects metaphysics.

Our answer to these difficulties is in continuity with the responses of Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan. However, I suggest that certain currents in developmental cognitive psychology can help us to evaluate Thomas' epistemology in regard to our knowledge of being from our contemporary experience and study of this in the human sciences. Very briefly, we shall recall two diverse psychological studies of human knowledge, those of Jean Piaget and of James and Eleanor Gibson, and then suggest that both are needed and together offer us a "phenomenology" of our knowledge that an expansion of Thomas Aquinas' view can account for but that Hume's, Kant's, and Heidegger's cannot.

Jean Piaget's work is recognized as perhaps the preeminent twentieth-century psychological study of the child's cognitive development.[7] He accepts the validity of scientific study of the physical world, identifies the structure of this kind of knowledge, and studies the evolution, through infancy and childhood, of cognitive structures present in the adolescent who has the capacity to engage in simple scientific experiments. Thus he begins with a characteristically modern experience of knowledge, and studies the evolutionary emergence of the cognitive structure that it manifests. Mathematical physics studies the world through assimilating it to quantitative relations and accommodating such relations to it: this is but one example of how fundamental the process of assimilation is for knowledge. It is evident in infants' first cognitive interactions with their environment. Infants assimilate objects about them to their sucking reflex used as an action schema; and by accommodating this structure to the

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    [6] John E. Smith, "Faith, Belief and the Problem of Rationality in Religion," in C.F. Delaney, ed., *Rationality' and Religious Belief* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 47.

    [7] See Jean Piaget, " Piaget's Theory," *Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology,* 3rd edition, ed. Paul H. Mussen (New York: Wiley; 1970) vol. 1. 703-732; J. Piaget and Barbel Inhelder, *The Psychology of the Child* (New York: Basic Books. 1969); and my article cited in n. 4.

variety of objects they suck, they can differentiate among them. For example, infants suck the breast and know it through this act; but they also suck a coverlet, their thumbs, and toys; and all of these are sucked differently. Notice that infants then organize or construct their world cognitively by assimilating it to an action schema and accommodating this schema to different objects. The schema is developed in the very process of accommodation. Such construction is not opposed to knowledge of the world, but rather is what mediates this knowledge. In mathematical physics also, we construct the world through assimilation and accommodation, though we do so by applying mathematical schemata to the world. Knowledge therefore is mediated by action on the world about us.

We should note that Bernard Lonergan philosophically analysed the structure of knowledge found in mathematical physics and saw Piaget's work as correlative to his own. Lonergan argued for the possibility of metaphysics through showing that it is a search for intelligibility and, indeed, absolute or unconditioned intelligibility. However, even if we agree largely with his analysis, we must admit that this is not what Thomas primarily thought human knowledge to be. We can acknowledge the difference between Thomas' understanding of concept formation and that implicit in modern mathematical physics, while—as we shall show below— incorporating both forms of knowledge into a more inclusive analysis of our cognitive capacity.

We shall return to this question below, but here we can add that cognitively structuring the world about us, as Piaget analyses it, is for the good—the actualization—of the person who is seeking knowledge and of others (e.g., scientific knowledge is sought for the benefits of technology). Thus we can see a relationship of this kind of knowledge to one aspect of Thomas' explanation of our knowledge of being. Action is itself dependent on our desire to be; and thus at different levels of knowledge mediated by action there is some cognitive presence to the knower not only of our action but of our desire to be, and thus too of our being itself. This form of knowledge is akin to a dimension of knowledge by presence emphasized by Heidegger and Karl Rahner among others.

Piaget's approach to knowledge should be complemented by another type of psychological study, namely by the work of those psychologists who analyze perception or how the person discriminates shapes, colors, etc. Here the work of James Gibson and his wife Eleanor Gibson is particularly helpful. James Gibson reacted against the empiricist view that we initially sense only two-dimensional color (as points or blotches of color), and that perception of three-dimensional distance or depth is basically learned, that is, that this perception is the effect of one's interpretation of two-dimensional cues or clues and is thus a construction by a process of association. On the contrary, Gibson shows that the stimulus considered globally has correlates for one's perception of depth (e.g., in gradients of texture in the ground or settings of our normal perceptions in the visual world) and that three-dimensional physical reality is basically given in

perception rather than learned. In continuity with this, Eleanor Gibson reacts against the behaviorist interpretation of perception, which says that learning occurs through association of objects with the behavior or response they evoke. She writes: "Perception, functionally speaking, is the process by which we obtain firsthand information about the world around us. It has a phenomenal aspect, the awareness of events presently occurring in the organism's immediate surroundings. It has also a responsive aspect; it entails discriminative, selective response to the stimuli in the immediate environment."[8] This analysis is based on the fact "that there is a structure in the world and structure in the stimulus, and that it is the structure in the stimulus—considered as a global array, not punctuate—that constitutes information about the world. That there is structure in the world is self-evident to the physical scientist who uses elaborate tools and methods to discover it."[9]

Both Piaget and Eleanor Gibson examine growth in knowledge in a developmental framework. While Piaget analyzes the development of structures of knowledge, Gibson studies how discrimination of features of our world moves from the gross features of an object to greater specificity. We wish to note that the differing interpretations of knowledge in these two views correlate with the primacy given in the one to touch and in the other to sight. In the first, motor activity as mediating knowledge of the world is more emphasized, while in the second, emphasis is placed on the stimulus present in the environment. It seems to be a fact that these two initially unintegrated aspects or forms of knowledge are present in the infant and that both are essential principles of our developing knowledge of the world. D. Elkind judges that Piaget's study of concept formation reflects a mode of concept formation present in Galileo and much modern science while Gibson's reflects one present in Aristotle. He concludes that "taken together ... these two versions of the concept can provide a comprehensive view of the concept that will account for the modes of conception found in both the individual and science."[10]

Likewise, in knowledge of reality as being, both of these forms of knowledge are involved. We saw that knowledge of being, according to Thomas' understanding, is essentially dependent on two modes of knowledge—a knowledge of the intrinsic intelligibility of physical reality and a knowledge of our be-ing through presence. In the one, mediated by

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[8] Eleanor J. Gibson, *Principles of Perceptual Learning and Delopment* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1969) 3. Also see James J. Gibson, *The Perception of the Visual World (Boston:* Houghton Mifflin, 1950); and, in reference to the philosophical implications of this, R. Harre and E. H. Madden, *Causal Powers: ,A theory of Natural Necessity* (Oxford, 1975).

[9] E. Gibson, *Principles,* 13-14.

[10] David Elkind, "Conservation and Concept Formation," in D. Elkind and J. H. Flavell, eds., *Studies in Cognitive Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 188.

sense knowledge, intellectual abstraction, and insight, we see more of what Gibson emphasizes. But, in light of modern science we must now add that knowledge of the intrinsic intelligibility of the world about us is mediated not only by intellectual penetration of the natures of material things in the way Aristotle and Thomas analysed, but by our cognitive organization of the world about us through assimilating it to action schemata and accommodating such schemata to the world in the way supposed by modern physics and analyzed by Piaget and philosophers such as Lonergan. As for our knowledge of our be-ing (*esse*) by presence, it has more to do with the implications of Piaget's emphasis that knowledge comes through action or, we may say, praxis; namely, that this action is for be-ing and is accompanied by a consciousness of such be-ing. Thus we find in these two forms of knowledge present even in the infant a point of departure for our explanation of the psychogenesis of being.

Studies can be found elsewhere on how these forms of knowledge exist in the infant, how language develops only secondarily to and dependent upon them, how language and internal symbols such as imagination increase enormously the scope of knowledge, and how the child around age seven develops concepts concerning the conservation of quantity, number, area, space, and volume dependent both upon an interiorized activity on the environment and upon a perception of sameness despite change. We wish to note that this involves knowing necessities in the physical world about us, such as the distinction between a quality such as color and quantity, and the conservation of quantity (e.g., when water is poured from one beaker to a differently shaped one in spite of change of appearance).

The pre-adolescent goes beyond these achievements to be able to engage in simple scientific experiments. Piaget gave such experiments to younger children and pre-adolescents, and studied, for example, how they approach testing which combination of liquids can give rise to a specified color. A younger child immediately tries to attain an empirical correspondence with the experimenter's results. This is connected with the fact that children's organization of the physical world about them proceeds by their development of "more or less separate islets of organization," [11] which do not yet form the integrated systems found in adolescents. The pre-adolescent, on the other hand, begins a consideration of the problem by a systematic recognition of all the possibilities, and only then proceeds to look for the actual solution by an examination of the different variables. This older child proceeds by a hypothetico-deductive method, systematically trying all the possible solutions. The greater scope and possibilities of the pre-adolescent's knowledge are based on this more

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[11] J. H. Flavell, *The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget* (Princeton: D. van Nostrand, 1963), 204. Also see B. Inhelder and J. Piaget, *The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (New York: Basic Books, 1958), 117.

advanced structure. Piaget describes this structure and relates it to the adolescent's growth in affective and social interest in the following passage:

> The subject succeeds in freeing himself from the concrete and in locating reality within a group of possible transformations. This final fundamental decentering, which occurs at the end of childhood, prepares for adolescence, whose principal characteristic is a similar liberation from the concrete in favor of interest oriented toward the non-present and the future. This is the age of great ideals and of the beginning of theories, as well as the time of simple present adaptation to reality. This affective and social impulse of adolescence has often been described. But it has not always been understood that this impulse is dependent upon a transformation of thought that permits the handling of hypotheses and reasoning with regard to propositions removed from concrete and present observation.[12]

In both the affective and the cognitive areas, the adolescent, while retaining the operations characteristic of the younger child, is capable of going beyond these by systematically considering what is possible and centering on the actual in its relation to the possible.

It seems that the key to the adolescents' advance over younger children, their reflective use of the schema of the distinction between the actual and the possible, is mediated by a process of discrimination as well as by the process of reflective abstraction that Piaget studies. This new structure of knowledge is in part, as Piaget shows, the result of pre-adolescents' adjustment to their environment (including here both the physical environment and value horizon), their experience that this environment is larger than that to which they had previously cognitively adjusted themselves and thus that the adjustment made in middle childhood is no longer adequate, the feedback of both the environment and earlier adjustment to it upon them as cognitive subjects, and the development by reflective abstraction of a new action structure of knowing reality within the context of the actual and the possible. In part too this new knowledge is due to a kind of intellectual discrimination between the actual and the possible, a discrimination not central for the younger child and one made through a negation; the real is distinct from the simply possible. This simple abstraction lies in the area of qualitative knowledge that Piaget does not investigate at length, and it occurs by means of a natural logic that questions why things are the way they are rather than otherwise. Making this discrimination seems to require a higher order of abstraction than the

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[12] Piaget and Inhelder, *Psychology,* 130-131.

abstraction of one attribute from another (e.g., height from quantity), which underlay the child's grasp in the earlier period of cognitive growth. While depending genetically on the earlier discrimination of the child, this later growth contributes to the greater scope of the adolescent's knowledge.

What is the relevance of this to our question whether in principle there can be intellectual knowledge of grounds for belief in God? I suggest that this knowledge of adolescents which we have briefly analyzed is implicitly metaphysical, because it is a knowledge of being that enables its possessors to interact cognitively with their environment in a new way. Piaget shows that what is basic to this new cognitive interaction is that adolescents have a reflective knowledge of the distinction between the actual and the possible. But this is exactly what is meant by knowledge of reality as being. This knowledge is of reality in the environment and not simply of language or concept because it is only such knowledge that enables these young people to operate as they do in realistically forming and testing hypotheses. Similarly, through their acting for their future, their knowledge does reach a dimension of the actualization of their possibilities. And, as we indicated earlier, this entire achievement is what is meant by the word "being." The major modern opposition to the possibility of our having intellectual grounds for faith in God is the denial of metaphysics. However, implicit in our scientific knowledge and in our planning for the future is our orientation to being and to a knowledge of being. Thus those who deny the possibility of metaphysics, such as Hume, Kant, Heidegger, and their many followers, cannot account for our scientific knowledge and our planning and acting for the future unless they enlarge their view of human knowledge—as, indeed, even Aquinas' view must be enlarged.

EPISTEMOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE FOUND IN THE PASSAGE TO FAITH

We can ask how this epistemological analysis of human knowledge relates to the knowledge present in those on the way to faith in God, such as Thomas Merton. The answer is that Merton and others had to have a less restrictive understanding of the capabilities of human knowledge than that of many modern philosophers who deny to human beings the capacity to know beyond the limits of science. The above analysis sought to show that we can know reality as being. If we can know it as such, then we can ask what things are as being, what the interrelation among beings is, and what causes are operative in the beings we know; and we can ask what the horizon of our own intentionality is in our action and life. If we cannot know reality on this level, we cannot critically validate the grounds for belief in God that many find in their experience of the world or of conscience.

We recognize that the knowledge on which people come to faith is not normally explicitly metaphysical. It is larger than a metaphysical knowledge, for it is more fully personal—involving affectivity as well as

intellectual knowledge, experience as well as intellectual analysis. This occurs in the context not simply of a person's attempt to gain an objective understanding of the world or the human being, but in the midst of a search for meaning and an openness to a restructuring of the self. The knowledge involved here is not so much analysis of the physical world or of inner human experience, as a reading of what is mediated by these experiences as testimonies God gives of his existence and presence. Thus the viewpoint that searchers adopt is not so much the question of whether they can infer the existence of God from what they experience, but whether God is really manifesting himself through these experiences. It is a question of discernment of the signs and symbols through which—as the searchers perhaps half believe and half doubt—God is making himself known to them and calling them. What has precedence is not one's own intellectual shrewdness or search for fuller meaning, but rather the question of what the mystery is that encompasses one. Thus it is also a question of creative imagination, of how one will construct a reality and life that are inclusive of oneself—whether as mediating God or not. As in the physical sciences we cognitively construct the world about us, so too in the process of coming to believe we cognitively construct reality and our life in a larger context. Will one see reality and life as limited by the finite or inclusive of the infinite? Is the model for existence and reality that the person will accept one that includes God or not? To recognize that this is the type of knowledge concerned in the process of conversion is to see some kinship between the modern believer and believers in pre-modern cultures who interpreted the experiences of life—e.g., the fruitfulness of the fields and flocks, and the identity and welfare of the people—as mediating God's or the gods' reality, care, and presence.

To assert that a cognitive construction of reality by creative imagination is operative here is not to deny that there are grounds for such construction, but it is to see these grounds as more than simply objective metaphysical knowledge of being and its causes by intellectual insight into that which is. It is a knowledge mediated as well by one's affective orientation toward a fullness of being and by having one's imagination touched by symbols that evoke the possibility of a paradigmatic change in the form of being that one accepts as real and relevant to one's life—a new form that seems more coherent, more inclusive, and more consistent with what one knows from elsewhere.

Another problem we may raise here is the following: Christianity holds that the act of faith must be free to be saving and that it must be reasonable if it is to be fully human. But it may appear that if such faith is free, then it is not reasonable, for to be free means that one is not compelled by reason or anything else. Again, since faith is a real commitment it may seem unreasonable unless there is enough evidence to support it. On the other hand, if it is reasonable, i.e., if there is fully sufficient reason to believe, then we know rather than believe and the act is not really free.

The answer to this lies in what faith is. The faith we are speaking about is both a belief that God exists and a belief in God—a personal knowledge of God joined with personal commitment. This is, of course, in no way sufficient until it is completed and, in part, corrected by the self-revelation God gives us of himself in Christianity; we are dealing here with only the beginnings of faith, but the later revelation does not simply deny God's earlier revelation of himself. As said above, we look to evidence from the world and from the self not restrictedly as empirical evidence for God's existence, but as means by which God reveals his existence to us, or testimonies that he gives of himself. Considered as God's testimonies, they are understood to be the results of God's action, which manifests something of him and communicates something of him to us—his personal act. On our part, then, our coming to believe in God is coming to interact with a personal being. Seen in this context, evidence is a sign to be discerned, and discernment is a free act—one that involves risks, even when there are sufficient reasons for us to believe that God has given testimony to his existence. Because of the personal character of the interaction between God's revelation and our response of faith, the acceptance of this revelation is not simply an objective analysis of scientific or philosophical evidence for an objective fact. Affectivity is involved in the whole process, and so too is freedom. But freedom here depends on the personal context of this encounter and thus on the dispositions that are brought to it, not on the inadequacy of the testimony that God gives of himself.

Seen in this context, it is well for us that our acceptance is free and involves risks, because otherwise it would not involve the whole of ourselves and would not call for some transcendence beyond the self toward God. We do have in our culture a tradition that values objective and certain knowledge as essential to human life. Some sceptics say that if one fears or doubts, one should not act. As Karl Rahner wrote, the Greek ideal of man saw "knowledge as simply the absolute measure of man ... [and] a given piece of ignorance only as a falling short of the perfection to which man is ordained as to his end."[13] Against this, a philosophy of the person finds that:

> a risk is of the essence of the self-perfecting of the finite
> person in the historical freedom of decision. Risk is
> involved; coming out into the open is involved;
> committing oneself to what is not totally visible, the
> hidden origin and the veiled end, a certain manner of not-
> knowing is essential to the free act of man. ... There is
> therefore undoubtedly an ignorance which, since it renders
> possible the accomplishment of the free act of the finite

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[13] Rahner, "Dogmatic Considerations on Knowledge and Consciousness in Christ,'" in H. Vorgrimler, ed., *Dogmatic vs. Biblical Theology* (Baltimore: Helicon, 1964), 248.

person while the drama of his history is still being played,
is more perfect than a knowledge in the act of the free will
which would abolish the latter.[14]

It is our nature as human "to be directed toward the mystery, which
is God, qua mystery."[15] We are not things but subjects, and God is not a
thing but a subject. If we are a mystery to ourselves, God is even more a
mystery to us: and the access to God that is faith preserves this. We do not
control God or confine him to our own criteria.

One may ask whether we are here defending meaning and grounds of
a specifically supernatural act of faith in God, and if so, how can
supernatural faith result from God's testimonies in nature and the human
person? Agreeing largely with Rahner's answer to this question, I would
say that since this faith is one to which God leads a person in the present
order, and in the present order he orients all to a communion with himself
and a salvation that is beyond the rights, exigencies, and capacities of our
humanity, then the faith of which we are speaking is a supernatural faith,
even though it leaves very much to be desired and is oriented toward a
fuller faith. The testimonies God gives of himself in the interiority of the
person and in the physical world are, in Christian understanding, acts of
God in his intention for the salvation of humankind—an intention that acts
in the interiority of human beings to make them apt for this destiny. And so,
while these acts are of themselves natural testimonies to God, they come to
us from an intention and context that is more than this. Moreover, they are
mediated to the person within a context of a historical tradition such as
Christianity, and thus have larger implications than what they explicitly
mediate. They are God's personal acts for human salvation, and the faith
response of which we are speaking is a personal act for our salvation.

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[14] *Ibid.*, 248-249.
[15] *Ibid.*, 249.

CHAPTER VI

KIERKEGAARD ON FAITH:
A CRITICAL REFLECTION

KAJORNPAT TANGYIN

Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it would obey you' (Luke, 17: 6).

It happened some time later that God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

Rising early next morning Abraham saddled his ass and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place God had pointed out to him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there; we will worship and come back to you.'

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together. Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, 'Father' he said. 'Yes, my son' he replied. 'Look,' he said 'here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering'. Then the two of them went on together.

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son (Genesis 22: 1-10).

Kierkegaard, in his book *Fear and Trembling*, gives us a narrative through his pseudonym Johannes de Silentio about the story of Abraham in the book of Genesis. Coming from a Thai context, I feel better starting with the original words from Genesis to meditate upon before trying to learn

what Johannes de Silentio claims about them. Abraham, the father of faith, is the great person for all Judeo-Christian and Islamic religion. However, Silentio talks about Abraham only in the Christian context, not trying to view him from Jewish and Islamic contexts. Here it is not the point to make a comparison among monotheistic religious perspectives on this great person in differing contexts. The point is: How does Abraham act in response to God who asks him to sacrifice his beloved son to God? And we may have further questions about how we understand Abraham's act relating to his faith, and what faith is. Those who are familiar with this story may take it for granted, as persons do who 'preach' about Abraham. But Silentio leads us to reread it—how Abraham acts in his belief in God to sacrifice his only beloved son Isaac with his conviction that he will get Isaac back. How do we understand Abraham? There is no easy answer as we hear from the teacher in Sunday school. Silentio, in *Fear and Trembling*, begins his *Preface* with this statement: "Not just in commerce but in the world of ideas too our age is putting on a veritable clearance sale" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 41). Many ideas including faith seem to be oversimplified like shopping in the supermarket because everything is there. Any easy answer as we always hear from Sunday school may not dig deep enough into the paradox of Abraham's faith: to sacrifice Isaac and to receive Isaac back.

With ethical norms, it may shock the people who hear this story, saying that Abraham would be a murderer. He is going to kill, or to sacrifice Isaac as an offering to God. Silentio puts this story into contradiction if it is compared to other persons who perform the same act as Abraham. "If faith cannot make it into a holy deed to murder one's own son, then let the judgment fall on Abraham as on anyone else. … The ethical expression for what Abraham did is that he was willing to murder Isaac; the religious expression is that he was willing to sacrifice Isaac; but in this contradiction lies the very anguish that Abraham is not the one he is…. For if you simply remove faith there remains only the raw fact that Abraham was willing to murder Isaac, which is easy enough for anyone without faith to imitate; without the faith, that is, which makes it hard" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 60).

What are supposed to be the ethical norms to justify Abraham's act in this case? Because of faith, or only faith that makes Abraham to be the father of faith, not a murderer. How could we understand this event on the mount in the land of Moriah? On the way to Moriah, there is no conversation left to us, and no one knows what Abraham was thinking. Abraham was thrown into the absolute paradox which is unspeakable, and unintelligible to others. He said nothing to Sarah, his wife, and did not fully answer Isaac's question: Where is the lamb for the burnt offering? This is Abraham's answer: 'My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering'. How could he explain to Isaac that God demands his life? This story of 'the binding of Isaac' is not only Isaac, but for Mark C. Taylor: "The binding of Isaac is a figure for other bindings. This narrative

might better be entitled: "The binding of Abraham." The binding of the son repeats and extends the binding of the father, even as it seems to break the tie that binds the two together as one" (Taylor, 1993, p. 76). This binding does not mean only the physical body that is bound but it links to other questions like human relationship, freedom, rationality, and moral law. As the father who loves his only son, Abraham will perform an act that breaks his relationship to his son. And he will break the moral law that binds all men to live together in society because of God's command.

Abraham seems to stand in the place where no one knows what he thinks, and no one understands what he is going to do. Some may put a question to Abraham in a different manner when he negotiated with God for Sodom and Gomorrah: "Are you going to destroy the just man with the sinner? Perhaps there are fifty just men in the town. Will you really overwhelm them, will you not spare the place for the fifty just men in it? Do not think of doing such a thing: to kill the just man with the sinner, treating just and sinner alike! Do not think of it! Will the judge of the whole earth not administer justice?" (Gen 18: 23-25). Abraham dares to negotiate with God for Sodom and Gomorrah, but in the case of his own beloved son Isaac, he keeps silence.

'Here I am' is the absolute answer for a man of faith like Abraham which is nothing different from Mary's answer at the Annunciation: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me" (Luke 1: 38). Before this answer, the angel says to Mary: "for nothing is impossible for God" (Luke 1: 37). For Sylviane Agacinski, "The 'here I am' with which Abraham replied to the God who was demanding the death of his son was always, for me, a paradigm of faith, of utter devotion, of the absolute risk of religious love" (Agacinski, 1998, p.127). Why does Abraham not ask God for his only son and himself? If he has to answer, I do not think that it would be that different from Mary and her angel. For Abraham, his faith might lead him to accept the angel's statement: for nothing is impossible for God. To sacrifice Isaac and to receive Isaac back is not understandable to man. That is why Silentio states: "What I intend now is to extract from the story of Abraham its dialectical element, in the form of *problemata*, in order to see how monstrous a paradox faith is, a paradox capable of making a murder into a holy act well pleasing to God, a paradox which gives Isaac back to Abraham, which no thought can grasp because faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 82).

I repeat again here: *faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off.* On the way to the mount in the land of Moriah, Abraham takes with him not only fire, wood, two servants, Isaac, but also faith. Because of his faith, he left everything behind and keeps faith in his blood and bones as he always answers to God: 'Here I am.' He is ready for everything God commands, and Silentio points out Abraham's character through this paragraph:

> It was by his faith that Abraham could leave the land of his fathers to become a stranger in the land of promise. He left one thing behind, took another with him. He left behind his worldly understanding and took with him his faith. … From Abraham we have no song of lament. It is human to complain, human to weep with one who weeps, but it is greater to have faith and more blessed to behold the believer (Kierkegaard, 1985, pp. 50-51).

For Silentio: 'faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off.' Faith itself begins only when thinking stops. Some may interpret faith to mean faith begins when thinking is limited. When thinking leaves off, doubt also is cast away from us. Insofar as we think, question, doubt, faith is not there. Abraham lives his faith in his real life, not only in proposition or in any system of thought. "… [W]hat makes another like Abraham is having faith. It is not having Abraham's individual relationship to God, but having Abraham's faith. … It is not murder that makes one like Abraham" (Kellenberger, 1997, p. 27). Abraham never doubts in terms of sacrificing Isaac because 'nothing is impossible to God.' For Silentio, if Abraham doubts, he will do something else. And he will never be forgotten whatever he will do, as Silentio says:

> But Abraham had faith and did not doubt. He believed the absurd. If Abraham had doubted —then he would have done something else, something great and glorious; for how could Abraham have done other than what is great and glorious? He would have marched out to the mountain in Moriah, chopped the firewood, set light to the fire, drawn the knife—he would have cried out to God: 'Do not scorn this sacrifice, it is not the best I possess, that I well know; for what is an old man compared with the child of promise, but it is the best I can give. Let Isaac never come to know, that he may comfort himself in his young years.' He would have thrust the knife into his own breast. He would have been admired in the world and his name never forgotten; but it is one thing to be admired, another to be a guiding star that saves the anguished (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 54).

If Abraham begins to doubt and to decide to sacrifice his life instead of his beloved son, he might be great like other great heros who sacrifice themselves for their beloved person. His name will be honored and immortal, and becomes the story from generation to generation. But Abraham has faith, and this faith is absurd for anyone else. How could we believe in sacrificing his son and he will receive his son back again? When Abraham begs God for Sodom and Gomorrah, it is understandable. It is his

love of just people as one human being's love for mankind. But in the case of Isaac, we may just stop with fear and trembling before Abraham. For Silentio, faith leaves him in silence. To understand Abraham, according to Silentio, is unthinkable. Faith is not an object of our intellect. It is beyond the category of reason. It is an inward experience of God. At that stage of faith, no one else except Abraham stands alone before God. Faith is not only some consistent propositions in a complete system of thought, but it exists where 'thinking leaves off.' Faith is not just a short story where it ceases to be when that story comes to an end. Faith does not end after Abraham receives Isaac back. Abraham's 'Here I am' is always and everywhere for God from the beginning to the end. His relationship to God is anything, anywhere, anytime, and nothing could separate him from God, even his beloved son.

Abraham is special in his own vocation. Each one has each his or her own vocation to respond to God. It means that everyone can be like Abraham in faith, not in his particular trial of faith. Kellenberger insists, "But this is not to say that he is like Abraham in every respect. He need not be in order to have the faith of Abraham. Notably he is not called upon to sacrifice his son. Nor does he have a promise from God that through his son he will be the father of nations. What makes Abraham the father of faith is his faith, not his trial of faith" (Kellenberger, 1997, p. 48). How great is Abraham. We can see many great persons in the history of mankind, and the criteria to justify their greatness differ. What is Abraham's greatness according to Silentio? Let us listen to Silentio in his *Speech in Praise of Abraham*:

> For he who loved himself became great in himself, and he who loved others became great through his devotion, but he who loved God became greater than all. They shall all be remembered, but everyone became great in proportion to his expectancy. One became great through expecting the possible, another by expecting the eternal; but he who expected the impossible became greater than all. They shall all be remembered, but everyone was great in proportion to the magnitude of what he strove with. For he who strove with the world became great by conquering the world, and he who strove with himself became greater by conquering himself; but he who strove with God became greater than all. … There was one who was great in his strength, and one who was great in his wisdom, and one who was great in hope, and one who was great in love; but greater than all was Abraham (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 50).

Silentio gives us an account of the degree of greatness, and where his criterion comes from: he who loves God becomes greater than all; he who expects the impossible becomes greater than all; he who strives with God

becomes greater than all; and greater than all was the one who believes in God. And this, for Silentio, belongs to Abraham. Silentio exalts Abraham with the highest in his love, his striving, his expectation of the impossible, and his faith in God. Silentio probably wants to show us the movement to faith as he claims about the great to the greater; from those who love themselves to those who love others and greater than all are those who love God. And those who expect the impossible are like Abraham who expected the absurd in sacrificing Isaac and expected to receive Isaac back. Heraclitus of Ephesus once said a long time ago about faith: "If you do not expect the unexpected you will not discover it; for it cannot be tracked down and it offers no passage" (Barnes, 1987, p. 113). Expecting the unexpected is the point that Heraclitus claims about faith, and we can see the similarity between Silentio and Heraclitus. Let the angel remind us always: for nothing is impossible for God. If Abraham has no faith, he might do something else and it will be great and honorable. And Abraham, according to Silentio, will not be greater than the tragic hero. Silentio makes a comparison between the tragic hero and the knight of faith, between Agamemnon and Abraham. Agamemnon, the commander of the Greek forces in the Trojan War, had to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to the goddess Artemis in order to calm the wind for his troops.

For Silentio, Agamemnon is the tragic hero who sacrificed his daughter to save the army. "Ethical heroes are those who are faced with a moral conflict between a duty to one they love and a higher moral duty that requires them to sacrifice what their heart desires. They face a moral dilemma, and they rise to the higher duty that ethically they must choose but at the cost of their own suffering and the loss of the one they love. They are essentially tragic figures, and Johannes calls them 'tragic heroes'" (Kellenberger, 1997, p. 30). Everyone understands how much Agamemnon had to sacrifice and how difficult it was to make the decision to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia. And everybody pays respect to his act of suffering leading to the triumph. But Agamemnon's tragic hero is incompatible with Abraham's the knight of faith. Mark C. Taylor remarks of this distinction between Agamemnon and Abraham:

> Agamemnon's slaying of Iphigenia is an expression of civic duty. His fellow citizens understand his impasse and empathize with the agony he suffers. Furthermore, they admire Agamemnon for his willingness to set aside personal feelings and responsibilities for his daughter in order to secure the common good. When understood within its proper social context, Agamemnon's deed is not horrifying but is completely reasonable. ... Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac suspends or transgresses the ethical in the name of something that surpasses or is exterior to the entire moral order. Though faith is not unrelated to

morality, religion cannot be reduced to ethics (Taylor, 1993, p. 79).

A tragic hero knows that he acts according to the superior duty in which he himself has to sacrifice something or someone he loves. His act is not something surpassed by the ethical sphere. His ethical duty is within the universal. He suffers from his decision but it is the most reasonable for that moment. The tragic hero is great in his own way, and his name will never be forgotten. Agamemnon is great in his moral duty to the state, and his act is always understandable. But this is not so for Abraham.

Silentio considers Abraham the knight of faith who suspends the ethical sphere in order to rise to the religious. Morality does not contradict faith, but faith could not be reduced to mere ethics. There must be a point of departure for going beyond the ethical sphere, and this is the great paradox as Silentio says: "For faith is just this paradox, that the single individual is higher than the universal … the single individual now sets himself apart as the particular above the universal" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 84). Agamemnon might have to choose his tragic options. Abraham does not encounter that tragedy, but instead he encounters the absolute paradox. This supposes the difference between Agamemnon and Abraham. "The tragic hero renounces himself in order to express the universal; the knight of faith renounces the universal in order to be the particular" (*Ibid.*, p. 103). Agamemnon renounces himself for the state through his moral duty and everyone recognizes his justification. Abraham sacrifices his beloved son Isaac because of his 'Here I am' to God, not to save the nation or anything else. He himself stands alone in his relation to God, and at that point ethical norms are not applicable. It is not understandable and is not within the universal. Silentio says: "As for the knight of faith, he is assigned to himself alone, he has the pain of being unable to make himself intelligible to others but feels no vain desire to show others the way" (*Ibid.*, p. 107). For Silentio, this event is only Abraham and for Abraham, not someone else. And it is impossible for Abraham to tell anyone about this event.

This is the important part of Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*: he reacts strongly against Hegel and other speculative thinkers who make the individual a part of the system. For Kierkegaard, faith is beyond an account of reason and religious experience exists in the relation between the existing individual and the absolute. For the case of Abraham, Silentio can speak about him in many aspects and shows us the condition and movement of faith. But for faith itself, Silentio seems to keep 'silence.' Abraham keeps silence when he leaves his fatherland. Before he arrives at the mount in the land of Moriah, no one knows what he wants to do. Sarah knows nothing and Isaac breaks the silence when it reaches the critical point. Behind the scenes, only Abraham and his God know. At this religious stage, this suspension belongs to absolute individuality. Abraham, according to Silentio, seems to be a counter-Hegelian as Butler puts it here:

> In the midst of Kierkegaard's discussion of Abraham's faith in *Fear and Trembling*, he remarks with due irony that if Hegel's philosophy were right, then Abraham would indeed, be a murderer. … According to Kierkegaard, Hegel fails to understand that the individual is higher than the universal ethical norm, that there are times when ethical laws must be 'suspended' or 'surrendered' so that a higher value can be affirmed, namely, the value of faith—which, of course, for Kierkegaard, is always an individual affair (Butler, 1993, p. 381).

For Silentio, Hegel's ethics has no place for individuality outside the law of the state. An individual has to sacrifice himself for the state, and if he does not it might be sinful. This is the confrontation between Abraham and Hegel: the individual and the totality. Silentio probably considers that the Hegelian system, at the end, will lead to the destruction of faith rather than support of it. Abraham, therefore, is the typical person to move beyond any system of thought. Faith in any system of thought seems to cease being faith because it is supposed to be understandable through rational explanation. For Silentio, this is a wrong view about faith. And some may ask what faith is; and what is the proper answer?

Silentio, in his *Fear and Trembling*, just takes account of the movement of faith by retelling the story of Abraham. The main question in this project asks how to be the knight of faith rather than what faith really is. At this point, Abraham the knight of faith steps beyond the universal ethical norms, and beyond Hegel's system of thought. To be a knight of faith, for Silentio, requires infinite resignation. Silentio says: "Infinite resignation is the last stage before faith, so that anyone who has not made this movement does not have faith; for only in infinite resignation does my eternal validity become transparent to me, and only then can there be talk of grasping existence on the strength of faith" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 75). The knight of infinite resignation is a person who feels not at home in the world and wants to renounce everything in order to be back to the infinite. He may view happiness in this world as incompatible with blissfulness in God. A knight of infinite resignation could not be a knight of faith because he still could not stand on the strength of absurdity.

For Silentio, "Through resignation I renounce everything. … Through faith I don't renounce anything, on the contrary in faith I receive everything, exactly in the way it is said that one whose faith is like a mustard seed can move mountains. … Through faith Abraham did not renounce his claim on Isaac—through his faith he received Isaac" (*Ibid.*, p. 77). For those who could not stand on the strength of the absurdity deserve not to be a knight of faith. Infinite resignation is prior and necessary to faith. If we stop there, it is not yet faith. Faith is like a double movement from his renouncing of everything, and his 'strength of the absurd' of

receiving back everything. Pattison remarks of this double movement of a knight of faith with this explanation:

We note that Johannes distinguishes two … in the God-relationship. The first is that of infinite resignation, in which the individual is prepared to sacrifice the world for the sake of God. This, Johannes says, he can understand. … But what Abraham performs is a sublime double-movement: he both renounces the world … and yet believes that he will get Isaac back, in this world. This is the double-movement of faith that Johannes insists is so incomprehensible (Pattison, 2002, p. 197).

A knight of infinite resignation is not one who withdraws from the world. He is not one who lives an ascetic form of life. On the contrary, he is in the world as an ordinary person—like a tax collector ... any person. But we could not find any means to judge him from the outside. He lives with high hopes to attain the infinite but he seems to end with his conviction about this unattainable. He could not live and be satisfied with the perishable and finite things in the world. He could not accept the absurd with joy. He could not climb up to the statement: for nothing is impossible for God. A knight of faith, according to Silentio, is the highest attainment and nothing is higher. Silentio accepts his limits and could not stand on 'the strength of absurdity' as a knight of faith. He says, "I for my part can indeed describe the movements of faith, but I cannot perform them. When learning how to make swimming movements, one can hang in a belt from the ceiling: one may be said to describe the movements all right but one isn't swimming" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p.67). Silentio just describes the movement of faith like a trainer who teaches us how to swim, but he himself can stand only on the edge of the swimming pool. He could not take a leap into the absurdity. The best he can be is only a knight of infinite resignation. This might be the reason why he could not explain what faith is, and he realizes that he could not be like Abraham, a knight of faith. "He must be 'silent', for he cannot understand faith. He stands in awe before Abraham's faith and cannot comprehend it. But, though he cannot directly state what faith is, Johannes can indirectly communicate the nature and demands of faith, which he does by describing and celebrating Abraham through retelling the story of Abraham's trial of faith" (Kellenberger, 1997, p. 12).

A knight of faith is not a tragic hero who plays the most ethical significance within the universal, and his act is always understandable to everyone. A knight of faith is not a knight of infinite resignation, but infinite resignation is a prior requirement of being a knight of faith. A knight of infinite resignation just renounces everything he loves and wants to cherish but he could not step into the 'strength of absurdity' of grasping back all that he renounces. Kierkegaard broke his engagement with his beloved Regine Olsen to live his life of infinite resignation. He may hope that Regine would understand him as his subtitle under the heading of Fear and Trembling quoted from J. G. Hamann: What Tarquin the Proud said in his garden with the 'poppy blooms' was understood by the son but not by

the messenger (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 39). Kierkegaard probably wants Silentio to send the message to Regine by retelling the story of Abraham and Isaac as Tarquin strikes off the heads of the tallest poppies in his garden before the eyes of his son's messenger. The messenger may not understand but his son understands.

Silentio seems to renounce everything for being of infinite resignation, but he dares not take the leap into absurdity. He just admires Abraham who is able to take a leap from universality into absurdity. A man of faith is the one who can hold the 'strength of the absurd' and carry it along his life as Abraham carries it through his whole life. Before Abraham, Silentio probably stands with fear and trembling. He might not understand how Abraham takes a leap, and as he always says: "But when I think of Abraham I am virtually annihilated. … I strain every muscle to catch sight of it, but the same instant I become paralysed" (Kierkegaard, 1985, pp. 62-63). Faith, therefore, is possible when the movement of infinite resignation takes a leap into absurdity. That is the paradox of why the particular is above the universal; a knight of faith is above the tragic hero. "And if faith is a leap, it is a leap beyond thought, beyond calculation, a leap made from and with passion that can be neither comprehended by thought nor communicated through language" (Butler, 1993, p. 378).

A tragic hero stands on his moral duty in the universal, but a knight of faith takes a leap beyond the ethical sphere. For Butler, fear and trembling has to turn into the state of grace because as far as we fear and doubt, we will be far away from faith. Doubt and fear will move us from the state of grace and sink us down in the water like Peter when he begins to be afraid of the storm, and Jesus said to him: 'Man of little faith, why did you doubt?' (Matthew 14: 34). And with his disciples on a boat in the midst of storm: 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' (Mark 4:40). These words might accord with what Silentio wants to express about faith in *Fear and Trembling*. Then the character of fear and trembling belongs to Silentio, not Abraham. Abraham continually lives his faith, and his response 'Here I am' to God's demand of Isaac is beyond any category of reason.

For Silentio, a positive description of faith in his *Fear and Trembling* is: "Faith is the highest passion in a human being. Many in every generation may not come that far, but none comes further. … But anyone who comes to faith (whether he be greatly talented or simple-minded makes no difference) won't remain at a standstill there. Indeed he would be shocked if anyone said this to him" (Kierkegaard, 1985, p. 146). If Silentio is shocked when he comes across Abraham's faith, someone may be shocked when he begins to hear Kierkegaard's talk about faith. Those who are not shocked when they come across Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* may not even understand what he says. Then the problem we see in *Fear and Trembling* is probably the particular problem of Kierkegaard relating to his situational background. Someone may read Kierkegaard's works like a text, a novel, or a fiction story. However, his particular problem in his work becomes an

issue to discuss along with others in the history of philosophy, whatever the issue is: faith and reason, subjectivity and objectivity, totality and individuality. Gabriel Josipovici points out what I mean by the particular problem of *Fear and Trembling*:

> In *Fear and Trembling* the question is no longer to set two life-views against each other, but to ask how it is possible to become a Knight of Faith, like Abraham. The narrator can make us feel vividly that he—and we—cannot really understand Abraham, but the implication remains that so long as he goes on writing about Abraham he himself will never be a Knight of Faith. This is Kierkegaard's problem. … This is the sort of person he is and the sort of person his upbringing has made him, and all he can do is go on writing about the difficulty, the impossibility, the desirability, of that leap (Josipovici, 1998, p. 125).

If Kierkegaard becomes a knight of faith, he might do something differently. For Josipovici, Kierkegaard has to keep in silence and could not write anything about faith. I think that Kierkegaard views faith in the form of mystical experience. Those who have faith cannot explain it, and those who explain it have no experience. As far as he writes something about faith, he still has not become a knight of faith. He seems to claim that Christian faith limits individual mystical experience, which he himself strives for. Kierkegaard is clever in turning problems in his life into his philosophy. His work is not something separate from his biography. The problem of faith is his deepest concern relating to both his family and his religious background at that time. And he proposes his ideas through many pseudonyms in his indirect communication to the people. Silentio talks about faith, but he does not give us a positive description of faith—rather, he retells the story of Abraham, the father of faith. This is the main way that Kierkegaard departs from traditional Christian thinkers like Augustine's *Crede ut intelligas*, or Anselm's *Fides quaerens intellectum.* Kierkegaard does not believe in order to understand, nor does he see the role of faith in the search for understanding. But according to Kierkegaard, 'faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off.' Roger Kimball places Kierkegaard in the (heterodox) tradition of *Credo quia absurdum*: I believe because it is absurd (Kimball, 2001, p. 22). For Kierkegaard, there is no bridge to cross between faith and understanding. For faith, we have to take a leap. If the question now is: Is faith understandable? Kierkegaard stands firmly on the negative answer to this question. The further question probably is: Is faith possible? Is it possible to be Christian with Kierkegaard's view of faith? For Kellenberger, he might say it is possible by seeing a person in the Bible: Mother Mary.

Mary, like Abraham, is immured in silence. It is for this reason that, as Johannes says, no one can understand her. And, like Abraham, she must

therefore proceed in anxiety. This too Johannes brings out. … Although Johannes does not make it explicit, Mary, like Abraham, believes and acts by virtue of the absurd. She trusts God absolutely. She is joyful in the knowledge that she has been chosen (Kellenberger, 1997, p. 55).

But if one asks the same question to Ricoeur, the answer might be different:

> Surely the Christianity he described is so extreme that no one could possibly practice it. The subjective thinker before God, the pure contemporary of Christ, suffering crucifixion with Him, without church, without tradition, and without ritual, can only exist outside of history. … To understand him one would need to be able to grasp him as an unprecedented combination of irony, melancholy, purity of heart and corrosive rhetoric, add a dash of buffoonery, and then perhaps top it off with religious aestheticism and martyrdom. … (Ricoeur, 1998, p. 13).

I think that both Kellenberger and Ricoeur are right in their respective views. They see Kierkegaard in different perspectives. Kellenberger applies Kierkegaard's faith in terms of other persons in the Bible whether Job or Mary, not any person outside the Bible. Ricoeur, on the contrary, makes Kierkegaard's view of faith applicable to the common person in society and he sees that it could not be put really into practice. Ricoeur proposes to view Kierkegaard's idea of faith relating to his background, his reacting to Hegelianism and Christendom in Denmark during his lifetime. He lived during the time of the critique of ideology. The organized Church and Hegel's philosophical system are criticized by his works. Kierkegaard wants to defend and differentiate his idea of faith from the Hegelian system of thought because he views that speculative thought will lead to the abolition of Christian faith. He seems to bring Christianity back to the origin of Christianity which accepts the absolute paradox of faith. Christianity during the 19th century, for Kierkegaard, seems to become too academic and begins to lose its standpoint on faith. And for anyone to become a true Christian is perhaps too simple because he becomes one even though he does not know what Christianity really is. Anderson agrees with Kierkegaard in his challenge to this simplification:

> I think that in Kierkegaard we finally have a philosopher who gets religion right by claiming that it is essentially irrational. … I also agree with Kierkegaard that saying religion is irrational makes believing in God more difficult, less comfortable, than most people would probably like. Kierkegaard sees as his mission to tell us what it really means to be religious, without mincing any words. … Better to have only one truly religious person, in

Kierkegaard's eyes, than to have millions of pretenders (Anderson, 2000, p. 79).

I think that Anderson may not realize that Kierkegaard himself could not attain the stage of faith and that he can be only a knight of infinite resignation. To be a true Christian, therefore, is the other question supposed to be answered? If being a true Christian, as Anderson thinks, is to follow Kierkegaard's account of faith, who will be a true Christian? And how could we dare to claim that other views that differ from Kierkegaard's are false beliefs, or that there are "millions of pretenders"? I think that Kierkegaard wants to answer for himself what being a true Christian is, and his striving is not supposed to be the criterion for others. If we think that Kierkegaard requests the existing church whether Lutheran or another to accept his view of faith, I think that we begin to put Kierkegaard beyond Kierkegaard himself.

I agree that Kierkegaard's notion of faith is so radical and challenging, that it shocks to people who are Christian by name and not by practice. For Kierkegaard, I understand that if we have to accept his radical view of faith as the essential foundation of religion, we would have no existing religion at all. We could not reject that the existing religion is an organized religion, and its structure needs to have an organized system of thought like Christian theology. It is not only pure faith as in its beginning in Abraham's story. But the point we can learn here is that organized religion should not deny that in the end religious experience is the individual's relationship to God. Yet we cannot reject the social dimension of religion. Religion could not be just a public or private affair.

Kierkegaard seems to challenge the systematic thought of the organized church by putting more emphasis on faith and the mysteries in religion. Anyway the style that Kierkegaard proposes in his works seems to be radical. When Silentio retells the story of Abraham and the binding of Isaac, Levinas might not agree with Kierkegaard about his emphasis only on the first voice of God demanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Because Levinas thinks that the second voice of God telling Abraham not to kill Isaac is much more important: "Do not raise your hand against the boy, do not harm him" (Genesis 22:12). For Levinas,

> Kierkegaard was drawn to the biblical story of the sacrifice of Isaac. He saw in it an encounter between subjectivity raising itself to the level of the religious, and a God elevated above the ethical order. But the story can also be taken in a very different sense. The high point of the whole drama could be the moment when Abraham lent an ear to the voice summoning him back to the ethical order (Levinas, 1998, p. 33).

And again he adds:

> Why is it that Kierkegaard never spoke of the conversation in which Abraham pleaded with God for Sodom and Gomorrah, begging Him, in the name of the righteous who might be living with them, to spare those accursed cities? For it is this action of Abraham that contains the precondition for a victory of life over death. Death has no dominion over a finite life whose meaning is derived from an infinite responsibility for others, from a stewardship (diaconie) that is constitutive of the subjectivity of the subject, which in its turn is nothing but tension towards the other. It is only here in the ethical that an appeal can be made to the singularity of the subject, and that life can be endowed with meaning, in spite of death (Ibid., p. 35).

This is the critical point between Kierkegaard and Levinas as Jeffrey Stolle observes: "Today nobody will stop with faith; they all go further." This was Kierkegaard's complaint. "Today nobody will stop with ethics; they all go further." This is Levinas' complaint, and it is his complaint with Kierkegaard as well" (Stolle, 2001, p. 132). For Levinas, Kierkegaard's teleological suspension of the ethical seems to be not possible. This is the main difference between Kierkegaard's view of faith and Levinas' philosophy of ethics. Levinas views ethics differently, and there must be a place for the singularity of the subject. For Kierkegaard, Kantian ethics and the Hegelian system of thought have no place for subjectivity because we have to conform to the ethical laws which are applicable to all human beings without realizing the differences among individuals. For Kierkegaard, faith could not be reduced just to ethics in this sense. That is why Abraham comes to the point of his suspension of ethics for something higher. I think that the main differences between Levinas and Kierkegaard lead to different aims of doing philosophy. Whereas Kierkegaard attempts to place the individual over the universal of the Hegelian system, Levinas wants to turn over Heideggerian ontology to philosophy of ethics. However both of them claim religious faith prior to any intellectual understanding. They seem to end religious faith with mysticism.

For Kierkegaard, religion should not be only ethical formation, and religion should not be only a topic for intellectual exercise. Religion is beyond questions such as whether it is irrational, an infinite passion of the finite to the infinite, the absolute surrender to the divine, or even a mystery. To understand faith with reason as in Kant's project of 'pure rational faith' will lead eventually to the removal of faith in religion as Agacinski observes:

> Kant's 'pure rational faith' may well be genuinely pure; but in that case it can no longer be faith. By reducing Christianity to a purely ethical religion, Kant was abstracting from faith in Jesus Christ, and from the

mystery of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and hence from the absolute risk which inheres in the belief that God was this particular man, an empirical and historical reality. He abstracted from love for the God-become-man who gave the infinite such a specific face. And yet Abraham was a man of faith only to the extent that his faithfulness—his 'answer' to God's call: 'here I am'—was a leap into danger. (Can it really be God who is asking this of me; can this really be what he wants?) And faith in Christ is another absolute risk: could this particular man really be the Son of God? Thus *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* cannot comprehend either the faith of Abraham or that of the apostles: neither obedience to the God who hides his face, nor love for the God incarnate. (Agacinski, 1998, pp. 141-142)

I, for my part, do not think that Kierkegaard wants to remove reason from religion; he just attempts to bring the organized church back to its origin. He challenges the church and provides an alternative way for the individual's commitment to religion while surpassing the religious structures in society. Faith in Christianity is perhaps the one single concern that he can live and die for, and because of his inquiring into faith, he strongly challenges the church and the Hegelian system of thought at that time. Even though I dare not say like he did that faith is irrational, I, for my part, have to reconsider faith more and more. I agree with him that faith is not a subject of intellectual exercise, but it is at the level of religious experience where each life has to answer 'Here I am' to God individually. The organized church is necessary for the existence of religion in the social dimension. Reason and systematic theology are very much needed for the structure of the organized church. The church should accept limits when she comes to the sphere of particular religious experience. Reason has to accept its own limits when it has to take account of the religious sphere.

Faith, according to Kierkegaard, is not just the common talk to which many people easily pay lip service. On the contrary, it is the supreme truth which we have no language to positively describe. For faith, Kierkegaard asserts that there is nothing higher and we could not go further. Those who attain faith like Abraham cannot express it in words to other people. I personally realize that philosophers, thinkers, or even theologians do what Thomas, the Apostle, did to prove Jesus' resurrection: "Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe" (John 20: 25). Philosophers and others may not want to prove God rationally like Thomas wanted to physically, but rationally and physically we always want to say 'unless' and 'unless' in order to believe God. Jesus perhaps wants to say to philosophers as he said to Thomas: "Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side.

Doubt no longer but believe" (John 20: 27). Thomas might be shocked by the presence of Jesus, and he dare not even do as he said 'unless' for his belief. 'Doubt no longer but believe' seems to be a hard thing for many thinkers who are always concerned with epistemological proof for their belief in God. They perhaps cannot believe if they do not have rational proof, and understanding is always prior to their faith. Kierkegaard partly walks in the Augustinian tradition and he seems to end differently. He moves from Augustine's 'I believe in order to understand' to 'I believe because it is not understandable.'

Silentio believes that the demands of faith are an impossible task for human beings, but he does not deny their possibility in his reference to ordinary persons like the tax collector, etc. Because we could not judge any other person concerning his faith based on outside aspects, it exists inwardly in his individual relationship to God. Philosophers who always say "unless and unless" like Thomas seem to be very far from faith. Faith might not be the object of intellectual exercise, but it is the way of life that people live through. This is perhaps why farmers, fishermen, or tax collectors live their faith. But it is hardly for some thinkers as Jesus says: "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children" (Matthew 11: 25). Children here are representative of those who live their faith without any 'unless.' For these persons, Jesus says to them: "Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe" (John 20: 29). And I, for my part, want to stand on this view with this sentence: Happy are those who have not doubted and yet believe.

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CHAPTER VII

REASON AND RELIGION:
AN ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION

LALAN PRASAD SINGH

The conflict between reason and religion is called a 'challenge'. When the challenge becomes intense, it is called a 'crisis'. Every civilization has faced this challenge in different periods of history. The civilization which resolves this crisis comes out victorious and heralds an era of glory and achievement. The 21st century is facing the same crisis but it has entered into a period of intense clash and crisis, never before experienced in the annals of human history. On the resolution of this crisis depends the very survival of humankind.

I propose to analyze, examine and evaluate the concept of reason and religion for a better and deeper understanding of the present crisis. Reason without moral content becomes dangerous and religion without rational metaphysics becomes demonic. Religion becomes the breeding ground of superstition and dogmatism, fanaticism and fundamentalism, hatred and violence. This is the hypothesis of this paper.

Reason is considered the human capacity for seeing, forming, investigating and examining cognitive relations. Reason as an instrument is the supreme defining characteristic of human being. It is a faculty or process of ratiocination, of drawing logical inferences. Kant considers reason the power of synthesizing into unity with the help of the comprehensive principles and concepts that are provided by the intellect. According to him there are two kinds of reason—pure and practical reason. "Pure Reason," based on *a priori* principles, is distinct from "Practical Reason." Practical reason is concerned with the performance of action.

Nagarjuna is of the opinion that reason has four categories—Bhava (positive), Abhava (negative), Ubhaya (both positive and negative), Nobhaya (neither positive nor negative). According to him, the thing cannot be said to be either real or unreal, or both real and unreal. According to him, there are two truths on which Buddha's philosophy is based, one is empirical (samvrti satya) and stands for the ordinary people, the other transcendental (paramartha-satya). When Buddha was asked about the transcendental nature of truth, he kept silent. Buddha maintained silence not because he did not know the answer, but because he was aware of the antinomical character of reason. The resolution of the antinomical character of reason paved the path for the discovery of dialectic. Knowledge is a dialectical process.

The question of cosmic origins or the first principle as to why there is something and not nothing has occupied human enquiry since the dawn

of civilization. Reason and religion have been trying to understand universal and ahistorical principles of reason with which to speculate on matters of ultimate reality. Reason and the social system are epigenetic. In a socioeconomic system, this epigene manifests itself in a linear cumulative and quantitative form. In this process of growth and differentiation, man is becoming more and more independent of nature. Only man possesses the rational power and spiritual vision to create a society of his own imagination and requirements, yet man does not enjoy absolute freedom. He is strained by the axial facts that each social system has a different realm of change. Not all social changes are compatible with one another. Our analysis and examination from prehistory to modern time views our perception of time, space and causation to have undergone a great change.

With the publication of a research paper by Heisenberg in 1927, "On the principles of uncertainty," causation has ceased to be an ontological reality. The power that we possess today to transform nature and the range of sociopolitical life are on a scale which no civilization howsoever great might have been able to comprehend. This is the achievement of man's power of reason. Reason is instrumental in creating a scientific temper in modern times. Science and technology are products of the human intellect. However the scientific and technological advancements are getting out of balance without our moral and social performances. We are in need of social engineering and spirituality to arrest the decline of moral values—by giving a religious and moral content to reason. Arnold Toynbee is of the opinion that the constituents of society are not individuals but their relationships. Unless society is based on sound moral foundation, it will not remain harmonious. This is a classic question on which philosophers have been speculating from time immemorial. The difference between reason and religion has been reflected on Plato's myth of the cave. Karl Jaspers is right in formulating this problem. He says: "Morality is rooted not in internal scales or value or in the moral practices of any given society, but rather in the decisions of moral individuals." Further he says, "Whatever else we may know there is no knowing how to live." Society is a promise or hope. The role of man is very important in creating a just society. However, man has not been part of the universe. Man has been considered as a unique creation, distinct from physical things.

We live in the universe that contains both matter and consciousness as salient constituents. Matter and consciousness have been regarded as strange partners. Both are contained in reality which is the inner aspect of the web of the universe. At present our understanding of reality is undergoing a great change. The scientific worldview is moving from rationalism to complementarity. The foundation of logic is ratiocination — that any logical proposition must be either true or false. Logical reasoning does not accept any middle ground for partial truth or falsity. It follows from the above that if any proposition confirms that if a single logical statement and its negation are both simultaneously true, then nothing can be ascertained. Complementarity rejects both these propositions on the basis of

observations of physical phenomena. We observe a single electron behaving both as a particle and as a wave. The logical propositions are true in logic, but not in the physical world. It follows from the above that the universe in limited circumstances adheres only to the proposition of logic.

Kant has long before stated that we cannot know things in themselves. He was the first systematic thinker to challenge objectivity, the idea that we know things as they are because the concepts with the help of which we know things are our concepts, coming out of our own understanding which passes through *a priori* categories of sensibility. Everything we know has a subjective element. Therefore, absolute objectivity is impossible. We now know that the dilemma of appearance and reality cannot be resolved by reason. Wittgenstein is nearer to truth when he says "whereof we cannot say, thereof we must consign to silence."

Let us now analyze, examine and evaluate the concept of religion. Rudolf Otto considers the awareness of *awe* to be a mixture of fear and fascination before the divine as the quintessence of religion. He speaks of a kind of experience of a *mysterium tremendum*, the total otherness of a divine being. Otto has made a great contribution to the in philosophy of religion. However, he commits a mistake when he emphasizes that this was the prototype of all truly religious experiences. This conception of the essential nature of religious experiences may be acceptable in the context of Western theism. This definition of religion, nay this kind of placation and use of spirits and powers and different forms of rites and rituals, bespeaks Western theism.

Sociologists and anthropologists have always emphasized the socio-cultural contents of religion. Emile Durkheim says that "a society has all that is necessary to arouse the sensation of the divine in minds, merely by the power that it has over them" (*Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, New York 1926, p. 207). According to him the gods of religion are nothing more than society in disguise. The *Encyclopedia of Religion* says that "religion is a unity of life based on esoteric experience. It speaks of the depth of dimensions of mystic experience—harmonious in form, divine effulgence and clarity in accordance with different cultural *mores*." Thus some kind of esotericism forms the basis of all religion. Though, different religious traditions have some salient features, the subterranean spiritual flow is the same. Hinduism and Buddhism emphasize immanence rather than transcendence. Both believe in continuous rather discontinuous theory and experience but the underlying spirit is marked by spirituality.

Buddhism denies the existence of a transcendental creator-god in favor of an indefinable, non-personal absolute source or dimension that can be experienced as the depth of human subjectivity. However, there is a presence of transcendence. In Zen Buddhism and Advaita the experience of Satori and the realization of Brahman speak of deeper spirituality. This kind of experience is wholly other than, or wholly transformative of, ordinary awareness. It is true that transcendence cannot be defined. In Jaspers' words, "Everything thinkable is rejected as invalid by transcendence.

Transcendence can be defined by no predicate, objectified by no representation, and attained by no inference, although all categories are applicable as means of saying that it is not a quality or a quantity, it is not a relation, and it is not one, not many, not being, not nothing, *et cetera*" (*Philosophic III*, pp. 38-39). Karl Jaspers only affirms the traditional wisdom of almost all religious scriptures. Soren Kierkegaard also speaks the same language. He says "God is altogether other than man and man's world. His existence, therefore, cannot be proven nor His nature conceived."

Religion is a way of divine life. Religion is a spiritual technique to move man and woman from the mundane to super-mundane existence, from the dualism of subject and object to the higher and sublime state of oneness of infinity and divine being. Religion has undergone great change and transformation and has provided moral and spiritual anchorage to humankind. The aim of religion to make a person free and this is possible by man's establishing a relation to what Jaspers calls "authentic being." According to him the independence of man as an individual free from everything that happens in the world comes from establishing a deeper integration to transcendence. In the Upanishads it has been stated that it is Truth that wins. Truth wins against untruth and falsehood because it is truth.

Philosophers have gone beyond an investigation of things in being to a systematic knowledge of being itself. We have been trying to understand reality, which has hitherto appeared in different forms of metaphysics—materialism (everything is matter), spiritualism (everything is spirit) and hylozoism (cosmos is a living spiritual substance). In every case being has been defined as something existing in the word from which all other things originated. But this kind of investigation has been rejected by Karl. Karl has shown that being *per se* unlike things in being, is not an object and can never become one. That is to say that things are those appearances of phenomena which with the help of categorization appear as clear, distinct, and thinkable. Man can become an object only in part as physical existence. However, it does awaken in us a faculty of sensing what authentically is in the phenomena. Philosophy's search for reality or being is to secure a sound foundation for a rational metaphysics of religion. Philosophy does change our entire consciousness of being and reality. This is at the heart of every philosophy. Religion based on such a vision and on philosophy succeeds in arresting the decline of moral values and enthroning them once again in the wills and minds of the people. True religion provides a sound rational metaphysics to seek living in organic harmony with reality; the highest religious experience is characterized by mystical oneness. It is a quest to seek such transcendence within the human self. Religious life is one of harmony with both the mental and human orders. It is a religious act of submersion of individuality in an organic relationship and in a mystical experience of oneness with reality.

Man is a spiritual being. In the words of St. Augustine, man is a spiritual substance. Transcendence is the essence of man. However, man is in a state of hibernation. He has forgotten his true being and transcendentality. In the words of T.S. Eliot, "Where's the life we have lost in living?" The task of religion is to awaken the dormant divinity and to take man to a state of spiritual sublimity. The present crisis of civilization presents distinctive challenges to both Reason and Religion. Reason is the human capacity for seeing, forming and investigating cognitive relations. Reason when employed in the process of ratiocination becomes the basis of science. There can be three ways of relating Reason and Religion: conflict, cooperation and harmony. We can find examples of all three in the present and past. The conflict between Reason and Religion is because of the misunderstanding about their role and function. Reason is the greatest gift of creation but it is a two-edged sword. It can help in cutting us out from under the trammel of ignorance and it can provide religion much needed rational metaphysics. But when it is devoid of moral content it can unleash forces of destruction.

Reason and Religion move by making models. These models are put to test. Differences in testing the models are based on the distinction between objective (scientific) and subjective (religious) truth. Our life and culture are guided by both objective and subjective truths. There are limitations for both reason and religion, each of which deals with a different aspect of reality and being. When Kant says that "the territory of pure understanding" is "an island enclosed by nature itself within unalterable limits," he wanted to convey that "land of truth" is "surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the native home of illusion." It is an attempt to restrain the concepts of understanding in favor of ideas through which reason begets and diverts moral conviction and religious belief. However, when reason is bereft of moral content, it creates a weapon of mass destruction with its scientific and technological tools. Again, when Religion is divested of its rational metaphysic, it loses its universal character and appeal and it becomes institutionalized and denominational.

The cooperation of reason and religion is to live as parts of the universe, in alignment with reality. In the convergence of reason and religion the very concept of being and reality demands unity and harmony. We can take spiritual humanism as far as it can go. This possibility of co-operation and convergence of reason and religion is based on complementarity. It is a scientifically known fact that the observer is essentially involved in what is being observed.

The universe is diverse and apparently it is full of contradictions. In spite of these apparent contradictions, we postulate a unity and harmony. We live in a world which contains matter and consciousness. Matter and consciousness have been considered as strange partners. However, both are contained in reality or being, which is the transcendental aspect of the web of the universe. Our scientific world-view is undergoing great change and transformation from rationalistic reductionism to complementarity.

Rationalism is discovering the hidden dimension of the non-rational character of physical reality. Erwin Schrodinger claims to resolve the dilemma of wave/particle in favor of wave: this problematic in fact still remains a dilemma to be solved by reason. Rational metaphysics provides a philosophical foundation for the possibility of freedom and intuitive experience of reality and being. The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy writes, "… Jaspers understands Jesus as one of the 'exemplary men' in human history alongside Confucius, Buddha and Socrates. Because of the paradigmatic way that Jesus realized existential possibilities, such as the ability to love and the capacity for suffering, he is relevant to human beings at all times. In place of any religious faith grounded on a revelation of God, Jaspers holds out the conception of philosophical faith. This sort of faith has no objectively guaranteed proof of the existence of transcendence and is not bound to rituals, churches, priest and theologians, who claim to be the interpreters of God's revelation."

The harmony and integration of reason and religion would pave the path for spiritual humanism. This kind of religion would foster a feeling of non-violence and compassion. The Dalai Lama and some prominent Christian clergy have initiated an inter-faith dialogue to provide a rational understanding of different religious traditions. Religion has been the greatest civilizing force. However, a wrong interpretation of religious texts is posing a great danger. Cultivation of love and non-violence is a historical necessity for the preservation of the moral health of mankind. The solution of the crisis of civilization lies in radical changes in human behavior. To change one's behavior and lifestyle is not an easy task but is one area where religions have something special to offer—from the dawn of history, religions have had a track record of success in changing people. Convergence and integration of reason and reality may herald an era of spiritual renaissance and save mankind from the holocaust of nuclear war.

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EDUCATION FOR REFLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING: DEVELOPING CITIZENS FOR A CIVIL GLOBAL SOCIETY

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Introduction

This chapter proceeds from two fundamental assumptions about reasoning in faith to develop citizens for a global society. If the over-arching goal of international philosophical discussions is to create a global society living in peace and harmony, then a means to cope with fundamental differences in religious, political and philosophical beliefs must be found. In order to develop individuals who are capable of living with those who hold different philosophical positions, cultural customs and faith traditions, all members of the global society must accept harmony as a worthy goal. My first assumption holds that all individuals accept the possibility of a spiritual, non-material, reality. This assumption is necessary because the beliefs of many faiths rest on this fundamental premise. While it is true that the characterization of a spiritual reality differs among cultures and religions, belief in a non-material reality is a broad requisite assumption. An extension of this assumption is the belief in a human spiritual dimension. How does one argue this point?

Practically speaking, I became aware of human spirituality when at five years of age my great-grandmother died. Observing her body in the coffin, I recognized that the deceased body was not the great-grandmother I knew. Culturally I was raised in a Catholic family. This experience with death solidified my belief in a transcendent soul and the spiritual dimension of my faith. My belief did not require Kierkegaard's dramatic "leap of faith," but was part of a developmental socialization in my family's faith. As a child my Catholic Christian beliefs seemed "normal" and "universal" to me. But as my world grew and I was exposed to other Christians, I then considered the possibility that other belief systems existed and that those believers were as committed to their own beliefs as I was to mine. Confronting different beliefs challenges an individual's personal identity. In response, an individual might either question his or her own beliefs or reject what the other person believes as unbelievable.

The second assumption is that all individuals value harmony between individuals, societies, and nature. Harmony is demonstrated by an individual's ability to respect the beliefs of the other despite the conflicts and tensions the other's beliefs raise within one's own identity. Harmony,

or what can be described as a communion of saints, is the ultimate goal of faith traditions. In a practical sense as an adult believer, I was confronted with the breadth of spiritual belief when I attended a conference in London entitled, "Spirituality and the Whole Child." The conference took place at the University of Roehampton, a consortium university consisting of an Anglican college, a Methodist college, a Catholic college and a college in Froebel's educational tradition. I presumed that participants would have some similar notions about what spirituality means, but I was mistaken. The disparity in definitions for spirituality became clear when a woman remarked following a keynote speaker, an Anglican cleric, "We seem to be spending an inordinate amount of time talking about God." She was clearly irritated. I must admit that I was both shocked and amazed as she proceeded to identify herself as a practicing witch. I found the woman's comments unbelievable within my worldview. Again, confronting differing beliefs challenges one's personal identity.

In this paper I will argue that one source of global conflict rests in how 'unbelievable' different faiths, political systems, and philosophies seem to non-believers. I will propose that a process of reflection that leads to thoughtful decision making is a potential means to bridge the believer/non-believer gap. In the next section I will present a brief history of American schooling and describe how my argument fits into a larger picture.

Historical Purposes and Education

Historically the purpose of schooling, society's prominent vehicle of education, was to transmit a society's culture to the next generation. Children were prepared in the skills and rituals that supported survival within a particular cultural context. Since Plato first presented his vision for society in *The Republic*, the connection between educational philosophy, educational policy and educational practice was evident in theory, but often seemed tenuous in reality. Ironically, conjecture about the philosophical purpose(s) of schooling seldom draws public attention, but discussions about a specific curriculum or an instructional methodology typically enflames strong opinion. Implementation, or action, captures attention but an action's philosophical foundation is seldom considered. Because American public schooling is a feature of the local political landscape, individual communities define the purpose of schooling to suit current priorities often illustrating a larger historical educational theme.

When Plato first argued his metaphysics, epistemology and axiology in ancient Athens, implementing the connection between philosophy, education and educational practice challenged society's leaders. Augustine and Aquinas translated the Greek philosophical tradition into a Christian worldview that dominated Western thinking into the modern era, signaled by The Enlightenment. In American colonial times, schooling reflected the prevailing classical philosophies and their Christianized versions. English

colonial education followed the models of the northeastern colonists who were predominantly northern European transplants. The first broad historical segment of American education (1620-1820) focused on religious purposes, that is, the knowledge necessary to read the Bible, manage financial affairs prudently, and participate as a Christian neighbor in community life. Youngsters were educated to take the place of their parents as workers for the common good as defined by their Puritan Christian traditions. "Values such as obedience, hard work, competition, respect for authority, . . laid the foundation for American middle class values (Pai & Adler, 2001).

Beginning under the influence of Enlightenment thinking, the American cultural tradition carries the distinction of dramatically furthering a revolt against authoritarianism and church-dominated states. The democratic principles argued in the American founding documents were legitimized by modern philosophies articulated by Locke, Rousseau, and Kant. The thrust toward modern philosophy solidified into American cultural landscape the influence of instrumentalism, utilitarianism and rationalization in education as a reflection of American society's shift from a God/Church-dominated worldview to a secular worldview.

After the defeat of the British in the War of 1812, American education shifted from a religious purpose to an agenda of nation-building as its dominant purpose (1820-1946). Schooling focused on weaving multiethnic immigrant communities into one country with a single view of citizenship defined by "the melting pot ideal" (Pai & Adler, 2001, p. 62). Although sociologists and historians hold differing views of the actuality of this ideal, it served as a rationale for separating personal life with its language, religion and customs, from public life with its emphasis on competition, individualism, and patriotism.

After World War II, the United States was firmly established as a world power with a secure national identity. Following the Brown v. Board of Education court ruling and Civil Rights legislation, consideration of a larger purpose for education was given attention (1946-2001). American schooling received a mandate for equitable opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities, foreign language speaking students, special needs students and broadened gender opportunities. Each of these three extensive historical periods marked trends in American schooling that responded to a changed cultural and political landscape. Within each new historical era the purpose of schooling and citizenship or the relationship of the polis to the person was redefined.

In view of recent world events my argument proposes that American schooling has entered a new historical era that necessitates a fourth thematic purpose for American schooling. This new purpose requires an approach to prepare students for reflective decision-making within a pluralistic global society. This reflective process integrates cultural values and reason, in order to teach students to make decisions that move beyond individual good to the global common good. At the same time the reflective process

develops within students the ability to learn about other beliefs, develop an understanding, if not appreciation of those beliefs, and then make appropriate decisions that respect the global community.

Decision-making is the key event that moves belief into action. The significance of the thinking process prior to making decisions provides an opportunity for growth in both tolerance and solidarity moving individuals toward "engagement." Contemplative practice is a model of reflective decision-making that demonstrates the integration of the Catholic faith as a core cultural value that influences decision-making within Catholic schooling[1]. In the next section I will describe in more detail an illustrative schema of the relationship between reflection and decision-making.

Reflective Practice: Philosophy, Meaning and Action

Decision-making for school leaders and teachers is a process of mindful decision making (Schuttloffel, 1999; Zumwalt, 1989). The act of reflection provides an individual with a lens to examine a school's philosophical underpinning, the various messages teachers send to students, and the ensuing decision making. The concept of mindfulness infers that teachers and school leaders critically ask "why?"—before, during and after decision-making. School leaders also require mindfulness during their decision making process (Schuttloffel, 1999a, 1999b; Sergiovanni, 1991). Reflective practice, as a mindful process, makes it possible to examine the thinking that precedes decision making (Schön, 1983, 1987), thinking that occurs during decision making, and thinking that examines previous actions (Killion & Todnem, 1991, 14-16). This thinking about action is what distinguishes mindful school leaders from those who act merely as school managers. School leaders' examination of their beliefs about teaching, learning, students, and their roles exemplify the critical level of reflection. Borrowing from Van Manen's application of three reflective levels in curricular studies, critical, interpretive and technical levels of reflection may be engaged for decision making (1977).

Critical reflection begins with an examination of an individual's basic beliefs, values, philosophy, and tacit assumptions. Critical reflection answers the question why do I [lead, teach, act] the way I do? Due to the long established separation of Church and state, American schools depict the Enlightenment's move to secular purposes for schooling. Some purposes for American public schooling include preparing students: for the world of work, to maintain our democracy, to know the common American culture, to become fully actualized human beings, to perform the basic skills for life in a technological society, to appreciate the diversity of their fellow human beings, to identify injustices in society and seek to remedy them, to relate to the respected tome of previously accumulated knowledge,

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[1] Merylann Schuttloffel, (1999). *Character and the contemplative principal.* Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.

or to become self-sufficient members of society. This list is not exhaustive, but it serves to portray the competing contemporary purposes for public schooling. The list emphasizes the precipitous imbalance between the temporal dimension of the human person and the neglected spiritual dimension.

Figure. 1 Van Manen's three levels of reflection

3. Critical level of Reflection
Why is a decision made?
2. Interpretive level of Reflection
☐*What meaning does the decision create or what message does the decision send?*
1. Technical level of Reflection
How is the decision implemented?

Adapted from Vann Manen, M. (1977)

These multiple purposes raise an epistemological question, "What is worth knowing and how do we know?" Numerous philosophical positions find their representation within a typical American public school's curricula and extra-curricula. Within the context of educational theory, thinking becomes the substance of a reflective curriculum. The primary methodological approach would be to provide students with opportunities to experience reflection and decision-making. Critical reflection also encourages a person to understand why another individual chooses to act the way he/she does. Critical reflection forces an examination of beliefs, values, and fundamental principles held by those outside one's community of believers.

The interpretive level of reflection illuminates the messages sent or the meaning created by the connection between beliefs as isolated theory, or ideals and daily practice. School leaders begin to see that beliefs seldom remain idle, but most often communicate through symbolic signals that create meaning for those under their influence. Messages often portray cultural meaning that is misunderstood by outsiders who do not consider the critical source of meaning. For example, if a school leader believes that the classroom should replicate experiences of democratic citizenship, but that same leader does not provide students (or teachers) an opportunity to participate in decision making, the message sent is incoherent with the leader's beliefs. This "mixed-signal" undermines attempts to transfer an important democratic belief to students. The crucial role of interpreting beliefs, values, and educational philosophy into messages that are coherent points to the heart of teaching moral behavior. Beliefs that remain theoretical do not impact students' lives unless there are practical experiences with these beliefs.

The American educational philosopher, John Dewey contended that thinking is the methodology that leads to the resolution of society's problems (1938). He described the reflective thinking process as "meaning making." Dewey challenged previous educational methodologies that ignored the realities of the student's world. For him, experience was pivotal to learning because it was the source of cultural values and beliefs. Dewey's philosophy stated that faulty thinking led to inappropriate decision-making and the ensuing problematic behaviors. And while Dewey defined himself as a philosopher, he promoted the application of philosophy to real-life problems including how to find a balance between individual freedom and society's common good. Dewey's ideal school, then, provides students with activities where students learn how to reflect on their experiences and use that knowledge to make better decisions.

At a technical level of reflection, school leaders examine those behaviors that not only send substantive messages but also typify their beliefs. Technically, the challenge is to do that which is coherent with what is believed. The necessity of coherent action is the core of transferring, or at least illuminating, beliefs from one believer to another. Beliefs must make the transition from words into action in order for coherence to be credible.

By integrating Van Manen's three levels of reflection and Sergiovanni's leadership schema into an illustration of decision-making by reflective citizens, the important contribution of each element is emphasized. This schema focuses on the interaction or integrated relationship among culture, reason and decision making. The schema does not put culture and reason at odds with each other, but acknowledges that they both are vital elements in a reflective thinking process. This schema illustrates reflective thinking and its potential for opening new interactions between groups with conflicting or contradictory views on religion, politics, and philosophy. While the schema itself is linear and rational, it represents a more dynamic relationship.

Sergiovanni (1992) used three elements as a metaphor to characterize leader decision-making. First, "the Heart" portrays what an individual values and believes. My schema associates "culture" with the "Heart" and critical reflection. Sergiovanni used "the Head" to describe my mindscape of how the world works. Mindscape means worldview or an understanding of how the world works. Valassery and others have often noted the assumption of a western worldview when cultural valuations are made. My encounter with a witch did not fit my mindscape of spirituality. My first reaction was to claim "spirituality" for myself and resist her claim to spirituality. This interpretive response did not allow for the possibility that a witch was a serious believer. I had rejected her "Heart." My contention within this argument is that I do not have to believe in witchcraft in order to respect and tolerate her beliefs. And for harmony to exist, she in turn, must allow for the credibility of my spiritual beliefs. Both of us must accept the basic premises of human rights for the other. I associate "the Head" with Reason. Reason is the ability to be rational, to solve problems,

to think and to reflect on my own thinking. Wendland states, "Faith is an indispensable link between human reason and his decisions. ..." Sergiovani used "the Hand" as a metaphor for decision-making. First people consider their values and beliefs, determine how a question fits into their worldview, then make a decision. But upon what principles are decisions made? Within "contemplative practice" I describe reasoning in the Catholic faith (1999). Every decision maker has foundational principles that influence their choices and shape their behavior (critical reflection).

The dynamic interaction of the heart, head, and hand in decision making

The HEART (what I value and believe)	**The HEAD** (my mindscape of how the world works)	**The HAND** (my decisions, behaviors, and actions)

REFLECTION:

Critical level	Interpretive level	Technical level

CULTURE → REASON → *REASONING IN FAITH*

the **HEART**	The **HEAD**	The **HAND**

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement*, p. 8 as seen in Schuttloffel, M.J. (1999). *Character and the Contemplative Principal.*

Van Manen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical.*Curriculum and Inquiry, 6*, (3), pp. 205-228.

The pivotal ingredient in this decision-making process is a person's ability to reflect upon their own thinking and recognize the elements that influence behavior. Those elements include beliefs, cultural values, philosophy, faith and previous experiences. From this reflection-on-thinking individuals come to understand the source of their decisions (Schön, 1987). Then reflective thinking challenges the individual to consider how others come to make their decisions. This awareness of the credibility of another's thinking is a prerequisite to understanding and harmony.

Thus far I have argued that the source of global conflict rests in how unbelievable different faiths, political systems, and philosophies seem to non-believers. I have proposed that reflection and the ensuing decision making process are a means to bridge the believer/non-believer gap. The reflective process challenges an individual to consider the decision-making

process the other engaged before making their decisions. Next I will portray the importance of an individual's character in the reflective process.

Character and the Individual's Communities, Story and Virtues

In his study of character, Nash states:

> My character is the sum total of all those moral characteristics that make me a unique person, different in important respects from all other persons. In addition to my intuitions and feelings, these unique moral characteristics include my very special communities, my continuing story, and my formative virtues (italics in original, Nash, 1996, p. 72).

Nash proposes that each individual belongs to communities that shape their identity. Certainly Nash would concur that an individual's culture may be the largest defining community. Religious faith communities are significant contributors to the cultural community. Individuals are shaped by and also are capable of shaping their community.

Dewey also recognized the benefit of a person's membership in a larger community and with responsibilities to that community. In order to be a contributing participant in community life, Dewey posed that an individual must practice those habits of character that support the welfare of the community. Like many post-Enlightenment thinkers, Dewey himself did not support organized religion, but he did not deny a spiritual world. He argued that if religion could be used to unite citizens to work for the common good rather than divide—as history often demonstrated—religious experiences could provide a positive motivation for decision-making (1934). Since Dewey rejected absolutisms, he defined moral behavior as those behaviors that contributed to a functioning democratic society and improved individual character. Dewey would argue that developing in future citizens the ability to make moral decisions is the ultimate purpose of education. He did not accept the hierarchy of spiritual over temporal nature, but emphasized that thinking leads to action.

Dewey, in the Augustinian tradition, placed a priority on the community where the student resides and how that community shapes the cultural values of the student. Each recognized that a youngster does not live in a vacuum, but experiences life within a cultural context. As a student grows and begins to understand his community's beliefs and how those beliefs impact decision making, it is then possible to grasp how the beliefs of others direct his actions. As the student's experiences extend into a wider community, the challenge becomes to make meaning outside one's own cultural values. Nash's concept of story describes those experiences of individuals within their communities. In other words, story is an individual record as well as a group experience. Each person is a creation of his/her

own life story, a personal narrative. Beliefs and values impact the direction and meaning of that story to the individual and the larger communities. And that individual story plays out within the story of the larger community.

Virtue is a characteristic represented by particular behaviors. Virtue shapes decision making as the guiding light that directs free will toward particular choices. Virtuous behavior is the sign of a virtuous person. Traditional philosophy focuses on the teacher's role as a model of virtuous behavior for the student to emulate (Augustine). Progressive and constructivist teachers attempt to present experiences that replicate healthy community interactions for students to appropriate (Dewey). Both opportunities—exposure to virtuous behavior and experiences to practice of virtue—are necessary to develop character.

Taken together, communities, story, and virtue become the framework of character. An examination of these elements provides an insight into the person and his behaviors. A reflective decision making schema can be further enhanced to demonstrate the dynamic relationship between all these elements.

The dynamic interaction of the heart, head, and hand in decision making

The HEART	**The HEAD**	**The HAND**
(what I value and believe)	(my mindscape of how the world works)	(my decisions, behaviors, and actions)

REFLECTION:

Critical	Interpretive	Technical
VIRTUES	COMMUNITIES	STORY

CULTURE → REASON → *REASONING IN FAITH*

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement*, p. 8 as seen in Schuttloffel, M.J. (1999). *Character and the Contemplative Principal.*

Van Manen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical.*Curriculum and Inquiry, 6*, (3), pp. 205-228.

Nash, R.J. (1996). *"Real world" ethics: Frameworks for educators and human service professionals*. New York: Teachers College Press.

The Heart includes the formative virtues as shapers of beliefs and values as well as results of the individual's beliefs and values. Communities shape the mindscape

The HAND creates the individual's continuing story. Character as the positive engagement of these qualities should lead to thoughtful decision-making that leads to harmony. The three levels of reflection provide the insight into the foundational principles for decision-making, the meanings attached to behaviors, and the actions carried out through the decision.

If education is a tool for furthering world peace and understanding, then character development becomes valuable only when character influences behavior. In other words, if character guides an individual to make particular decisions and those decisions illustrate positive character traits, more virtuous decisions should result. A decision-making process that includes reflective thinking, or meta-cognition, presents a vehicle to transform individual behavior and ultimately prevent a pessimistic clash of civilizations (Flavell, 1977).

Closing Reflections

Thoughtful, mindful, reflective decision-making are necessary for future American leadership. The United States holds a profound responsibility to use its wealth and position in the world community to further the aim of harmony. A powerful American cultural myth rests on a belief characterized as "manifest destiny." This myth holds that God created the United States for a special purpose in the world. While the religious foundation of this belief has waned, Americans still value democratic principles that they believe benefit both the individual and the community. American public education emphasizes the separation of church and state, but recognizes that citizenship requires students with the ability to make moral decisions. My argument within this paper is that reflective decision making is a methodology that would prepare students with the skills, experiences and character a global society requires. Previous studies conclude that within public education there are beliefs and behaviors parallel to contemplative practice (Schuttlofffel, 2001). The challenge for educational philosophers is to argue persuasively that reflection and the ensuing decision-making process are a means to bridge the believer/non-believer gap. The significance of this bridge is that it crosses over to harmony, a place seldom visited by humanity.

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PART III

CULTURES AND FAITH

CHAPTER IX

AFRICAN SYMBOLISM OF REASONING IN FAITH

OCTAVE KAMWIZIKU WOZOL

AT THE ORIGIN OF THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE: "WE ARE, THEN I AM!"[1]

In the African cultural tradition,[2] the philosophy or the life of the *muntu* (man) is religious and his religion is a lived philosophy.[3] In other words, the Bantu vision of the world integrates itself into its religion and vice versa because the world is, first of all, the world of human beings, spirits and ancestors. In fact the Bantu people are fond of their relational world—the notion of solidarity is a fundamental value[4]—so that the notion of the person is perceived in the perspective of the principle: "We are, then I am."

This primitive relation concerns the subject who feels or realizes himself in communion (belief) with the whole of nature and the whole of the cosmos. This *modus vivendi* concerns really a cosmic communion[5] because the human person is not seated in front of the cosmos, but is in the cosmos. In this religious vision of the universe, the situation of 'being with' concerns the level of having (life and power) and the level of relation.[6]

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[1] Nsambi e Mbula, *La vie communautaire : une chance pour la vie consacrée dans la réalisation de sa mission prophétique* in *Revue de Spiritualité Africaine (1)* (Kinshasa, Institut de Spiritualité Africaine, 1995), p. 31.

[2] We will essentially speak about the Bantu peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo wherein live more than four hundred tribes who speak some 215 different languages. To express the reality of human being, the Bantu languages use the term *mu-ntu* (man) or *ba-ntu* (men): Placid Tempels, *Philosophie bantoue;* Mujynya N.C., *L'homme dans l'univers «des» Bantu*, Lubumbashi, 1972; G. Balandier, *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique noire* (2e edit) (Paris, 1963).

[3] V. Mulago, "Symbolisme dans les Religions traditionnelles Africaines et Sacramentalisme," in *Revue du Clergé Africain* (Juillet 1972), p. 468.

[4] Matungulu Otene, *Etre avec. Heurts et lueurs d'une communion* (Lubumbashi: Editions Saint Paul Afrique, 1981), p. 13.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[6] Matangila Musadila, *La catégorie de la faute chez les mbala (bantous). Paul Ricœur en question* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), pp. 181- 217.

"Being with" (Mit-Sein) as Having

The Bantu people consider that life is a precious gift of the ancestors who, in fact, had also obtained it from the hands of the Supreme Being named Nzambi Mpungu Maweji. Considered to be a fundamental value, human life must be considered as a whole (totality).[7] The separation between the spiritual and the profane (material) does not exist in this tradition. It is the responsibility of each one to protect, preserve, prolong and promote life. Transgressing these existential rules is a grave fault; the function of the interdictions and taboos is to moderate human behaviour.

'Being is power' (*l'etre est force*): Placid Tempels was the first philosopher to sustain this fundamental notion of the Bantu ontology. According to him, this power can grow or decrease, i.e. by the fact that a person becomes chieftain of a clan, he ceases to be what he was earlier. His essence is now transformed [8] and this change concerns the quality and the intensity of his vital power.[9] According to the Bantu ontology, creatures preserve within them a great bond and the vital powers depend on one another. Nzambi Mpungu Maweji (God) is beyond every power because he is the source (origin) of life. After God, we have the founders of the clans, the chain of the ancestors, the spirits, the deceased and finally the living persons. Thus for Placid Tempels, the Bantu world is 'a plurality of co-ordinate powers'.[10]

Distinguishing the Bantu mental habit from the western mentality, Tempels recognizes:

1. that the western philosophical notion of being is more general than the notion of real being : one accepts rational beings or ideal beings who are not real beings;

2. that the conception of being is dynamic in the African culture and static in western society; and

3. then we understand causality in the direction of our realistic metaphysics, whereas the Bantu people follow their philosophy of powers.[11]

This conception of the Bantu's philosophy will be criticized by Paulin Hountondji and Eboussi Boulaga. According to them, Tempels' approach to African philosophy is an 'ethno-philosophy' or a premature generalization of what he had analysed in social work in the Democratic

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[7] Matungulu Otene, *Etre avec pour vivre vra* (Lubumbashi : Editions Saint Paul Afrique, 1982), p. 40.

[8] Tempels, *op.cit.*, p. 89

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Republic of Congo.[12] Without minimizing the Tempelsian contribution to the humanization of the relationship between the Belgian colonialists and the Congolese people before the period of the independences, we recognize that the muntu's reality goes beyond a simple power, because the power cannot exhaust the categories of being. For the Bantu people, power is not being, but it belongs to being and constitutes a part of being without involving the whole reality of being.

All in all, the muntu man is a 'being with' the power. He is essentially the 'I-Thou' with the other 'Thou-I'. The immanence of the muntu is also his transcendence because he is the man of the other. Indeed, the muntu belongs to a specific structure (the family, the village, the tribe, the ancestors), but he is not submerged by this social structure because he is a gift of Nzambi Mpungu (God) who never sleeps.[13]

Being with" as Relation

In the history of contemporary philosophy, the analysis of the notion of 'being with' followed two main orientations: existential phenomenology (Heidegger, Sartre, Jaspers), and personalism (Martin Buber, Marcel, Mounier, Levinas, Berdiaev, etc.). In the two cases, the principle of 'Connais-toi toi-meme" (Know Thyself) is very important. For its reflection opens the way of understanding the reality of the human being as an open individuality or a polarity (I-Thou) living in a bi-polar 'I and Thou' relation.[14]

But, as it appears in the different attempts to explore human existence, phenomenological philosophy has a great resemblance with a trip in the equatorial forest in Congo. In fact, one can enter the equatorial forest one way and come back by another. And the question which one can pose is the following: is it possible to rationalize the lived life (le vécu humain)? According to many philosophers, i.e. Wittgenstein, Buber and Bergson, this methodological difficulty accounts for silence as 'a profundity without words' (Henri Bergson). Thereby, we can argue that the subject in the Bantu culture is both person (I-Thou) and relation (I and Thou). This situation is well expressed by the notion of the "child of the other" (man of the other).

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[12] F. Eboussi Boulaga, "Le Bantou problématique," in *Présence Africaine* (Paris, Présence Africaine, 1968), p. 5, sq. P. Hountondji, *Sur la « Philosophie Africaine ». Critique de l'ethnophilosophie (textes à l'appui)* (Paris 1977).

[13] Kamwiziku Wozol: *Le primat du vécu 'Toi-moi dans la philosophie de M. Buber et les Soonde. Introduction à un dialogique du travail.* Thèse de doctorat en philosophie (Lubumbashi : Faculté des Lettres, 1984).

[14] Martin Buber, *Je et Tu* (Paris Aubier, 1958).

Man's Constituents

In the Greek platonic tradition, the soul is separate from the body. In African tradition, the subject is a unit of different constituents which are:[15]

- Body (Nitu),
- Blood (Menga),
- Heart (Coeur),
- Soul (Moyo),
- Shadow or Double-Person (Kivudi), and
- Name (Zina).

The body (nitu) is only the material body of the human person. Other creatures (birds, animals, snakes, fishes, etc.) have also their material structure: the nsuni (flesh). The nitu is the material substance, perishable, which remains in the grave after death. This part of the human body is a mortal envelope which is subject to time alterations.[16] The nitu is not a simple material object. It is essentially that by which the subject is present in the world and confirms himself as a concrete (real) being. Thus, the nitu is not only the way of communicating with other persons, but "is symbolically exposed to the magician's aggressions; because the wizards destroy and eat the nitu. That is a great fault and the whole society did not tolerate this criminal act which resembles contemporary terrorism. In other words, terrorism is like sorcery because "the wizard is an intelligence which can never have mercy on anybody."[17]

The blood (menga) is the power of the person, life's dynamism, the soul's (moyo) seat. In the magician's world, the one who obtains human blood becomes, by this fact, master of the occult powers which are inside it. This is the reason why the blood (menga) must be protected by social norms and interdicts. It is forbidden to wound somebody because the blood and the heart are both the source of life. It is, above all, the seat of the soul (moyo).

The soul (moyo) is the principle of every life, its motive principle. In human existence, the soul is the breath of life. The human being is the only creature who possesses the moyo. This soul does not die because it is not exposed to the alterations of time. If one dies, the moyo withdraws from the body and returns to the ancestors' village: the Kalunga. The moyo's movement is realised if the dead person had lived as a good person. If he was a foolish man, without respect for social values, the moyo —which is

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[15] Matangila Musadila, *op.cit.*, pp. 188-190

[16] J. Van Wing, *Etudes Bakongo*, 2eme Edit. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1959), p. 284.

[17] Kamwiziku Wozol, *Interhumanité et Idéologie de la compétence dans la culture soonde*, p. 140.

not exposed to the magician's aggression—will eternally ramble or stroll up and down.

The shadow or double-person (kivudi) is the man himself, completely one and invisible. This is the reason why it is forbidden to walk upon the shadow of another person. For what reasons? With Eric de Rosny we will say that the kivudi is the external projection of the vital interior principle. After death, the shadow or double-person (kivudi) disappears. Besides, the kivudi can be the object of magical aggression. In this case, the work of a nganga (healer) will consist in bringing again the kivudi that was taken by the ndoki (wizard).[18]

Finally, the name (zina) constitutes the last part of a human being. The name expresses the child's growth. When a child becomes an adult, he changes his name after being initiated in the educational centre of circumcision (mukhanda).[19] Then the name constitutes the personality of the subject and determines his identity.[20] According to Van Wing: "the name seems to be in close relationship with the soul; the name doesn't die and, thereby, it resembles the soul (moyo)."[21]

As is stated above, the human being in the Bantu culture is a 'mit-sein' ('being-with'). This primitive experience is lived in a whole unity of different components: the body, the blood, the heart, the soul, the shadow or double-person, and the name. This relationship is experienced through social life wherein the family is the basic structure of society. Here, the notion of work is very important because it is the main feature of the ideology of competence: the person is competent who humanizes relationships and guarantees social peace.[22] Unfortunately, there is a great difference between theory and praxis; because the reality of life in African social work proves that the relation of 'being with' is not love everyday' (Gabriel Marcel).

THE CRISIS OF 'BEING WITH' AND ITS SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION

'The Mouth Is Smiling Whereas the Heart Hates' (The Reality of Social Crisis)

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[18] Eric de Rosny, *L'Afrique des guérisons* (Paris, Khartala, 1992), p. 131 sq.

[19] Nange Kudita wa Sesemba, "'*Un rite d'initiation chez les Tshokwe: Mukkanda ou Tshamvula*," in *Cahiers des Religions Africaines*, 8 (1974).

[20] Joseph Ntedika Konde, "'Une mobilisation totale pour l'œuvre éducative," in *L'éducation de la jeunesse dans l'Eglise-Famille en Afrique*, (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2001), pp. 389-402.

[21] Van Wing , *Op.Cit.* , p. 290.

[22] Kamwiziku Wozol, *'Interhumanité et Idéologie de la compétence dans la culture soonde'* in *Kinshasa Philosophical Review* (7-8) (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1991), pp.135- 144.

To illustrate the crisis of 'being with' (the other person) in their life, the Bantu people use symbolic language (proverbs): 'The mouth is smiling whereas the heart is hating'. This hypocritical attitude is not far from the well known sentence of John Paul Sartre: l'enfer, c'est l'autre! So, the other person ceases to be a subject of realization (love) and his look or regard (face to face) becomes the diabolical way or strategy of usurping my liberty. Where and how can we restore the primitive relation between man and man in order to live true to the nature and the ancestors? According to the African people, the problem of living together is real and the best way to restore social peace is dialogue under the palaver tree.[23]

'Nobody Can Use a Stick to Protect Himself against Solar Rays' (Necessity of Reconciliation or Living Together)

First of all, the palaver tree is essentially the meeting place between living persons (men) and the "dead-living' (ancestors) who are the mediators near to Nzambi Mpungu (God). Hence the person who realizes the importance of the palaver-debate is conscious of the fact that he never lives one day without referring to his ancestors.

Secondly, genuinely wise is the person who is able to resolve the social conflicts in his society because "the tortoise never leaves its carapace." In other words, the human being is always a 'being with' and everybody must always look for a new dialogical space in order to restore this primitive and sacred dimension of humankind striving to live a good life in the bosom of the great religious family[24]—another expression of the philosophical village as has already been said. This symbolic manner of peacemaking is the African strategy of reasoning in faith.

This kind of dialogical rationality is comprehensible because the palaver tree is both a symbol and a space of dialogue. As a symbol: if people want to protect themselves against the solar rays or dangers of social dislocation, they agree to hold a party under the shadow of a tree. This decision (reasoning) is an engagement in faith, a creed (credo) in the values of solidarity. Symbolically speaking, the palaver tree is not only the expression of authentic dialogue, but is also the symbol of the presence of the ancestors. These mediators near to Nzambi Mpungu (God) planted this tree in the middle of the village in order to preserve social justice and

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[23] L. Mayola Mavunza, *Logique et Argumentation. Rhétoricité de la palabre africaine et de l'analyse sociale* (Kinshasa: Science et Discursivité, 2003). See also: Matangila Musadila, *La catégorie de la faute chez les mbala (bantous). Paul Ricoeur en question* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), especially « *Conclusion de la seconde partie: l'arbre a palabre: lieu de la régulation des tensions sociales* », pp. 295-313.

[24] *L'Education de la Jeunesse dans l'Eglise—Famille en Afrique* (Actes de la XXIe Semaine Théologique de Kinshasa du 22 au 28 novembre 1998) (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2001).

democratic freedom. Thus, nobody can accept to meet the other person without remembering himself that the palaver tree is sacred and that its specific function is to create a dialogical space of concrete rationality (wisdom) in order to reconcile people.

Besides, argues Mayola Mavunza, in the African traditional palaver, argumentative reasoning completes demonstrative reasoning.[25] The reason for this is: the purpose of the palaver is not to punish the troublemaker but to remobilize him; to use the argument *ad hominem* and not the coercion by law in order to bring everybody to a consensus or a dialogue. The humanism of the palaver consists in a profound respect for the person and social democracy.[26]

As is stated above, the African palaver uses symbolic argumentation. As Mudiji Malamba quoted: in front of a wise person, one must use a device (enigma, proverb, allusion etc.); before a senseless man, one must speak clearly."[27] The advantage of symbolic language is to awaken the young men; this is done by the wise men of the village who speak to them in a symbolic language.

This method of reasoning is theoretical and practical; and the teenagers discover the ideal of the accomplished man on the individual and social levels, namely, to cherish and to practice the values of justice, rightness, truth, honesty, courageousness, etc. Thus, when there is a conflict between people, reference to the ancestors will be the best path to peacemaking.

The Symbolic Efficiency of the Misanga Ritual of Reconciliation

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The conceptual field. Issiaka Prosper Laleye is right to say: "People can never congregate in order to become sillier but to become more intelligent and wiser."[28] And to become more intelligent and wise is the other manner to develop strategies of peacemaking. Thereby, the Bantu people develop a concrete dialogical rationality which is centred around a

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[25] L. Mayola Mavunza, *Logique et Argumentation. Rhétoricité de la palabre africaine et de l'analyse sociale* (Kinshasa: Science et Discursivité, 2003), pp. 79- 93.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[27] Mudiji Malamba, "Initiation aux vertus ancestrales et à l'art de raisonner," in *L'éducation de la jeunesse dans l'Eglise-Famille en Afrique* (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2001), p. 57.

[28] Issiaka Prosper Laleye, "'Le fonctionnement idéologique: 'Un concept pour l'enquête sur le dynamisme de l'idéologie dans les sociétés negro-africaines'," in *Kinshasa Philosophical Review* (7-8) (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1991), pp.17- 29.

complex symbolic register because the signification of each symbol depends on the area (culture) and the degree of the fault.[29]

The concept Misanga means conflict, interdict and process of reconciliation. And the misanga is not a simple rite of reconciliation but a public, religious, ethical and psychological confession.

An ethical (religious) rite: the misanga refers to the invisible world and its praxis proceeds by the recognition of a fault (aveu de la faute). For what reasons? Two brothers of the same family should not decide to live separately forever. This situation constitutes the phenomenon of misanga because it is contrary to the specific nature of human beings: we are, then I am! The reason for this is: the members of the village will proceed to the ritual of reconciliation, misanga.

It is a social rite for it is the process of remobilization of the person who has transgressed the interdict. And the officiator will be the chieftain of the village.

The "misanga" symbolic registers. This dialogical praxis of reconciliation uses the following symbols: cooking-pot (*nungu*), water (*meya*), fire: incandescent wood-embers (*kala dia tsuya*) and a bit of straw (*kisengula mbanza*).

The cooking-pot (*nungu*) is the symbol of clan unity or communion because society (men, women, children and visitors) eat the meats which are cooked in the cooking pot. And in everyday life, the muntu must cherish and practice this solidarity by eating with other persons in the same cooking pot.

Water (*meya*) is very necessary to life and also is 'life' (Antoine de Saint Exupery), because water washes, purifies, vivifies and remakes life. In the African culture, the following symbolic argumentation emphasises the importance of water in the process of inter-humanization: "The peanut feed dies nude (stark naked). The earth (symbol of femininity) will receive her (hospitality). After a few days, the peanut will come to life again. It will return to home well-dressed, beautiful; and accompanied by its sisters (solidarity, 'being-with', communion)." Besides, it is senseless to mask nudity from the water of the river.

This paremiological argumentation brings us to understand with Mukambu ya Namwisi the praxis of *misanga:* « A cooking pot full of water is placed in the middle of the circle line formed by the members of the clan, officially invited by the chieftain. The chieftain tells everybody the problem which is disturbing the social peace in the village. Illness, malediction, public injury, egoism, etc. After this short speech, an invited chieftain addresses a short prayer to the ancestors before putting the wood-ember in the water.

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[29] *Conflits familiaux et réconciliation* (Kinshasa-Bandundu: CEEBA, 1980).

The incandescent wood-ember (*kala dia tsuya*) is the symbol of hate, violence, suffering, etc. In fact, the incandescent wood-ember (*kala dia tsuya*) is the presence of fire. And fire symbolises vitality, courageousness, royalty. In the Soonde culture, for example, fire is often used to prepare and to illumine, to maintain, family unity. Nevertheless, fire is also dangerous because it burns all the objects which touch it. Referring to the *misanga* ritual, this fire must be extinguished in water. In other words, the incandescent wood-ember must go out. This process of reconciliation is preceded by this speech between the celebrator and the public:

- Celebrator: Let the motive of the conflict be dissolved in this water…
- Public: Let it be dissolved.
- Celebrator: Where will it go now?
- Public: It'll go below the river.
- Celebrator: *Yi kodienu*: Shout after the flame of the incandescent wood-ember.
- Public: Tsu, tsu, tsu (shouting).

After this dialogue, each member of the clan has to dissolve the fire of hate in his heart. The action of shouting after the flame of the incandescent wood-ember is meaningful. The reconciliation is operated by means of the symbolic register of nature: a bit of straw (*kisengula mbanza*). Symbolically, one uses the bit of straw (*kisengula mbanza*) in order to shout after the evil (wrong). The celebrator will sprinkle water with a bit of straw (*kisengula mbanza*) in order to bless the assembly.

As has been stated above, the misanga is really a peacemaking ritual. And the vitality of this rite is expressed by the religious dimension of social peace: the reconciliation around the ancestors who taught their descendants to live in harmony with nature and all human beings.

PALAVER AND RECONCILIATION: AFRICAN ROOTS OF REASON IN FAITH

Generally speaking, the use of symbolism characterizes all the African traditional religions. And the Bantu, particularly, agree with the symbolic registers which refer to colours, nature, the animal world, the mineralworld and different rituals around birth, initiation (life-training), marriage, investiture of a chief, death and reconciliation around the ancestors.[30]

In this culture, we learn that the tortoise is the symbol of wisdom and prudence; that the leopard is the symbol of the sacred and authority

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[30] Kabasele Lumbala, *Symbolique bantu et symbolique chrétienne. Rencontre dans la liturgie* (Kinshasa: Editions Filles de Saint Paul, 1990), pp. 15- 27

(power); that the owl symbolizes sorcery, misfortune or bad luck; that "the papaya is beautiful but empty" and thus the symbol of false appearance, bad character, hypocrisy; that the earth is symbol of mother (mama), of the wife who is always there, at the same place; that the rain is the symbol of the masculine being, the fertilizing principle (which flies and returns like a wind); and that the tree (vegetal world) is essentially the symbol of human life, which takes roots in the profound earth (village) of the ancestors, develops many branches and leaves (symbol of population), etc.

The main feature of all these elements is essentially the colour. In the Bantu culture, there are three fundamental colours which are often used and from which might derive all other colours: the white, the red (ochreous), and the black. Their signification depends essentially on their use-context and on the colours with which they go.

Particularly, the white is extraordinarily rich in representation. The white colour is the symbol of feminization and fecundity. Concretely, the latex tree is the symbol of feminization because of the colour of its sap which resembles motherly milk; and as the latex colour is as white as the masculine semen—when it is normal—African Bantus think that the latex tree represents also fecundity.

In the presence of the red colour, the white colour becomes the colour of masculinity or innocence. In fact, red is often associated with blood (*menga*) which can evoke the spring of life, fecundity (menstrual), murder or hurt (wound).

In view of the color black, white symbolizes the day, in opposition to the night; or light in opposition to darkness, life in opposition to death, and finally fecundity in opposition to sterility. Thus, emphasizes Kabasele Lumbala, these two colours (white and black) are often associated in the rituals of initiation in order to mark the passage from death to life. In fact, black often springs from destruction, from burning, and thus from death; whereas white is associated with light, in the case of birth. The day rises when it is clear; it disappears when it is dark.

Among many Bantu tribes, when a person dies and leaves many children, one draws a white line from the middle of his chest to the navel. That is to mean: everybody wants that the dying person become the name-giver for his descendants. But if the dying person was sterile (childless), one draws in his corpse a dark line from the navel to the sacrum. By this gesture, the community regrets that this ancient member of the clan dies like a dry stick; so, the community will implore him to die forever. Furthermore, when the dark colour is used itself, it can symbolize hidden power, the power of germination or neutralization or hidden life full of vitality. The trilogy of the three colours (white, red and black) is the symbol of the totality of life.[31]

Practice makes perfect: nature is entirely the symbolic register in the Bantu dialogical rationality. The typical example is the work of the forger

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[31] *Ibid.*, p.17

wherein are mixed the four elements of creation: the earth, the air, the fire and the water. So, observes Hampate Ba, one will find in the corner of a blacksmith's shop a ball of earth and a little calabash (gourd) of water; the fire shines in the stove (cooking range); the air is the bellow. When the forger seizes the hammer, he strikes slightly the anvil while comparing the anvil to the wife and the hammer to the man. And he says: "I'm not *Maa Ngala* (God), I'm his representative; it's God who creates and not I. …" Then he takes water and an egg, and offers them to the anvil. He says: "This is your marriage portion (dowry)."[32]

From what has been said above, it appears clearly that the Bantu people are fond of their ancestral cultures, traditions, religious and magical faiths. Human life forms a whole with differently bounded aspects. A visitor is immediately impressed by the kindness of the Bantu people who exteriorise easily their spontaneous feelings of happiness, love, friendship and generosity. But this impression must be criticised because social conflicts often divide different members of the family. For example, if one says: "Good morning and how are you?" the answer will always be "very fine" and the subject will be quiet for a moment. After this speech-reserve ('*reserve langagière*'),[33] the subject will finally say: but. … This 'but' is the beginning of the social 'crisology' which sustains all of the system of reconciliation.

AFRICAN CHALLENGE FOR THE WORLD-PHILOSOPHICAL VILLAGE

In his message *Africae terrarum* (October 29, 1967), Pope Paulus VI had invited scholars and philosophers to profoundly study African traditional values:

- spiritual vision of life in the idea of the oneness of God,
- respect for human dignity,
- philosophy of community with the ancestors,
- respect for the function of the father of the family.[34]

In the light of *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II interpellated African scholars, theologians and philosophers on the relation between Reason and Faith in the era of globalization.[35] As was stated above, dealing with

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[32] Hampate Ba, "La tradition vivante," in *Histoire générale de l'Afrique* (Paris, 1980), p. 209.

[33] Ntambwe Tshimbulu Raphael, "'La réserve langagière comme procédé théorique de persuasion en Afrique'," in *Philosophie et Communication Sociale en Afrique, Recherches Philosophiques Africaines* 17, (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1989), pp. 137-143.

[34] *La Documentation Catholique*, n. 1505 (1967).

[35] *Ibidem*, col. 1951-1952.

reasoning in faith during this era of globalization must cope with the problem of "the Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order" (Samuel P. Huntington). In fact, the world is now functioning like a great village. Thereby, there is not only a new awareness of local cultures, but this calls also for a creative integration of diversity because it appears that globalization is a horizon of a new 'civil society' sustaining or disturbing local 'visions du monde' ('Weltanschauung').

Thus, the philosophical problem can be formulated as follows: is it possible to realize a new synthesis of different values in the search for the good life (as Walter puts it) without referring to a common point or scale of values?

On one level, looking for a common reference is another manner to account for a social operation (work) which cherishes and practices values of rationalities and faiths because there are different manners of reasoning and different conceptions of faith. So, reason and faith must be taken in their large sense involving the reason of faith and the faith of reason. On the other level, it appears that the act of 'reasoning in faith' makes possible the realization of a dialogic philosophy. On what grounds? With Martin Buber we can say that the primitive relation between 'I' and 'You' emphasizes the awareness of my existence as a 'man with man'.

According to us, the notion of the other seems to be the best common reference for reasoning in faith from all parts of the world. In fact, each one in African tradition is the child of the other (family, society, ancestors, God—Nzambi Mpungu) so that no one can consider the other man as an unknown person (without identity). This fundamental belief in mankind (inter-humanity) is not only the existential womb or matrix around which revolve human experiences, but after all is the dialogical rationality which, under the palaver tree, cherishes values of family and solidarity, values of responsibility and respect for differences, values of perseverance, firmness, steadiness, honesty, hard work, etc.

Nowadays, the world is functioning like a village wherein the problem of living together calls for a creative integration of diversity. For there is not only a new awareness of local "visions du monde," but as Samuel Huntington has said in his manner: a clash of civilizations is possible.[36] Therefore, observes George McLean, to live together in the global age, it is necessary to recognize "that the human person is essentially relational and hence our futures are so bound together as to require mutual recognition, respect and cooperation; that peace can be had only from the free pursuit of harmony; and hence that in a global age 'blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall possess the land'."[37] This philosophical address

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[36] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking the World* (New York: Simon &Schuster, 1996).

[37] George F. McLean, *Persons, Peoples and Cultures: Living together in a Global Age*, (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and

is, in other words, a typical symbolization of the real, for the problem of peacemaking is essentially a question of intersubjectivity. Moreover, the action of peacemaking presupposes a rational or existential engagement in the relational world[38] and a fundamental creed (having faith) about mankind.

"We are, then I am": the pre-eminence of the community on the individual did not mean social alienation of the subject because the I and the Thou as subject and person (Buber) are not reduced in the scale of personage (somebody) or to an anonymous subject. The existential principle "we are, then I am" is essentially socialization without depersonalization; it is identification of the person, recognition of one's specificity and the particularity of one's origin.[39] Therefore, our phenomenological description of the social foundations of the 'lived philosophy' reveals that reason and faith are so bound together in the African tradition that the palaver tree debate is both argumentative reasoning and recognition of the religious dimension of human life. The reason for this is: the African symbolism of reasoning in faith is not only a dialogical strategy of peacemaking under the palaver's tree, but constitutes the basic African challenge for a global philosophical village which should cherish the values of solidarity and humanism.[40]

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Philosophy, 2004), p. 207, especially "Epilogue : Perspectives for living together in a multi-cultural and multi-religious world," pp. 201-208.

[38] Many contemporary philosophers deal with this theme in their reflections, i.e., Martin Mordehai Buber (*I and Thou*), Gabriel Marcel (*Homo Viator)*, Emmanuel Mounier (The personalism), Matungulu Otene (Being with), Tshiamalenga Ntumba (Bisoite) etc.

[39] Tshungu Bamesa, *Le rôle de la communauté*, in *L'Education de la Jeunesse dans l'Eglise-Famille en Afrique* (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 2001), p. 19.

[40] Kamwiziku Wozol, '*La rationalité du village philosophique africain*, in *Philosophie Africaine : Rationalité et `Rationalités*, in *Recherches Philosophiques Africaines* 24 (Kinshasa: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1996).

CHAPTER X

THE KARMIC REWARD DOCTRINE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE CHINESE PEOPLE

XIA JINHUA

In these modern times, almost everything seems possible; nothing seems to be beyond the reach of science. In the century that has passed, science and technology indeed helped us to acquire great material prosperity, while nibbling away the influence of the religious sphere on human life. Despite this religion has been vital to people's spiritual life in the background of globalization. Buddhism is one of the important religions in the world and the world's Buddhist population is roughly 495 million. In fact, the Buddhist population is much higher than the data show because many Buddhists are not registered in temples. For instance, in China many people believe in Buddhism, but do not perform corresponding procedures in the temples and so their names are not found in the personal registers of the temples.

In addition, there are a lot of people affected by the karmic force and the doctrine of causation in China. More than half of these people are Buddhists. For this reason we should discuss the Karmic Reward Doctrine and its influence on Chinese people in this paper.

NATURE OF KARMA

Karma is a rule that is different from natural law; in Buddhism it is called the moral law of causation. Karma is a kind of mental ability that hides in one's consciousness, and is not seen. Karma arises from the vital force in one's body. One cannot easily recognize it in his body or consciousness because karma lies low in one's consciousness. Karma seeds will come out of its shell and grow when the conditions are ripe like an apple shoot sprouts from an apple seed when such conditions as sunshine, water and soil are present. Karma is operated by one's daily good and evil actions. It is not determined by gods or supernatural forces, but it is dependent on one's every word or deed. No external force can do anything to change the operation of karma, so people must not pray to God to change it. Some compare karma to a bank account. If one does a good virtuous act and is kind in his life, he has put good karma into his account. He has to continue depositing into this karma-bank frequently performing good acts so that good things happen in his life. If something adverse happens, he has no one to blame or complain about, because what happens in his life depends on what he has deposited in his karma-bank.

As stated above, one's karma slowly gets formed by the accumulation of the consequences of his thoughts, words and deeds. If one performs good actions in his life, he will be born in a happy family or meet with success in the future. If his thoughts and actions are evil in this life he will certainly be thrown into the earth-prison (*Naraka*) or live a very miserable life in the future. The main focus of karma theory is not that one attains reward or punishment after one's death, but rather that one should think, speak and act rightly in order to avoid hardship and pain at the end of one's life.

Sometimes, one's conduct not only affects oneself but also brings certain consequences on others. For example, the decision of the national leader to draw on manpower and material resources to build a big project has significant effects on the nation and its people. The individual conduct of the leader, besides affecting the people of the nation, involves them in the project, thereby giving birth to common karmas. New common karmas are formed this way. Common karmas are the main motive force that brings changes in the society. Common karmas and individual karmas act on each other, playing a role in society and nature. Their influence changes or sustains social arrangements and the natural environment. Likewise, karma influences the phenomenon of inequality which arises not only because of inheritance, environment and nature, but also because of karma, i.e., people's thoughts, words and conduct.

Thus, karmic force is one of the most important factors that determine the life of an individual: its success or failure. These karmas bear fruit when corresponding conditions are present. There are many such records of recompense brought about by karma in Chinese historical literature.

AS YOU SOW, SO YOU REAP

A man does good or evil year in year out, and these good or evil actions become karmas in his consciousness. Karmas reward good with good or evil with evil when the karma-force is ripe. The recompense of good or evil is: as a person sows, so shall he reap. *Liao-fan Four Teachings* by Yuan Huan in Ming Dynasty recorded this as follows:

> Before, there was an old grandmother who did good things at Putian in Fujian Province. The poor got cakes for free from the grandmother. She was never tired of the poor. One god wanted to test her, and became a Taoist. The Taoist asked for three pieces of cake every morning. After three years, he was moved by her honesty. One day, he told her: "I want to thank you for your cakes. There's a special land after your house. If you are buried there after you die, your descendants will have glory, splendor, wealth and rank.

After the grandmother died, her son Lin buried her in the backyard according to the Taoist's words. Just as the Taoist's predicted, in the grandmother's first descendants, there were nine men who were among the successful candidates in the test choosing government officials. Thereafter, there were many famous men in the grandmother's descendants for generations.

This event happened in Ming Dynasty because of Yuan Huang's honesty and kindness. Nevertheless, there were some exceptions to the recompense of good or evil in Chinese history, and these exceptions became anti-Buddhist when men attempted to vilify Buddhism. For example, Yen Hui, the best student of Confucius, died young; Chi, a bad-repute burglar, died of old age in Ch'un Ts'ew. These days, someone says that the grandmother's next-door neighbor died in her boots though she believed in Buddhism for over thirty years. Faced with the important problems in Buddhist theory, Rev. Hui Yuan in Eastern Chin Dynasty explained:

> The Buddhist sūtra said that the recompense of causation involved three kinds: Xianbao, Shengbao and Houbao. Xianbao is recompense in one's life; Shengbao is recompense at one's rebirth; Houbao is recompense in the second rebirth, the third rebirth or later rebirth when karmas are ripe. The recompense comes earlier or later because karmas ripen one after another.

Hui Yuan's words mean that good actions lead to pleasant and uplifting effects for the doer. Bad actions lead to unpleasant karmic results. There is no pleasant or unpleasant result but it is only a matter of time. When it is up, good or bad actions firmly lead to corresponding results. Three kinds of recompense in Buddhism reply reasonably to the question on whether good actions lead to unpleasant results and bad actions lead to pleasant effects. The retribution in one's life may result from one's earlier good or evil deeds: effects come about by the maturing of the karma-force in former lives. As all know, for some wrongdoers everything goes without a hitch. That is because their good karmas in the past time outweigh their bad actions. They do not recompense bad results until they have recompensed pleasant effects. If their evil karmas were more than good karmas, they would be punished by bad results at any time. The fact that many corrupt officials are brought to justice at present proves the truth of the Buddhist karma theory. As to those corrupt officials left now, they would be punished when the fruit of karma becomes ripe. There is a common saying: "the net of Heaven stretches everywhere, its meshes are wide, but no bad-doers can escape them." The reason that Buddhism advocates karma-reward is that people ought to control their desire and exercise restraint in their words and deeds. The more they get, the more they want and can never be satisfied.

THE INFLUENCE OF KARMIC REWARD DOCTRINE ON THE CHINESE

Retribution in the cause-and-effect doctrine has had a far-reaching effect on the Chinese. The influence is divided into positive and negative. With respect to the positive effect, the Karma-reward theory has played a very important role in establishing and improving traditional morality in China. Since Buddhism came to China, good and bad ideas in Buddhism were combined with retribution for a cause from the ancients in China, and formed Chinese characteristic recompense doctrines.

On the basis of absorbing the law of "suffering for one's own act" in Indian Buddhism, this recompense doctrine expanded the scope of receiving retribution for cause and effect to sons and grandsons. That is to say, the law of Buddhist retribution is that "every man receives the reward of his deeds." This karma-reward goes through the past life, the present life and the future lives. So a man's karmas do not disappear of their own accord but retribution for loose living does not always come in this life. "A father did bad deeds, and his evil fruit could not be avoided by his sons; a son did evil actions, and his karma-reward could not be avoided by his father." Obviously, this retribution has nothing to do with others besides the doer. Nevertheless, the retribution since the time before Ch'in in China is different from the Indian. On the one hand, "Heaven" is the executive of karma-reward; on the other hand, the subject receiving karma-reward is not only the doer but also his family. For example, people often sharply denounce evil-doers in order "to break off from their descendant." This statement clearly has an impact on the way people view their good and bad actions.

From the point of view of sociology, the Buddhist karmic reward doctrine had a negative impact on the Chinese in and through history. The most obvious expression is that men disabled at birth were given nick names: a man losing one eye or becoming blind would be given a nick name like *A One-Eyed Dragon* or *Blind*; a deaf or a dumb would be given a nick name: *Deaf* or *Mute*; a man who lost a leg would be given a nick name *Cripple*, and so on. A lot of children jeer at the disabled in the countryside. Judged from their point of view, the cause of a man being disabled at birth is his evil deeds in a former life, and what is worse, many men who were disabled at birth think so. This situation is more serious in some areas of belief in Buddhism. The father or the mother would say that he or she did bad actions to give birth to a disabled child that is punished by Heaven. So the disabled children are asked to stay at home and accept sympathy and help. They must not make a living independently and if they do their families would be reproached by neighbors. These neighbors think that there is nothing to be sympathetic about and there is no need to feel a sense of responsibility for the family of the disabled. Before being called "*The Disabled*," they used to be called "*Useless*." The word "*Useless*" fully shows that the abilities of the disabled are negated by the public. Owing to

this wrong idea, people do not pay attention to the rights and interests of the disabled, as for example, access to welfare facilities and jobs that are not too difficult for them, and so on. Healthy men are given jobs, the family or welfare department takes charge of the disabled. This idea has something to do with the deep influence of traditional ideas on the Chinese people. This is not Buddhism, but it has a real effect on many Buddhists.

THE BUDDHIST FAITH OF A NEW STYLE IN MODERN TIMES

The Buddhist faith of an ordinary Chinese occupies an important position in all Buddhist beliefs. People think that monks and nuns are persons who can perpetuate and promote Buddhist truth. This idea has been firmly established and it is not easily dispelled. At present, however, the way of life is completely different from that of the past. A new style of the Buddhist faith is slowly emerging as the traditional Buddhist faith undergoes some change as people become rich. The extravagant and ostentatious display at funerals, spontaneous singing and dancing in the temples, and varied dharma practices are some of the changes introduced in modern times. These practices were not found in Buddhism in the earlier times, but they have slowly become part of the Chinese Buddhist faith. Such changed practices have become so much part of Buddhist faith of the modern times that it is impossible for people (even for many monks and nuns) to distinguish between practices which belong to the traditional Buddhism and which belong to modern Buddhism. With these changes coming into Buddhism, it seems that the Chinese Buddhism is losing its dominant position and is unable to direct the Chinese Buddhists in the right belief. This new trend cannot be altered during this current period particularly because this period lacks genuine masters of Buddhism. The Buddhist circles are unable to do anything about this new style of Buddhist faith, but often agree to the changes proposed by it.

In some temples in Shanghai, the biggest city in China, there are female singers and dancers from the countryside of Suzhou, Hangchow and suburbs of Shanghai. Their performances manifest the innate character of the new Buddhist faith.

The performers are forty to fifty years old, wear uniform dresses and place embroidered towels on their heads. Their dresses are beautiful and made with bright colors. After going into the temple, they lay baskets down gently and dust their dress. Accompanied by cheerful music of Erhu and Kuaiban (or drum, gong and other musical instruments), they begin to sing and dance. Some forty to fifty in number and have a happy and smiling expression. They were recreational activists when they were young and danced the *"Yangge"* dance or *"Faithfulness"* word dance in *the Great Cultural Revolution*. After the Reform and Opening, their living conditions improved; there was no worry about their clothing and food; their children have grown up and married. To satisfy their need for religious belief, they rent a big bus to go to town before they begin farming in the summer or

after the autumn harvest and pray to Buddha for harvest and peace under the guidance of "*Xiangtou.*"

Buddhism has influenced people in these areas for a long time and the women certainly are grateful and return to the temple willingly. However, they are different from the *Kulapati* Buddhist (the Buddhist at home who accepts the five disciplines): there are no incense bags with seal from several temples, no special expression of respect to a noted temple or an abbot,—their faith is similar to other folk religions that include belief in ghosts and gods. They cannot and do not want to differentiate between Buddhism and folk religions. In short they think that if they do good and to pray to Buddhas they will receive good fruits. So they express their hopes in their own way, for example, burning incense, singing, dancing and beating drums.They go to both Buddhist monasteries and Taoist temples, even to *Chenghuangmiao* (a temple of a god of that place). It is important for them to be happy and so they do not care about particular forms of worship.

One is deeply moved by their warm-hearted performance though their singing is not too pleasant to the ear. What they sing are old folk dramas or out-of-date popular songs having themes, such as "husband and wife going home together" in the *Tianxianpei* (a popular drama of Anhui Province) or *the radiance of Mao Zedong*, *Qianfu* (a song praising workers who pull boats on the bank of Yangtse River). Sometimes the women beat a small wooden fish and wave a red silken lace, and at other times beat drums and gongs in celebration. The uproar of drums, gongs and songs is exciting to the people present. The whole temple is bustling and full of life with various assemblies for worship or preaching. The women obviously practiced before the performance and their moves are in good order. Their leader is a more positive member and trains them to be good performers in their spare time. Women from the countryside seem to be happier than women from the city. They could change the words of a song freely, even change "*the radiance of Mao Zedong*" into "*the radiance the Buddha* occasionally. They pay attention to this selflessly because of their faith and interest in recreation. In the earlier days they did not make a lot of noise in the temple. But now temples in Shanghai welcome all Buddhists or other visitors as long as they are not in a difficult situation. Comparatively speaking, Buddhism seems to be more tolerant and broad-minded than other religions.

Meanwhile, extravagant display of funeral ceremony and change of offerings show that the effect of Buddhism is further expanding. Although the common practice in society does not accord with the frugal idea of Buddhism, certain elements are connected to Buddhism. Let us look at the examples given below:

In the countryside of the Ninbo regions, if someone dies the body must be kept at home for at least three days. During that period, children and grandchildren wear a white cloth on their head, throw linen and stand as guard at the bier throughout the night. After relatives and friends bid

farewell to the dead, the dead body is cremated. They still invite monks for Buddhist affairs (i.e. prayers and worship). During the funeral procession, the eldest son, who holds the box of ashes of the dead with both hands, goes in front. All relatives, friends and neighbors follow. The family very warm-heartedly entertains the guests at dinner and spends much money (from several thousands to more than one hundred thousand RMB) on funeral arrangements. This offers much food for thought for the offerings are too many and expensive.

According to the news reports the Tianjin stores that sell related funeral articles are very prosperous. In addition to παπιερ-μ©χη≤ watch, bike, sewing machine, computer, sedan and villa, there is a bodyguard, private doctor, golf links and mistresses accompany the dead.

There is a Shili Darkness Street in Tianjin where a sedan sells for 4000 yuan (RMB); a golf link sells for 300 yuan; a villa sells for 30000 yuan with furniture, refrigerator, air conditioning, etc. The most popular fashion this year is a three-storied villa with a female secretary, a bodyguard, servants, swimming pool, a helicopter, credit card, travel checkbook and passport.

Now we look at stores in Xian, where we find not only paper TV, a golden watch and a washer, but also a sedan, a building with property rights, a vehicle that can travel to the Lower Hades leisurely with no definite purpose and a computer that can show online the palace of darkness. There are paper or foreign currencies for the dead to imitate the RMB or dollar in denominations from several thousands to some hundred million yuan (RMB or dollar). A few men in Peking sell stocks at a good price and claim that those stocks are included transactions in the stock markets of the Lower Hades.

Many temples open up a series of Dharma materials "introducing the light," e.g., Buddha pearl, bodyguard marks, hanging lamp, jade, opening for business of shops (or companies), etc. Originally called "opening the eyes" of an image, it was the special ceremony for celebrating a new Buddha or Bodhisattva statue which later was worshiped by Buddhists or others. Nowadays the ceremony uses these materials wrongly. These are good examples of social forces pushing Chinese Buddhism forward to "worldlization."

Strictly speaking, this sort of phenomenon is not connected to orthodox Buddhism and is a kind of folk faith. There is a Buddhist flavor in these phenomena. The practice of selling money, stocks of the Lower Hades or paper golf links to accompany the dead implies that the soul is not dead when a person dies. This is the theoretical foundation of the karmic retribution of evil actions in Buddhism. The ancient Chinese did not originally know things after one is dead and would just go into under Tai Mountain. Confucius said: "Not understanding birth, how can one understand death?" Again, "Ghosts and gods are respectable, but one should leave them far away." We cannot know things about ghosts and gods, but the Buddhist theory on heaven, earth-prison and transmigration in

the six ways broaden our knowledge. Since then people have been concerned about life after death and have been prosperous until now. This is the Buddhist influence that has penetrated the marrow of the Chinese nation.

In addition, Chinese are particularly keen on reforming Buddhism. This sort of reform is divided into two aspects: on the one hand, changing Buddhist doctrines by Buddhist philosophers; on the other hand, transforming Buddhist contents for realizing life's purpose, for example safety, freedom from disturbances and seeking the fortune to become rich. They pray to Buddha and Bodhisattvas to help them with good health and stability, so-called cars or bodyguard marks to "introduce the light" for safety or health needs; shops to "introduce the light" for acquiring great wealth. This kind of transformation is forming slowly and becoming popular. The action does not accord with the Buddhist intentions of little desire and easy satisfaction, but monks accede to persistent requests particularly from business people. These actions have become part of Buddhist ceremony and monks of other temples do the same. It is worrying that Buddhism develops so unrestrainedly, for not only would the great Buddhist wisdom be abandoned, but the people will also ignore the spirit of doing good and getting rid of evil if they go on this way. This is a great harm to Buddhism because monks follow worldly needs blindly. It is important and necessary that distinguished persons in Buddhist circles be fully alert and pay attention to this phenomenon.

HOLDING ONE'S DESTINY IN ONE'S OWN HANDS

As indicated above, preoccupation with compensation (e.g. a lot of funeral articles) after death is wrong and runs completely counter to the teachings of Buddhism. Notwithstanding this the doctrine of karmic reward is real. Buddhism draws more attention to one's words and deeds in his life. Man is not beyond his power to envisage karmic reward because his words and deeds act on each other between his life and his former lives. Doing good will bring good result or he has to pay for his evil behavior. One may ask: if every-thing is determined in man's life, is his life meaningless? It would obviously be wrong to think that we do not know how to do anything, how our free will can improve society and direct our moral and spiritual life.

The most fundamental factors affecting the power of karma are one's striving and wisdom. If one does not make great efforts, he cannot essentially change his wealth and his spiritual life. Not doing everything-possible to solve one's difficulties or make progress by hard struggle, one will never accomplish anything.

Although someone can temporarily overcome his original karma fruits by struggle, wisdom and other factors in special times and environments, he cannot avoid karma-reward sooner or later. Hence Buddhist sūtras remind people:

One's power of karma does not spontaneously disappear long after. He would suffer for his own act when it is ripe.

In fact, many great men could not avoid the phenomenon of karma in their lives.—We have examples in the persons of Confucius (B.C.551-B.C.479) in China and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) in India: Confucius ran out of grain in Ch'en and Chai, and was besieged by people in Kuang; Gandhi was assassinated, etc.

Being up against karmas, what should people do? According to Buddhism, firstly they should admit their wrongdoings, assume responsibility and carry out due punishment, since they had performed actions that are evil. If they avoid responsibility premeditatedly or always complain about conditions and other people, they would be doing wrong.

Secondly, they ought to learn from experience and work carefully. They should not say that an evil is small, so they may do it and that it is not worthy doing a good that is small. Thirdly, they should not lose heart at failures, but must try again. They must do good things and raise their level of morality for a long time in order to gain good fruit. Compared to the karmas of kings, other bad karmas are easier to be eliminated by repentance and doing good. As indicated earlier, Yuan Huan did good actions all his life to change his destiny. He believed a prophet named K'un because his many predictions had come true. Otherwise, Yuan Huan changed his destiny at the advice of a master of meditation. Therefore, he entitled his book: *Four Teachings of Liao-fan*. He explained in this book that doing good actions would change a person's destiny and gave his own experience as an example.

Everyone can perform evil actions, but so long as he learns from past failures to avoid future ones, he will always remain invincible. Confucius praised Yan Hui with the words "don't make the same mistake twice;" Mencius said, "Being ashamed of oneself shutting out bravery." All those who are praised are men who have corrected their errors.

How can one correct his misdeed? First of all, one ought to feel ashamed of his evil behavior. Man has many traits in common with animals, but man is superior to animals because he does something carefully, thinks deeply and sees far ahead into the future. Humans are willing to put up with pain for their happiness in the future although the happiness is far off. A man can become a Buddha (or a saint), if he regards all beings (or things) as his compatriots (or friends). However, if a man becomes bad, he would lose his nature and kill lives more cruelly than floods and beasts of prey. Fortunately man is ashamed of doing bad actions and this prevents him from doing evil continuously; rather it goads him to change from bad to good.

Secondly, a man ought to be afraid of doing evil thing, because though other human beings may not know about his evil deeds, gods and ghosts between heaven and earth clearly understand them in the dark. An honest government officer in the Song Dynasty refused bribes. The briber told him: "Nobody knows it." The officer answered: "Who says nobody

knows? Heaven and earth know it; gods and ghosts know it; you and I know it. I don't see why you think that nobody knows it!" An ancient says: "Don't do something bad even though nobody knows it in the dark."

Thirdly, everyone ought to pull himself together. A man does not correct his error because he would muddle in the old slipshod way of trusting in chance. Therefore, he should make up his mind to change his thought, not to be procrastinating, hesitant and waiting negatively in order to avoid problems in his life.

The great Confucian Ch'eng Hao in the Song Dynasty liked to hunt when he was young. After he learned Buddhism and Taoism for over ten years, he did not like his hunting habit. He thought that he had exterminated the habit of hunting and he told his friend Chang Tsai about this. Chang Tsai answered that he had not uprooted the habit, but only inhibited it. Ch'eng Hao was not convinced. After some years, he went by chance through a mountain to see many people hunting, men and horses were all shouting. He could not help feeling very happy and believed in what Chang Tsai said. This story shows that it is not easy to uproot the errors of desire, hate and folly.

How does a man correct his errors thoroughly and make a fresh start? A genuine correction of a person's failure begins in the mind. Evil words and deeds come from one's mind. So one ought to begin at the mind to root out these poisonous weeds.

* * *

The karmic force exists in one's body regardless of whether one believes in Buddhism or does not, but the karmic reward doctrine restricts Buddhists' actions. That is why Sakyamuni Buddha used every possible means to persuade people to believe in Buddhism. Of course, karmic force theory is not a nostrum to cure all ill. Its effect is limited because there is no elixir in the world as of now. However, if more people believe in Buddhism, it is possible that there will be more peace all over the world. Buddhism, as a kind of ancient religion, has been propagating the recompense of cause and effect for over two thousand years. It is by doing good that people save themselves and bring benefit to others. This thought has had a great effect on the Chinese people for a long time. It is essential to enhance personal moral character, to safeguard the social order and national stability.

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CHAPTER XI

WITTGENSTEIN'S NOTION OF FORM OF LIFE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

TRAN TUAN PHONG

INTRODUCTION

The notion of language-games and form of life play a very important role in Wittgenstein's later works. With the introduction of these notions Wittgenstein wants to move to a new account of linguistic meaning. Words have meaning rather than picture reality—through the contextual employment of the set of linguistic and non-linguistic settings of a human community. In contrast with the direct correspondence between language and reality through a single logical form, Wittgenstein moves toward a polymorphic and activity-based account of meaning. Our language cannot denote a *meaning* independently of the context of our cultural traction, our human form of life.

With these notions Wittgenstein wants to show that human beings use language in a variety of ways, to talk about science, religion, art and so on. Science is only one way to talk about the world, only one of countless numbers of 'language games' humans use in their life. Scientific discourse is no longer given a monopoly of legitimacy, but is just one language-game among many (including religious discourse) and as a consequence, religious discourse is not to be judged by scientific standards.

Wittgenstein points out that all human beings participate in human forms of life, of which there can be many. However, no matter how varied the expressions, still is a fundamental shared space if these beings are human. Though there are varied cultural and historical expressions of capacities and sensitivities characteristic of the humans, this is as far as they share in a human form of life; hence what they do cannot be completely foreign and opaque. What enables us to understand or translate language must be something that such languages have in common. Wittgenstein identifies this common element as the common behavior of humankind, a horizon enclosing these different languages (PI, 206). Wittgenstein also notes that language-games and forms of life are dynamic and changing: " It is a fact of experience that human beings alter their concepts, exchange them for others when they learn new facts; when it this way what was formerly important for them becomes unimportant and vice versa" (Z, 352). So from the perspective of the "common behavior of humankind" and the openness to change in the notion of form of life we can be positive in

reaching mutual understanding in intercultural dialogues between various cultures worldwide.

THE NOTION OF LANGUAGE-GAME

The term "language-game" starts to play its role in Wittgenstein's later works relating to his account of meaning. Wittgenstein, notably in the *Philosophical Investigations,* thought that linguistic meaning should not be determined on the model of the name and the object, as it was depicted in his famous picture theory of meaning in the *Tractatu*s, but in accord with its multifarious functions, by its use in language.

In contrast to the *Tractatus*, which offered a unitary account of the essence of language, in the *Philosophical Investigations* attention was drawn to the multiplicity of very different kinds of language-games or systems of human communication.

> And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten. … Here the term 'language-game' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life (PI, 23).

We use language in a variety of ways, to talk about science, religion, art and so on. Science is only one way to talk about the world, only one of countless numbers of 'language games' humans use in their live.

The same point is made with a different image: that words are tools: Wittgenstein considered language to be an instrument, a tool, and a language has been learned only when we can play the various games that constitute the language concerned (PI, 569).

> Think of the tools in a tool-box: There is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a rule, a glue-pot, glue, nails and screws. —The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects (PI, 11).

Language games are not fixed or limited; there are countless ones that come to be and cease to be (PI, 23). Through such an image, Wittgenstein offers a conception of language as consisting of many varied linguistic enterprises rather than a uniform description of facts. The image repudiates the idea of a single necessary form of language. It introduces the idea of many, varied, and interrelated units of sense imbedded in a broader context of life.

Language-Games and the Essence of Language

Wittgenstein's concept of "language-game" is clearly to be set over and against the idea of language as a system of meaningful signs that can be considered in abstraction from the actual employment of that system. Instead of approaching language as a system of signs with inherent meaning, we are prompted to think of it in the lives of those who speak it. One consequence Wittgenstein derived from the analogy between language and games was a rejection of a widespread assumption that the meanings of words are fixed by some essential feature that all instances have in common. As we have seen, in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein tried to delineate the essence of symbolic representation in his doctrine of the general propositional form. According to this all propositions depict possible states of affairs and are of the form 'Things are thus-and-so'. By contrast, in later works Wittgenstein introduced the concept of language with the help of a series of language-games. When we look at these games, we notice that they are united not by a single common defining feature, but by a complex network of overlapping and crisscrossing similarities, just as the different members of a family resemble each other in different respects. "Language" is a term that cannot be defined because it has no essence. The problem was raised by Wittgenstein when he pointed out that someone might object to his use of the term "language-game" because he had not said what the essence of a language-game is nor, or for that matter, what the essence of language itself is. What is common to all the activities included within the concept of language? Wittgenstein answered:

> Instead of producing something common to all that we call language, I am saying that these phenomena have no one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all,—but that they are related to one another in many different ways. And it is because of this relationship, or these relationships, that we call them all "language" (PI, 65).

The word "language" is not, according to Wittgenstein, the name of a single phenomenon. Rather, it is the name of a class of an indefinite number of language-games. Wittgenstein drew an analogy between language and an ancient city to help in explaining what he meant:

> Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses with additions from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform houses (PI, 18).

In other words, new forms of language or new language-games come into existence while others become outdated and are forgotten. It is important to realize, however, as Hartnack pointed out in his commentary on Wittgenstein, that "the members of the class of all language-games have no ... property in common" (Hartnack, 71).

One could ask the question: "What is a game?" If language involves just the use of words as labels, then there is a definite answer to this question. If, however, the term "game" is used in a variety of ways, it could be that there is no "object" or essential nature to which the term calls attention. Is there something common to the activities that we call games? Wittgenstein answered:

> Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games." I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic-games, and so on. What is common to them all?—Don't say: "There *must* be something common, or they would not be called 'games'"—but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all.—For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all,* but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that (PI, 66).

After examining various games and showing that, in comparing various games to one another, that many common features drop out while others appear, Wittgenstein concluded that "the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and crisscrossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" (PI, 66).

Board-games have some similarities with card-games but also many differences. What of ball-games and card-games? Is "winning" an essential feature of a game? Consider a child throwing a ball against a wall. Is "winning" and "losing" a feature in this example? What about competition? Is this essential to a game? Consider the game of solitaire. Many other examples could be cited but the point that Wittgenstein is making is that the term "game" has a variety of uses and refers to no outside "object" or essential nature.

The concept that Wittgenstein introduced to characterize the similarities among games is "family resemblances." He explained this by saying "the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, color of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way," so he concluded that "'games' form a family" (PI, 67). So do the various uses of a word, Wittgenstein argued, and to search for common meanings of a word is as productive as looking for the essential feature of games. The only way we can make sense out of the meanings of a word is by examining language as it is used in all the ways it is used.

Language-Game as a Linguistic Context

An important function of language-games is to provide a specific *linguistic* context within which words and propositions are used. Words cannot be taken out of context or examined in isolation. In themselves, independent of all contextual reference, removed from their particular language games, words have no meanings; they derive their meaning from such linguistic contexts. Words do not stand alone in relation to objects but are mutually dependent, interrelated, and form linguistic matrixes. "The concept is at home in the language games" (Z, 391). "The sentence gets its significance from the system of signs, from the language to which it belongs…. As a part of the system of language, one may say, the sentence has life" (BB, 5).

Meanings are contextually dependent; the meaning of words is governed by the language-game in which they are embedded. To understand a word or concept, one must recognize the sorts of linguistic circumstances involved. One has learned the meaning when one can extensively play the various appropriate games. In reconsideration of the *Tractatus* account, Wittgenstein acknowledges that we do tend to assimilate all words, irrespective of their context and try to explain their meaning through reference to the objects they represent. But in doing so, we fail to see that words cannot be understood outside of the linguistic contexts in which they are involved. As G.E. Moore writes:

> About the meaning of single words, the positive point on which he [Wittgenstein] seemed most anxious were, I think, two, namely (a) something which he expressed by saying that the meaning of any single word in a language is "defined," "constituted," "determined"… by the "grammar rules" with which it is used in that language, and (b) something which he expressed by saying that every significant word or symbol must essentially belong to a "system" and (metaphorically) by saying that the meaning is its "place" in a grammar system (Hallet, 77).

Language-Game as Rule-Governed Activity

On Wittgenstein's account, the concept of language-games points to the rule-governed character of language. This does not entail strict and definite systems of rules for each and every language-game, but points to the conventional nature of this sort of human activity. A set of rules in a language-game shows its regularity. Although language no longer has the precision of an exact calculus, it does have an inherent working order. The structure of language is constituted by rules defining the appropriate use, and therefore the meaning, of the words. According to Wittgenstein, to

learn the meaning of a word is to learn to follow rules, to use words in regular rule-governed patterns, to master such techniques.

We say: if a child has mastered a language—and hence its application—he must know the meaning of words. He must, for example, be able to attach the name of the color to a white, black, red, or blue object without the occurrence of any doubt (OC, 522).

The rules of meaning constituting language-games are rarely explicitly known, but stay embedded in the practice of the games themselves. So learning to play these games is carried out by learning the practices of the games without having to articulate the rules. Meaning is not something distinct that can be considered apart from the description of the way in which particular expressions are used by speakers in language-games. In speaking a language, we act in accordance with certain rules "'All steps are already taken' means: I no longer have any choice. The rule, once stamped with particular meaning, traces the lines along which it is to be followed through the whole of space" (PI, 219). But Wittgenstein also said that rules can be altered with time. Moreover, they always entail the possibility of varied interpretations, and what finally gives language its stability is agreement in the interpretation of the rules. And that agreement "is not agreement in opinions, but in form of life" (PI, 241).

Wittgenstein does not think that language is simply something based on rules, but rather on a language competence that can be understood as consisting of human freedom to formulate such rules again and again. So no language-games rules are simply imposed on us, although we are following some generally accepted rules and only sometimes make use of our ability to formulate new rules. As Wittgenstein says "new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten" (PI 23). Rules are linked with circumstances that justify their use, with the practice and behavior of a community sharing a language. The meaning of a statement is determined by rule-confirming usage, and this, in turn, gets it significance from broader matrices of human activity.

From Language-Games to Form of Life

Wittgenstein's comparison of language to game, as Kenny says:

> ... was not meant to suggest that language is a pastime, or something trivial: on the contrary, it was meant to bring out the connection between the speaking of language and non-linguistic activities. Indeed the speaking of language is part of communal activity, a way of living in society which Wittgenstein calls a 'form of life'. … It is through sharing in the playing of language games that language is connected with our life (Kenny, 163).

So Wittgenstein introduces the concept of language-games in order to bring into prominence the fact that language functions within the active, practical lives of speakers; that its use is inextricably bound up with non-linguistic behavior which constitutes its natural environment.

When language-games are put within the social context of a given human community, language-games are interwoven with other non-linguistic activities and must be understood only within this context. "To imagine a language means to imagine a form of life" (PI, 19). So a form of life can be understood as a social formation, the totality of communal activities into which language-games are embedded. By using the notion 'form of life' Wittgenstein wanted to pay attention to the fact that human activities, their language are embedded in the significantly structured lives of groups of active human agents, bounded together into a community by a shared set of complex, language-involving practices. Coming to share, or to understand the form of life of a community means mastering the intricate language-games that are essential to its characteristic practices.

It would be said in a sense that the term "form of life" is used by Wittgenstein to emphasize the non-linguistic elements of language-games. Language for Wittgenstein is not just a homogenous collection of words and rules, but exists as a sort of sub-languages which, in turn, do not consist just of words and rules but, as Wittgenstein says, "of language and the action into which it is woven" (PI, 7). More importantly, according to Black, form of life marks a conceptual shift in Wittgenstein's work away from the quasi-formalism of the early use of 'language-game'. Black argues that language-games were initially introduced to emphasize the rule-governed nature of discourse, but in the process of the development of his thought Wittgenstein became unsatisfied with the idea that rules explain use. Wittgenstein moved, Black suggests, away from a narrow concept of game explained by its formal rules or grammar, towards an ever broader conception which came to include more and more of the context of the language. Wittgenstein's final position, says Black, although still marked by:

> traces of the older, narrow conception, was really quite as odds with this conception. By the time *On Certainty* was composed, 'grammar' included even the ungrounded acceptance of what Moore called "a common sense view of the world," the long history of the earth, for example (Black, 329).

So according to Black, Wittgenstein never fully developed this new idea, which explains the paucity of reference to 'form of life' in his later writings. His argument is that Wittgenstein realized that language-games were not designated for what he now wanted them to do, but he never really worked out just what that was. The term 'form of life' simply indicates

"that there is much more to be looked at, much important territory still to explore" (Black, 330).

So the conceptions of language-games and form of life are closely related, but quite not identical. The concept "form of life" is broader than that of language-game, which, as Black suggests, is probably a relic from an earlier, more formal position. Baker and Hacker seem to hold the same position. They point out that "the notion form of life is connected with that of a language-game, but it is more general and elemental. A form of life is a given unjustified and unjustifiable pattern of human activity (part of human natural history" (PI, 25). It rests upon, but is not identical with, very general pervasive facts of nature. It consists of shared natural and linguistic responses, of broad agreement in definitions and in judgment, and of corresponding behavior (Baker and Hacker, 48).

TWO ASPECTS OF THE NOTION "FORM OF LIFE"

The concept "form of life" can be understood either very broadly or more narrowly. In the broad understanding, the form of life is known as a characteristically human form of life owing to the ways in which human beings exist and act and the natural conditions in which they live. Thus, simply as a human one can be said to participate in some very general form of life. In this way, we differentiate between humans, animals, and plants. Some activities are so characteristic to human beings that imagining them to be different would entail imagining a radically different kind of being. In the absence of certain kinds of regularity and constancy of natural phenomena, certain human activities would be rendered impossible or insignificant. There appears to be some constancy within the external world and the human way of being that allows for a characteristically human form of life, as distinct from the form of life of other beings.

In another reading, we can find in Wittgenstein's works a narrow sense of form of life. Within the human ways of being, there exist varieties of human activities linking with particular historical, social and environmental conditions. Human persons may participate in numerous forms of human life.

The First Understanding of "Form of Life"

So far, forms of life distinguish two categories of differences. First, Wittgenstein differentiates the human form of life from other non-human forms of life. Certain characteristic human traits and activities separate human beings from cats or fish or any other animal and make up our human form of life. "Forms of life"also refers to differences within the human form of life. Making the concept work in this dual role helps us to understand two facets of human beings. The former distinction, between human and non-human forms of life, stresses what is common among human beings, whatever their differences which arise because of some non-essential,

accidental features. The latter distinction, among human forms of life, stresses precisely these differences, which can, at times, be very great. The differences can be so great that we are unable to find much in common at all with other groups of human beings. The broader of the two distinctions which the concept form of life makes is between human and non-human forms of life. A clear example of this use occurs in part two of the *Philosophical Investigations*: on page 174 Wittgenstein wrote: "… Can only those hope who can talk? Only those who have mastered the use of language, that is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated form of life."

This passage can be seen as the culmination of a theme which begins early in the *Investigation*s, with the use of another important concept, natural history. Wittgenstein says that "commanding, questioning, recounting, chatting, are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing" (PI, 25). Here our natural history is what we share in common with all human beings. These abilities, which for Wittgenstein are paradigmatic of the ability to use language, distinguish us from animals who "simply do not talk. Or ... better: they do not uselanguage" (PI, 25).

The point to stress here is not that animals do not communicate. After all, dogs bark and whales use a complex system of songs. The point is more subtle than this. There is a qualitative difference between what animals do when they communicate and what we do when we use language. Part of the difference lies in the fact that we can take our ability to communicate much further. "A dog believes his master is at the door. But can he also believe his master will come the day after tomorrow? And what can he not do here?" (PI, 174). This "what" is the complicated part of the analysis of forms of life. It does not seem to be the case that the dog simply lacks either the language or the mental capacity.

Consider the case where the animal has the ability to use language. Presumably, to have language means to have at least a minimal level of mental ability. But Wittgenstein claims that "if a lion could talk, we could not understand him" (PI, 223). Here the barrier of language is overcome, and yet, we still cannot understand the lion's form of life. We cannot communicate with him. I do not think this means that we cannot understand anything at all about the lion's life, but much will remain a mystery because of the vast differences between lions and humans.

An important aspect of this qualitative difference has to do with the generative capacity of our language. Our ability to communicate differs from other animals in that our language is open ended. We are not restricted to a set of communicative signals. Animals who systematically communicate with each other do so with set patterns. Our human language is characterized by the ability to use words in new ways, to construct new phrases and sentences out of old words.

A more complete explanation of the differences between human beings and animals with respect to language may lie in the notion of the

complexity, which becomes possible with the generative capacity. Our complexity of expression, thus, allows us to have a complicated form of life. This seems to be the significance of pointing to phenomena, such as hoping. In Volume two of the *Last writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*, Wittgenstein identifies pretending as one of these phenomena: The question is: When would we say of a child, for instance, that he is pretending? What must he be able to do for us to say that? Only where there is a relatively complicated pattern of life do we speak of pretence (PI. 40).

This notion of complexity also appears in Volume One of the *Last Writings*, where Wittgenstein says that "feigning and its opposite exist only where there is a complicated play of expressions. Just as false or correct moves only exist in a game" (PI, 946). A well-known, and fairly humorous expression of this idea occurs in the *Philosophical Investigations*:

> Why can a dog not simulate pain? Is it too honest? Could one teach a dog to simulate pain? Perhaps it is possible to teach it to howl on particular occasions as if it were in pain, even when it is not. But the surroundings which are necessary for this behavior to be real simulation are missing (PI, 250).

The real point of this passage is the last sentence. Again, this points to the qualitative difference in forms of life. The ability is not necessarily absent in dogs to manifest signs of being in pain, even if they are not in pain. But the important part of the equation, the context, is missing.

This context brings up a distinction which Wittgenstein continuously appeals to, that is, the distinction between the inner and the outer. We can understand the concept of form of life as referring to certain social activities. But in the above example what seems to be lacking is something inner. What the dog lacks is an intention to deceive, to simulate. Wittgenstein also uses the notion of form of life to handle this important aspect of human action. Wittgenstein does not deny the existence of the inner (Cf. PI, 306-308). However, the inner, certain mental states, get their significance from their place in the context of human social environments. This is what it means to say that "an 'inner process' stands in need of an outward criterion" (PI, 580). In Volume Two of the *Last Writings*, which focuses exclusively on the inner and the outer, Wittgenstein expresses this same idea by saying "what goes on within also has meaning only in the stream of life." Here the concept "stream of life" not only stresses the differences between human beings and other beings, but also the similarities among human beings. We all share some basic characteristics which make up what Wittgenstein calls "the common behavior of mankind" (PI, 206). It is the existence of these common characteristics which make it possible for us to recognize what other beings are doing with language. This common behavior "is the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language" (PI, 206). Languages may differ vastly, and yet we can

still understand people's activities because we understand this common behavior and natural history.

Much of *Philosophical Investigations* can be seen in light of the remark Wittgenstein makes concerning this natural history (PI, 415): What we are really supplying are remarks on the natural history of human beings; we are not contributing curiosities however, but observations which no one has doubted, but which have escaped remark only because they are always before our eyes.

It is appropriate at this time to ask precisely what this commonality is that we share with other human beings. It is surely a complicated mix of biological, as well as psychological, features. As Gertrude Conway puts it, "there is a constellation of natural ways of being human" (Conway, p. 60). As we have seen, Wittgenstein interprets certain phenomena as uniquely human. Although he only enumerates a few of these, perhaps he has in mind a rather large set of what he calls "modes of this complicated form of life" (PI, 174). These modes do not simply include the language-games we play, although they are a part of this notion. After all, these language-games "are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing" (PI, 25).

Our human form of life, however, goes much deeper than simply using language or playing particular language-games. As Wittgenstein points out in his "*Lecture on Aesthetics*," "if you came to a foreign tribe, whose language you didn't know at all and you wished to know what words corresponded to 'good, fine, etc'; what would you look for? You would look for smiles, gestures, food, toys" (p. 2). It, perhaps, seems curious at first that Wittgenstein includes these last two items, but upon reflection this makes sense. Far from being objective artifacts in the world, these items obtain much of their significance from their context, from how they are used, and, as such, are part of our natural history as well.

The Second Understanding of the Notion 'Form of Life'

We have been discussing the distinction between human and non-human forms of life in order to clarify what traits human beings share. Yet, not everything Wittgenstein says on this subject points to what is common. Many examples hinge on vast differences between groups of human beings. Here the distinction that Wittgenstein wishes to make is between groups of human beings. There is no question, in many of these examples, of the humanness of the subjects. However, they live their lives differently than we do and, as such it can be said that they have a different form of life.

We discover this in quite ordinary circumstances, for example, when we visit a foreign country. Here the people we encounter share our human form of life, and yet, it may be the case that "we do not understand the people. And not because of not knowing what they are saying to themselves. We cannot find our feet with them" (PI, 223). This passage reinforces the point that a common form of life includes more than a shared

language. We can be lost among these people "even given a mastery of the country's language" (PI, 223).

That there are differences in human ways of living is a recurring theme in Wittgenstein's writing. I would contend that part of "what has to be accepted," part of what is given, is the existence of these differences in human ways of living. "For, here life would run on differently. What interests us would not interest them" (Z 388). This theme is present in Volume Two of the *Last Writings* as well:

> But now imagine you were to come into a society in which, as we want to say, feelings can be recognized with certainty from appearances (we are not using the picture of the inner and the outer). But wouldn't that be similar to coming from a country where many masks are worn into one where no, or fewer, masks are worn? (Thus perhaps from England to Ireland.) Life is just different there (p. 28).

This last statement is perhaps surprising, because we tend to think of forms of life as very different. The differences which come readily to mind might be like those between the Orient and the Occident. We are not likely to think of the differences between the English and the Irish as large enough to constitute a difference in form of life. Here Wittgenstein's example is instructive. The differences which do exist between the English and the Irish may in fact be enough to count each as a different form of life. On this point Wittgenstein is unclear because he provides us with no sharp boundary. We may, in fact, be unable to draw one here. As Wittgenstein continuously points out, many of our concepts do not have sharp boundaries.

Another indication of where we draw the line between forms of life occurs in his book *On Certainty*. What we take to be certain, as well as what is susceptible to doubt, can be used to distinguish different human forms of life. An important metaphor in this respect is what Wittgenstein calls our "picture of the world." Presumably, we may judge whether a form of life is different from our own by comparing our picture of the world with theirs, as Wittgenstein does in his book*On Certainty*:

> [262.] I can imagine a man who had grown up in quite special circumstances and had been taught that the earth came into being 50 years ago, and therefore believed this. We might instruct him: the earth has long ... etc. We should be trying to give him our picture of the world. This would happen through a kind of persuasion. For us statements such as "the earth existed long before my birth" form a particular picture of the world. Doubting one of these propositions would call the entire structure into

question. "If I wanted to doubt the existence of the earth long before my birth, I should have to doubt all sorts of things that stand fast for me (OC, 234).

FORM OF LIFE AND RELIGION

As we can see in his later works, especially in the *Philosophical Investigations*, language no longer functions in a uniform manner depicting the facts of reality. From now on, language is conceived as an indefinitely extendable collection of linguistic practices with no essence and no 'general form'. Scientific discourse is no longer given monopoly of legitimacy, but is just one language-game among many (including religious discourse). As a consequence, religious discourse is not to be judged by scientific standards. So when Wittgenstein turns his mind to religion, his intention is not that of critiquing its claims to meaningfulness. It is, rather, to elucidate the character of religious belief. This is achieved by careful attention to the way that religious language works in practice.

Religion as a Language-game

Wittgenstein views religion and religious belief from the perspective of the language-game analysis. This picture of language asserts that the meaning of words and phrases are determined by the context, or game, in which it plays a role. Hence, what is meant by 'belief' or 'truth' is different in the religious language-game than in the science language-game. Wittgenstein argues in his *Lectures and Conversations* that the depth grammar that regulates the religious language-game is different than the depth grammar that regulates science. He also postulates that as long as the primary goal of a particular language-game is different from another, they are immune to criticism from each other. Science, which is concerned with determining how the world is ordered, has a distinctly different goal in mind than the religious language-game, which is concerned with questions of an existential nature. The religious language-game has merit and is immune from science because it asks important questions that science is unable to touch. It serves a human need that is unable to be fulfilled anywhere else.

What then is the nature of the religious language-game?; what sort of activity takes place in this game? As in all language-games the meaning of the words within the religious language-game is determined by the language-game itself. The word 'belief' is important both in the religious language-game and the science language-game. Where those who have attempted to prove or disprove God's existence rationally have failed, one is assuming that the word 'belief' is identical in both language-games. This is clearly not the case. Belief in science is something completely different than belief in religion. When someone says "I believe that the world is not flat" something different is being said than "I believe in God, the Father

Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth." Under the guise of the referential theory of language, which Wittgenstein asserted in his earlier work the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the meaning of the word 'belief' would be meaningful only if it referred to an object or fact in the world. This theory does not allow for the same word to have different meanings depending on the context. Wittgenstein's language-game analysis avoids this problem and offers an alternative that truly mirrors the way in which language operates in the world. It follows from this that words in different language-games could have different meanings. Therefore, the word 'belief' can be demonstrated to have a different meaning in the scientific language-game than in the religious language-game. If it can be shown that these are different versions of 'belief' and that the rational justifications for God's existence or non-existence rest upon a scientific meaning of 'belief,' then it can be shown that these proofs play no role and are irrelevant to the religious language-game.

In his *Lecture on Religious Belief* Wittgenstein calls this the "extraordinary use of the word 'believe'. One talks of believing and at the same time one doesn't use 'believe' as one does ordinarily" (LRB, 59). Wittgenstein's reason for calling attention to the use of the term 'belief' in the religious context is to cancel our inclination to treat it as 'intellectual assent'. To believe religiously is not to accept certain propositions as true. Rather it is to be passionately committed to a way of living. Wittgenstein emphasizes the role which religious beliefs play in the conduct of our lives. This means that our relation to religious commitments is not epistemological but practical. In the face of a total lack of evidence, in the usual sense, people are still willing to risk everything (LC, 54). This aspect of his view is brought clearly into focus by connecting Wittgenstein's task of 'passionate commitment to a system of reference' to the notion of belief as 'believing in'. Religious belief is not based on rationality, but on how one sees the world. Here Wittgenstein makes a key differentiation between himself and Kierkegaard. It was Kierkegaard's claim that holding a religious belief was irrational. Wittgenstein develops the position that a belief in the religious language-game is not rational or irrational. Rationality does not play a role in the religious language-game. Speaking about how science and religion differ on this point of rationality, Wittgenstein notes that; "You could also say that where we are reasonable, they are not reasonable—meaning they don't use reason here" (*Lectures*, 59). If this point is granted, then at any juncture if science uses reason as grounds for an objection, it must conform to the depth grammar of that particular language-game, for if it does not it cannot be spoken of meaningfully.

For Wittgenstein, the religious believer is participating in a unique form of language or language-game when he is speaking of religious matters. The ideas, concepts and claims of the religious believer cannot be fully understood by someone who is not participating in the same language game or form of life as is the religious believer. The claims of the religious

language-game cannot be subjected to the rules of another language game, such as science. To attempt to do so would be absurd. Wittgenstein has studied and observed different types of linguistic framework. He has found that in some cultures there may exist different meanings for the same word. This leads him to believe that there are different usages of language, with different meanings. He believes that a single person can enter into many different language-games in his lifetime. Some examples of these games are science, sports, and religions. So when a person claims that something exists, it means one thing in the religious form of life and another in the scientific form of life. Science and religion are two different language-games and one should not submit the claims of one system of thought to the criteria or rules of another language-game or system of thought. Neither is in any greater need for justification or support than the other is.

As we mentioned earlier, in the introduction to the notion of language-game, Wittgenstein intends to show the diverse range of linguistic phenomena, the way in which speaking is connected with particular activities, and the rule-governed nature of those activities. Each of these aspects comes to the fore when religion is itself described as a language-game.

The rules of religious discourse are found in theology, which as D. Z. Phillips says, 'describe what it makes sense to say to God and about God. In short, theology is the grammar of religious discourse'. Or as Wittgenstein says:

> Essence is expressed by grammar. …
> … Grammar tells what kind of object anything is.
> (Theology as grammar) (PI, 371, 373).

Here, the idea of theology is that of a rule-making, rule-enforcing discipline, governing what is legitimate and illegitimate to say within the language-game of religion.

As a specific language-game, religion is not a system of speculative thought, but is, rather, something a person does, a whole way of living. Understanding of religious practice cannot be achieved purely by analysis of words and sentences because, as Wittgenstein emphasizes in *Zettel*, words without use are dead, that employment somehow gives a word meaning. "How words are understood is not told by words alone (Theology)" (Z, 114). And "Practice gives the words their sense" (CV, 85).

Religion as a language-game arises out of social activities in which it has its home and within which it gains its coherence and intelligibility. So religion cannot be understood fully without being putting in its social context, for to understand religion fully is to engage in religious life. It is also illegitimate to criticize religion according to the standards and objectives of another language-game. Part of what Wittgenstein means by saying that religious belief is a 'culmination' of a way of life is that religious belief, as opposed to belief in ordinary empirical events, often

arises as a result of a particular kind of upbringing or education. It is the result of 'life' and so one can be led to such beliefs only in the course of being brought up, persuaded, or converted to follow a particular kind of life: the religious one.

> A proof of God's existence ought really to be something by means of which one could convince oneself that God exists. But I think that what believers who have furnished such proofs have wanted to do is give their 'belief' an intellectual analysis and foundations, although they themselves would never have come to believe as a result of such proofs. Perhaps one could 'convince someone that God exists' by means of a certain kind of upbringing, by shaping his life in such and such a way.
>
> Life can educate one to a belief in God. And *experience*s too are what bring this about; but I don't mean visions and other forms of sense experience which show us the 'existence of this being', but, e.g., sufferings of various sorts. These neither show us God in the way a sense impression shows us an object, nor do they give rise to conjectures about him. Experiences, thoughts—life can force this concept on us (CV, 85, 86).

Religious belief is the upshot of a kind of life, a kind of upbringing, which culminates in a certain sort of belief. Further, when a belief is generated in this way, it is not the result of 'evidence', such as visions, etc.; and so it does not result in a belief that is simply possible,—one that may be true, or as Wittgenstein says, 'a conjecture'. A person is brought up, or initiated into a particular tradition, a particular way of life and then finds himself acting in certain ways—and then expressing his belief in certain things.

Religions are complex forms of life with their distinctive but contingent language-games. Within these language-games there can be the giving of reasons, explanations and justification, but for the language-games and forms of life themselves, there can be no explanations or justifications and no further foundations for them either. They are human activities that are just there, and religious forms of life like other forms of life are neither reasonable nor unreasonable. They do not rest on deeper metaphysical or theological foundations or any kinds of grounding theory. Neither do they stand in need of grounding, rationalization or theorization. They are, as Wittgenstein argues, in order just as they are. They are just there, as Wittgenstein says, like our lives. In his "*Lectures on Religious Belief*," he argues that there is something unique about the linguistic framework of religious believers. Their language makes little sense to outsiders. Thus one has to share in their form of life in order to understand the way the various concepts function in their language-games. The various

language games form a kind of "family resemblance." Wittgenstein concluded that those who demand a non-perspectival or impartial way of assessing the truth value of a religious claim are asking for something impossible. From Wittgenstein's perspective, science and religion are just two different types of languagegames

So Wittgenstein's language-game analysis as it applies to religious belief allows one to solve an age-old problem. The logical contradiction that exists between an all-perfect God and the problem of evil has now been solved. Belief in God is no longer subject to proof or evidence or empirical justification. The religious point of view is how one answers the existential questions, or how one sees the world. The result may be individualistic and perhaps enter into relativity, but it does give religion immunity from the assaults of science. Like the rest of Wittgenstein's language-game analysis, this theory of religion is consistent with our human needs. Clearly, today's society relies largely upon the theories and principles of science. Wittgenstein is not denying science, as much as he is preserving the rightful place of religion as an important part of life. It is essential to being human to come to terms with the existential questions and develop a religious point of view. Science can tell us about the world, but we need the religious point of view to tell us about our existence. As Wittgenstein illustrated in the *Tractatus*, paragraph 6.52; "We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched."

FORM OF LIFE AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

In *Zettel* Wittgenstein says: "Only in the stream of thought life do words have meaning" (Z, 173). On the surface, this sounds like an elaboration of a theme which is expressed first in the *Tractatus*:

> 3.3. Only propositions have sense; only in the nexus of a
> proposition does a name have meaning.

There seems to be continuity in Wittgenstein's thinking and passages like this can be taken as evidence for it. However, the stream of life is not a derivative concept.

We can see in the image of the stream of life the historical nature of human life. The remarks on the stream of life are, like many of Wittgenstein's remarks, comments on the natural history of human beings. Forms of life have their own natural history. Our views of the world, which are expressions of the ways we live, are not static. We see many instances of this in his book *On Certainty:*

> 132. Men have judged that a king can make rain; we say
> this contradicts all experience. Today they judge that

aeroplanes and the radio are means for closer contact of peoples and the spread of culture.

This spread of culture compounds the difficulties, mentioned above, that we have in distinguishing different human forms of life from one another. For Wittgenstein, we "see life as a weave, this pattern (pretence say) is not always complete and is varied in a multiplicity of ways" (RPP, 672). More importantly, this "pattern in the weave is interwoven with many others" (RPP, 673, Cf. Z, 569).

The stream of life also emphasizes the linear character of human life. We see our history as a development and improvement on previous generations. Perhaps this is a function of our particular form of life. We might say, then, that the stream of life serves as the cornerstone for a particular philosophy of history. Nevertheless, "we believe that the simplest plough existed before the complicated one" (PO, 397).

One could say that all humans participate in a human form of life, but that there can be different forms of human life. As the riverbed image might suggest, our human form of life formally structures our lives in general ways along a particular route. Within this single river network, different channels may be found flowing in the same direction. Wittgenstein says in *Philosophical Investigations:* "'Grief' describes a pattern, which recurs in different variations in the weave of our life." There are varied cultural and historical expressions of capacities and sensitivities characteristic of the human. Other human persons may strike us weirdly in term of the manners and object of their grief, the way they bury their dead, and settle their disputes. But if they share in the human form of life, then what they do cannot be completely foreign. As human beings, we all share a particular form of life, but different concrete expressions of this form of life may strike us as enigmatic (PI, 223).

Wittgenstein repeatedly speaks of our being trained in a particular way. The very language, through which such enculturation is achieved, is comprehensible solely to persons sharing the particular or similar modes of human life. The roots of some particular concepts run so deep in the communal ways of doing things that imagining them differently might entail a radical transformation of our experience of the world. Magical or religious beliefs may be so ubiquitous that they influence the entire orientation of a culture (OC, 141).

Human beings share in a fundamental form of life, yet within this general spectrum one finds a plurality of forms of human life into which people are initiated.

Human activities and conditions form a way of picturing, and shaping a world. People find themselves existing in a matrix of meaning and activities, absorbed in worldly involvements and projects. Such activity and involvement, which characterize the human form of life, are not limited to a uniformly detailed structure. Rather, they are constituted by the multitude of related ways in which people can relate themselves to the

world. This multitude of possible ways of being human is projected in particular paths, and to some extent it can also be demarcated within the general context of the human form of life.

We can distinguish specific forms of human life, cultural traditions and values but such distinctions do not automatically imply hermetically sealed units. We come into contact with ways that initially appear strange to us, due to spatial or temporal distance. Peter Winch states:

> The behavior of Chaucer's Troilus to Cressida is intelligible only in the context of the conventions of courtly love. Understanding Troilus presupposes understanding these conventions, for it is only from them that his act derives their meaning. Troilus's behavior can only be understood *completely* in the context of Medieval conventions of courtly love; but then is not our reading of Chaucer's tales and other similar literary documents the kind of experience which is necessary in order to acquire an understanding of courtly love? Don't these such works enlarge our understanding of different forms of life? (Winch, 82).

The members of oracular sects and scientific sects employ different language-games and methods of prediction. But Wittgenstein does not describe these as totally discrete and self-enclosed units. Are not world-viewes, such as those of Christian, Jews and Muslims, compounds of many forms? Can we not trace the changes and enrichments in these world-views in response to dialogue with other world-views? Wittgenstein himself refers to the shift from one world-picture to another. Wittgenstein does not deny the possibility of dialogue and conversion. In some instances, as Wittgenstein shows in his book *On Certainty*, we are influenced by the simplicity, symmetry, or fruitfulness of a particular world-view (OC, 92). Some world-pictures strike us being "poorer" (OC, 286). As a result, it is possible that people do acquire new values to enrich their world-views. " It is a fact of experience that human beings alter their concepts, exchange them for others when they learn new facts; when it is this way what was formerly important for them becomes unimportant and vice versa" (Z, 352).

It appears that diverse forms of representation must share some basic framework, some nucleus of shared principles and categories. Without this, trans-categorical communication would be impossible. According to Wittgenstein, the existence of such a common core is contingently due to relatively constant features of human being and doing and regularities in the natural world. There may be differences conditioned by varying linguistic structures or historical and cultural traditions and conditions. But we cannot identify a being as human unless there exist certain basic similarities; there must be some degree of sharing in a basic form of life. As Dufrenne says:

> We do not think that the diversity of languages or even diversity of cultures is the last word. Today cultural anthropology … insists upon a human basis and background common to every culture. Man always recognizes man, if not as his neighbor, at least as his like. … From one culture to another it is possible to establish communication. So far as language is concerned, at least approximate translations are always possible: the diversity is not irreducible. ... Everywhere man is a creature who speaks, hence whatever the diversity of languages may be, they at least have in common the same basic relation to the world. Indeed, it is the exigencies of this very relation that are responsible for man's being man everywhere and for such a thing as human to be possible (Dufrenne, 36).

That kind of background is basic to intercultural dialogue among people from different cultural backgrounds, or forms of life. Another important reason for people to participate in such kind of dialogue is that cultures are historically constituted, so no culture can be assured that its present achievements and values are immune to criticism, or are incapable of further development. No culture can claim to be in possession of an absolute perspective. Every culture has its developmental and perspectival limitations.

CONCLUSION

From the above-analysis of Wittgenstein's conceptions of language-game and form of life we can see that the world of meaning in which we live is not something independently given, but a world that comes into being and still continually unfolds through inter-human transactions. For Wittgenstein, there are infinitely many language-games corresponding to innumerable situations in life. The language-game itself is regulated by its own rules or grammar. A set of rules or grammar is what makes the language-game possible, by setting the boundaries of what can and cannot be said. Words or activities within a language-game take on meaning that is exclusive to that particular language-game. Therefore, as a language-game, scientific discourse is no longer given a monopoly of legitimacy but is just one language-game among many (including religious discourse) and as a consequence, religious discourse is not to be judged by scientific standards. But different language-games or forms of life can learn from one another. For example, as Kim Chinh Vu shows, "different religions can learn from each other; they see different spiritual qualities. … A Christian can learn from Buddhism about a psychological method, and Buddhism from Christian about historical and sociological ways of thinking." (Kim Chinh Vu, Chapter 5).

In many ways, forms of life of people from different countries are in a constant process of change, but they nevertheless stand within a framework that is relatively static—as waters of a river in constant motion relative to the more or less stable river bed. Wittgenstein uses the river-bed image as a suggestive picture for different forms of human life, different cultures or behavior, which themselves are in permanent flux. In this respect and from Wittgenstein's perspective of "common behavior of humankind" and openness to change in the notion of form of life we can be positive in reaching mutual understanding in intercultural dialogues between various cultures worldwide. Through this kind of dialogue each nation can learn from another to enrich its own culture to be more successful in encountering the challenges of the ongoing globalization process.

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CHAPTER XII

THE FORMATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND PROBLEMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

MARIA ROZANOVA

For all time, in all the periods of history people have been worried about the problems of justice, and devoted to the ideals of humanism. They respected human dignity and the rights of every individual person, which are Human Rights.We who live nowadays must look after newly appearing sprouts of civil society and not let them be wrecked in unfavorable conditions, not to let them wither away in the atmosphere of spiritual hunger and moral sickness.

We are obliged to do our best equipped with reason and humanism to enable our homeland to guarantee all its citizens a well deserved and fitting life … in which the human person is respected and his rights are observed. John Paul II

CIVIL SOCIETY

Introduction to the Phenomenon of Civil Society

The phenomenon of civil society is one of the most important components of modern society. First of all, the definition of civil society is closely connected with its function of securing the social, religious and political interests of its members.[1] The theory of civil society includes, first of all, the integration of the core principles of the classical liberal tradition (such principles of liberal ethics as recognition of human dignity, the protection of rights through the rule of Law, and freedom in political, economic, cultural and private life). In this, religion plays a very considerable role. Concerning Western society a very important factor of civil society is the fact that many modern values of Western culture including human rights are rooted in the Christian idea of the origin of the person as created in the likeness of God and deserving the recognition of his dignity as God's creation. Human nature can be considered in two main dimensions: natural and divine. The divine dimension defines a human being as a spiritual creature and in this way attributes dignity to the person. The idea of equality in the court of law correlates with the Christian idea of universality. In the framework of natural law theory we consider human dignity as the basis of the whole score of natural human rights, because

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[1] Gertrude Roebeling, *Economic Globalization, Civil Society and Rights: Dignity and Human Rights* (New York: Asser Press, 2002), pp. 215-216.

human dignity "is given to the person as part of his existence, an existence which flows from the same transcendental source of being."[2] These rights are inherent in persons by their nature and are not just products of social cooperation.[3] They are natural, which is why they are universal and held equally by all.[4]

But classical liberal theory has some lacunae. The most serious of these is its opposition "person-society." Thus, the theory of civil society as cultivating liberal values was primordially connected with self-sufficient and economically independent individuals with a high level of legal self-consciousness. A classical example of liberal thought is that of J. Stuart Mill with his teaching about individualistic autonomy as the basis of liberalism. For Mill, autonomy appears from "within, developing naturally from the inner nature of the individual."[5] Individual autonomy is incompatible with social interference. Mill's autonomy (self-determination) is "the source (indeed the only unfailing and permanent source) of individual improvement, societal progress and the growth of any "civilization."[6]

In promoting the individual this neglected the common good.[7] And although one of the founders of liberalism, John Locke, does not understand civil society as simply a sum of atomistic individuals, the traditional liberal concept rejects such notions as "unity" or "community." It considers the "common good" as "a whole to which individuals, understood as parts, may have to be sacrificed."[8] Individualism taken in such narrow limitations substantially restricts the sphere of the social life of its participants.

Here the problem of the opposition between individualism and solidarity arises. If the person is self-sufficient and independent and his purpose is to protect his rights, then this will lead to many conflicts. But the human being can be described not only as selfish and self-sufficient.[9] One of his characteristics is care for other persons. This altruistic behavior

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[2] Edward M. Andries, "Religious and Philosophical Norms in Constitutions of Germany and the United States," *Church Autonomy: A Comparative Survey* (Frankfurt am Main- Berlin-New York- Oxford-Wien, 2001), p. 12.

[3] See: J. Donnelly, "Human Rights as Natural Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 391,401 (1982).

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] S. Mendus, *Toleration and the Llimits of Lliberalism* (Humanities Press International Inc., 1989), p. 67.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 59.

[7] Kenneth L. Schmitz, *Is Liberalism Good Enough? Liberalism and Good (*New York: Routledge, 1990), p.86.

[8] N. Tarkov, *"Non-Lockean" Lock and the Character of Liberalism: Liberalism–Addresses, Essays, Lectures* (New Jersey: Rowman &Company, 1983), p.134.

[9] J.S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York, 1991), p. 136.

appears best from the whole of human nature. It is easy to conclude that the institutions of civil society can enable human beings to become part of social practice and thus to help develop the best qualities of human nature. In justice to Locke, his liberal theory departs from the atomistic model but reserves a place for family and Church because "the protection of individual liberty from coercive authority may itself require strong families and churches."[10] Moreover civil society providing different forms of social activity helps its participants to avoid the temptation of locking themselves in the sphere of egoistic interests. It promotes also the formation of new horizons of personal responsibility.

As a rule, the notion of "civil society" is related to the European philosophical thought of the Enlightenment and liberal tradition. But the elements of "civil society" can be found in Persian, Chinese, Hindu, and Arabic traditions, where social, spiritual, and communal life persisted despite the form of a ruler's edicts.[11] Private property and democratic institutions do not guarantee the appearance of real civil society. It is necessary to have a developed feeling of solidarity, which can provide consolidation and tolerance in the social sphere. Thus a very important role in constructing the unity of society is played by religion.

Civil Society, the Ecumenical Movement and International Law

Before turning to the phenomenon of the ecumenical movement in the 20th century it would be fruitful to remember H. Kung's theory on religious development. Relying on Thomas Kuhn's concept of scientific revolutions Hans Kung proclaimed the process of change in religious paradigms. He singled out five models of religious outlook: the Judeo-Christian of early Christianity; the Greek-Byzantium paradigm of the ancient Church; the Roman-Catholic paradigm of the Middle Ages; the Protestant paradigm of the Lutherans; and the Modern paradigm of liberal Protestantism. Kung describes the 20th century as the epoch of the establishment of a new "postmodern ecumenical" paradigm. The ultimate purpose of this paradigm is peace between religions and a harmonious union of nations. Within the limits of this ecumenical paradigm it is possible to single out three aspects or level: the internal confessional, the inter-confessional and the over-confessional.

In the framework of the over-confessional level the main question is how to overcome the longtime opposition between the religious and the secular outlooks, and to find ways for their harmonious combination in the future global paradigm. The attempt to put this idea into practice was made in the 20th century when the crisis in the political and cultural spheres of the 1930s (the rise of totalitarian ideologies, chaos after World War I) evoked

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[10] N. Tarkov, p.135.

[11] Gordon A. Christenson, "World Civil Society and the International Rule of Law," *Human Rights Quarterly,* 19.4 (1997), 727-732.

ecumenical cooperation in North America and Europe. One purpose of this movement was "to define a new global order, one based on a "just and durable" peace and centered on human rights." Religious and political leaders joined together to create a "post-world war organization." As the result of their activity the Commission on Human Rights was established and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948.

Before 1948 there had been a long process of debate among Christian leaders. Ecumenical Christian leaders organized the World Council of Churches in 1938. But despite its name, this World Council of Churches actually included leaders of the Protestant Church who called themselves "liberal Christians." The purpose was to work out a strategy for establishing a "new global order" to protect humankind from new totalitarian ideologies.[12] The members of the WCC considered that the "world-community needed to become spiritually united in a "global ethos" which happened to be complementary to the 'evangelical catholic' Christian faith." The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in fact became "the creedal expression of that ethos."[13]

The ecumenical church movement (mainly, Protestant) made a great contribution to the drafting of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (especially Article 18: "Everyone has a right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion."). And this was a great victory of "organized Christian forces" in the attempt to improve the modern situation, to create a "super national post-war global order" free from interference from the nation-state and to let Christian or more precisely, Protestant, principles have positive impact by changing the world. The so called "super national, post-war global order" can be defined as "world civil society." This is quite different from the classical "civil society" because it is made up of persons and groups in "voluntary association without regard to their identities as citizens of any particular country, and outside the political and public dominion of the community of nations."[14] This society supports such values as tolerance, solidarity and respect for human dignity, equality of traditions, ethics and policy of responsibility through the activity of non-government institutions (NGOs) including Church organizations.

Unfortunately the status of religious freedom in certain Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and Communist doctrines may still promote intolerance.[15] The silence of international law allows nations to continue to punish persons who practice a faith viewed unfavorably by the government, whereas international law and legal institutions have not gone far enough to

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[12] C. Nurser, "The 'Ecumenical Movement': Churches, 'Global Order' and Human Rights: 1938-1948," *Human Rights Quarterly* 25.4 (2003), p. 841.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 845.

[14] Gordon A. Christenson, "World Civil Society and the International Rule of Law," *Human Rights Quarterly,* 19.4 (1997), p. 731.

[15] See: R. Drinan, *Can God and Caesar Coexist? Balancing Religious Freedom and International Law* (Yale University Press**,** 2004).

protect religious freedom all over the world. The Russian Orthodox Church in many aspects does not support civil society and does not accept the requirements of new democratic processes and the human rights movement because she holds the previous "closed ideology." This includes attempts to "secure the adoption of legislation providing for state support of so-called traditional confessions of the Russian Federation, imposing restrictions on foreign religious organizations, and prohibiting foreign missionary activity entirely."[16] One of the main requirements for an open pluralistic society is that it guarantee freedom of conscience which is the deepest of all freedoms. There is need for international agencies, including international law and legal institutions, to keep vigilant watch over this right.

Nowadays we have ever greater confirmation that a new attitude appears. This enables people to regard themselves as "persons" and in this way to demand respect for their dignity and basic rights. These changes in the self-consciousness of people are widespread and it can be said that these are part, or even the essence, of the general process of globalization. The strong effort to create a "world civil society" even in eastern countries points to an extension and reinforcement of the demand of many people all over the world for freedom, respect for human dignity and development of personal self-consciousness.[17]

THE NEW CHALLENGE OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND HUMAN RIGHTS THEORY

A Human Rights and Cultural Relativism

Many problems of the defense of human rights are connected with the theory of cultural relativism. This is the methodological and philosophical position denying the possibility of universal common human values and principles, because of obvious differences between features and qualities inherent in the various local cultures.[18] Cultural relativism believes that conceptions of human rights are determined by past historical, cultural and economic dimensions. The ultimate expression of cultural relativism "sees culture as the source of all values"[19] and does not recognize human rights independent of the concrete historical situation in a concrete society.

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[16] Harold J. Berman, *Religious Rights in Russia at a Time of Tumultuous Transition: a Historical Theory: Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspective* (London: Kluwer Law International Press, 1996), p. 287.

[17] See: Richard K. Khuri, *Freedom, Modernity and Islam: Toward a Creative Synthesis* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998).

[18] A. Saidov, *International Law and Human Right* (Moscow: Academical Legal University, 2002), p.161.

[19] J. Donnelly, "Human Rights as Natural Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 391,401 (1982), p. 36.

Among the supporters of cultural relativism in the concept of human rights are politicians and attorneys from such Asian countries as China, Singapore, Syria, Malaysia, Bangladesh, etc. As a rule, they appeal to the relativism of the "human rights" concept as a counter-argument in the dispute with international organizations that criticize them for their violation of human rights in their country. This idea of cultural relativism was most definitely articulated by the Chinese delegation at the World Congress on Human Rights in Vienna, 1993. The participants from China maintained that "in different countries with different cultural traditions, the idea or concept of human rights could be perceived and put into practice in different ways. Thus it is not necessary to suggest that the international standards and models of human rights must be accepted all over the world, and it is not really acceptable to demand that all countries abide by those rights."[20]

Of course, there can be different ways of interpreting the idea or concept of human rights; for instance depending on the actual national psychology and local particular features. These interpretations are necessary and rather productive as long as they are not exploited for the justification of the violation of human rights. We should not forget that the process of the formation of the human rights doctrine is dynamic and still very much an unfinished work, like a masterpiece that has never been completed. As the universal category of human rights is not absolutely stable it is necessary to consider them in the context of the dynamic and evolutionary process of a new and changing world. Moreover, it is very important to remember the significance of distinctive national and regional features, and differences at the level of cultural, historical, and religious heritage. It is also very important to remember the obvious fact that the concept human right does not belong exclusively to the Judeo-Christian tradition or the Greek-Roman civilization. It is not just a "Western phenomenon"; other cultures, traditions, and religions have cultivated similar ideas in their own way.

It would be naive to search for the elements of contemporary human rights theory in the works of ancient thinkers. But at the same time this theory did not arise in any concrete epoch: Renaissance or Enlightenment. Otherwise the universal character of human rights would be denied and history would be distorted. Our past can demonstrate the progress of the development of the "human rights" notion.[21]The main categories of human rights already existed in ancient Greece and Rome Protagoras, Antiphont, Aristotle, Zeno, Marcus Aurelius, Cicero, and Seneca, etc. But the institution of slavery that rejected equality and freedom was an absolutely different factor from our contemporary reality.

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[20] J. Symonides, *New Human Rights Dimensions, Obstacles and Challenges: Introductory Remarks: Human Rights: New Dimensions and Challenges* (Paris, 1998), p. 26.

[21] A. Saidov, pp. 18-19.

- In Zoroastrian law despite its religious character we can find the elements of the main principles of human rights as in Roman law. All human beings are equal without distinction of any kind as to sex, race, religion or birth.[22] Yet Zoroastrism accepted slavery, and even slaves had some rights.

- Ancient Indian law mainly focused not on the rights of every human being, but on his/her responsibilities. Crime was considered a misconception. The Buddhists forbade the death penalty and torture or cruel and inhuman treatment or punishment of criminals.

- According to Confucianism, the purpose of every individual is to be in ideal harmony with the Cosmos. The distinctive features of the Confucian concept are the following: responsibility has primacy over rights; rituals and customs have priority over Law; self-perfection is prior to perfecting the social sphere; and the ideal of justice is superior to that of equality. Confucianism accepts the distinctions of sex, age, social statues because in their relations unequal individuals must be given their due.[23]

- Judaism had the fundamental basis of human rights rooted in the belief that human life given by God has absolute and uncompromising value. Human life can have no price.[24]

- Muslim Law based on Islam is totally dependent on the eternal and unchangeable rules of Allah and the Prophet Mohammed. Islam declared the equality of human beings and Muslims almost always demonstrated a tolerant attitude to non-believers under their control. Although there was slavery in Muslim social life, the slaves had some rights and they could buy their freedom. Governmental noninterference in public and cultural problems had great importance in the Muslim social order. Traditions, customs, community and clans could regulate individual freedoms and responsibilities. So in the Muslim world there were not many conflicts between state and individual. And Muslim thinkers did not have problems of personal freedom from governmental usurpation which is the most current topic in human rights practice nowadays.[25]

Another doctrine—universalism—sees human rights as entirely universal and as existing at all times and in all places. It does not accept cultural and historical differences: "human rights are clearly and unambiguously conceptualized as being inherent to humans and not as the

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[22] N. Safa-Isfehani, *Rivayat-i Hemat-i Asawahistan: A Study in Zoroastrian Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), Vol. 2, pp. X-XI.

[23] T. De Bary, *Neo-Confucianism and Human Rights: Human Rights and the World Religions* (Notre Dame, 1988), p. 186.

[24] A. Saidov, p. 33.

[25] A. Mayer, *The Dilemmas of Islamic Identity: Human Rights and the World's Religions* (Notre Dame, 1988), p. 95.

product of social cooperation. These rights are conceptualized as being universal and held equally by all; that is, as natural rights.' [26] This concept, though attractive, is very unrealistic and causes many problems in the modern world.[27]

But it is necessary to recognize, that in both in the East and the West the ideas regarding human rights did not have an independent legal character until the Enlightenment because they were developed in the context of religious and philosophical doctrines only.

If we were to examine human rights as an evolutionary notion, which expresses the expectations of all peoples both from the East and the West, it would be possible to achieve a deeper understanding of the problem of relativism and the idea of human rights in different cultures.

The Formation of Human Rights Theory: From Individual to Collective Rights

Specialists pick out three "generations" of human rights. The rights of the "first generation" proclaimed after the bourgeois revolutions mainly comprise civil and political rights. They can also be called the "negative" rights because they express personal independence from state power and designate the bounds of state interference in the sphere of individual freedom. These rights are the right to life, liberty and security of the person, equality before the law, ownership of property and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, etc. These rights were acknowledged as creating good conditions for individuals to take an active part in the economic, social and political spheres. Since the second half of the 19th century the interpretation of human rights has acquired a positive character. During the 19th century these ideas were developed by I. Bantam, G. Mill, A. de Tocqueville, V. de Humboldt, T. Jefferson, T. Paine, etc.

By the middle of the 20th century there appeared the "second generation" of rights or "positive" rights. These new but not completely formed rights were based on the responsibility of the state to provide social goods to individuals. They depend totally on the socio-economic development of the state. They were connected with social, economic and cultural rights and demanded the "positive" engagement of the state to guarantee the rights to security in the event of unemployment, problems of mother and child who are entitled to special care and assistance, education, necessary social services, rest and leisure, free participation in the cultural life of the community, enjoyment of the arts, a share in scientific advancement and its benefits, jobs, etc. (UDHR, art.23, 24, 25, 26, 27). Negative and positive rights are closely interconnected and are necessary stages in the development of freedom. Only the "negative" freedom can

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[26] See: J. Donally "Human Rights as Natural Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 391,401 (1982).

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-38.

lead individuals and the society to real "positive" freedom.

The rich heritage of thinkers of the 20th century (J. -P. Sartre, Karl Jaspers, G. Hart, P. Choler, I. Messner, J. Maritain etc.) was accepted in the process of the formation of the rights of a "third generation." These were generated by the global problems after World War II in the liberation of many countries from colonial dependence, the intensification of ecological problems, etc. They can be described as "collective" or "solidarity" rights because their possessors are not individuals but whole nations and peoples: the right to peace (Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, 1984); good ecological environment (42/186 Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond, December, 11 1987); self-definition and cultural diversity (Universal declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2. 11, 2001); social and economic development (Universal Declaration of the Right to Development 4. 12.1986), etc.

In fact, individual rights can be satisfied only through society, and "the right of a state or nation to develop is a necessary condition for the fulfillment of the rights and the realization of the development of individuals." [28] "The right to development is a human right and equality of opportunity is as much a prerogative of the nations as of individuals within nations." [29] Moreover it may not be very correct totally to separate the collective rights of peoples, nations, or ethnic groups from those of individuals because "it is possible to define the obligation to fulfill them and for duty-holders to secure them."[30]

Nowadays these three groups or "generations" of rights constitute the foundation of the the international legal deposit of human rights.

International Legislation and Human Rights Implementation

If we turn to one of the most important documents of international human rights law—The Universal Declaration of Human Rights—this analysis will not have a single meaning. Some items of the Universal Declaration are not acceptable (even on the theoretical level) for countries situated on different levels of development with different cultural traditions and historical heritages. The problem is that the realization of human rights theory demands a high level of civil society, a legal and political culture, and a developed personal consciousness.

Thus the widespread argument against economic, social and cultural rights including the right to development is that they are not human rights because they are not the same as natural rights. In accordance with this concept, human rights can be regarded only as personal rights—the right to

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[28] Arjun Sengupta, "On the Theory and Practice of the Right to Development," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 24.4 (2002), p. 862.

[29] *United Nations Economic and Social Council*, Official Records, Supp. No. 6, U. N. Doc. E/CN. 4/1347 (1979).

[30] Arjun Sengupta, p. 859.

life, liberty, and free speech. These "negative" rights are connected with the "negative" actions of the states by the law prohibiting men from killing, imprisoning, or silencing individuals. Economic and social rights are connected with "positive" actions, which the state has to secure, fulfill and protect. In this light social, economic and cultural rights are "not natural rights, and therefore, in this view, are not human rights." [31] Moreover, the second generation of rights—positive, social, economic rights and the third generation, the collective rights, were included in the list of the main inalienable rights under the pressure of socialist ideology which can be regarded as pure misunderstanding. Inalienable human rights can refer only to those rights which do not depend on the economic and cultural development of the society and have for an object to "maintain the high dignity and freedom of every person and defend it from the arbitrariness of the most powerful force in the society—the force of power and its aspiration for domination over the person. [32] This concept is quite contrary to Marxist theory, which considers moral values as determined by the means and mode of production. The human being is a consequence of the historical processes and class society that "shapes human beings into socially prescribed molds, rather than the reflection of an inherent essence or potential." Marxists do not talk about inalienable human rights because the arguments in favor of human nature as God's creation do not work in this context: "Simply because they are human" probably makes no sense to Marxists."[33]

Furthermore, if in most countries of western world religious norms play a great role in the social life, it is reasonable to talk about the fulfillment of natural theory. But for instance, in Russia it is very complicated to appeal to these norms because they refer to ethical-religious aspirations which have no influence upon a Russian society that is based mainly on ordinary materialistic grounds."[34] Unfortunately the widening list of human rights and freedoms, for example, the right to sleep makes human rights a relative category and deprives them of the status of a universal category. Sharp distinctions in the economic and cultural levels of different states do not allow these states to guarantee the second generation rights to their citizens and as a result of this situation these rights are relative rather than inalienable. All this casts a shadow on the whole complex of human rights including the right to life, freedom, etc. In particular for the reasons given above supporters of cultural relativism refuse to recognize fundamental rights as the basis of any legislation.

In sum we may say that the Universal Declaration contains many "elements going beyond the principles of natural rights." For instance, the group or collective rights are not "fundamentally different in nature from an

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[31] *Ibid.*, p. 856.
[32] S. Alekseev, *Theory of Law: New Approaches* (Moscow, 1994), p. 621.
[33] J. Donally, *International Human Rights* (Westview Press, 1993), p. 22.
[34] N. Kudryavtzev, "On Legality," *State and Law*, 3 (1994), p. 7.

individual's human rights, so long as it is possible to define the obligation to fulfill them and for duty-holders to secure them. Furthermore it is well established that the identification of political and civil rights with negative rights and of economic, social and cultural rights with positive rights is too superficial. Both require negative (prevention) as well as positive (promotion and protective) actions." [35] There is no reason to regard only civil and political rights as human rights, and not to regard economic and social and cultural rights as human rights. This proves, that "it is ultimately for the people to decide what they would regard as human rights and which rights the states would have the obligation to deliver."[36]

RUSSIAN LIBERAL THEORY

Russian Investigations of Universal Liberal Thought: The Conceptions of P.I. Novskyrodzev and I.A. Pokrovsky.

In the context of Russian liberalism at the beginning of the 19th century, ideas of human rights and social solidarity arose. This was developed by the thinkers of the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century—P.I. Novgorodtzev, I.A. Pokrovsky, B. Chicherin, M.M. Kovalevsky and others. The ideas they advanced were connected not only with the Russian traditional ideals of community, but with idea of active participation by all members of society in its political and social life.

It is especially important to refer to the Russian scholar Iosiph Alekseevich Pokrovsky (1864-1920), professor of law at St. Petersburg and Moscow Universities, who expressed his views in the works *State and Mankind , Natural and Legal Trends in the History of Civil Law, Abstract and Concrete Man in the Face of Civil Law*. In many respects his ideas coincided with the ideas of the German philosopher Kant. In essence they represent the developed theory of human rights adequate to advance the liberal ideas of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Pokrovsky lived at the beginning of the 20th century when the concept of "inalienable human rights" was hardly admitted in Russia. He put forward the new theory of human rights which laid the philosophical foundation of a modern integral human rights theory.

The Western notion of "solidarity" is connected with the theory of O. Kont, E. Durkheim, and L. Dugi. For instance, Dugi meant by solidarity not a relation of equality and observance of natural human rights to life and freedom, but rather the relation of universal obligations on every person. For Pokrovsky, one of the Russian initiators of natural law, solidarity was the basis of a society where the rights of its participants are the highest values and the common aim for this society is to secure a fitting existence

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[35] Arjun Sengupta, p. 858.
[36] *Ibid.*

for every person.[37] The combination of individual freedom and common solidarity may provide for the maintenance of inalienable rights. "Real solidarity returns the person to the appropriate place. The human person is advancing and society itself becomes the guardian and guarantor of personal being."[38]

Another important insight was that "civil society" can protect individuals from governmental interference because it is a "part of society which is not the state, but a residue. When this residue is powerful it becomes able to ensure that the state does its job but no more, and that it does it properly" (Ernst Gellner).[39] Only subjects of civil society may require the observance and guarantee of their rights. One of the theses of the Russian thinker was that integral human rights are correlated not with the "authorities," but with the state as a whole. He noted that autocracy had become obsolete, that natural law had gotten the upper hand and reflects the will of people to be supreme or sovereign, and that it has opposed the system of governmental trusteeship to the Declaration of Freedom and the Declaration of Human Rights. At the same time Pokrovsky noted that the problem of the limitation of governmental power was of no importance in these Declarations. Pokrovsky wrote that "all the Declarations of rights were directed against the authorities, but not against the authority itself. All the Declarations had the purpose of guaranteeing any political freedom instead of individual freedom."[40] There is a strict distinction of the notions "the right of the state" and the "right of civil society" which is "humanistic law."[41]

Thus Pokrovsky transfers the principles of Western individualism onto Russian ground and proclaims the combination of individual freedom and common solidarity. Pokrovsky connected individual freedom with personalistic theory; finally this led him to produce a citizen as a separate "Power" equal in rights not only with other persons—"Powers"—but with the state itself. As a matter of fact this approach to the interconnection of power and person was pioneering research, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it did not have enough cultural and historical prerequisites for its implementation.

Pokrovsky asserts the supremacy of the individuals in society: "There are such "inalienable human rights which cannot be destroyed by any law and which even the state cannot reach. If any law protects the individuals from the arbitrariness of authorities then the idea of "inalienable

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[37] S. Glushkova, *Human Rights in Russia: Theory, History, Practice* (Moscow: 2004), pp. 186-187.

[38] I. Pokrovsky, *The Main Problems of Civil Law* (Moscow, 1998), p. 321.

[39] Gordon A. Christenson, "World Civil Society and International Rule of Law," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 19.4 (1997), p. 723.

[40] I. Pokrovsky, p. 81.

[41] S. Alekseev, *Law: Theory and Philosophy: Complex Analysis* (Moscow, 1999), p. 624.

rights" works against the state as such. The self-assertion of the individuals reaches its culmination in respect for law. Now the individuals declare their pretension for equality with the state and the right to sovereignty within the limits of their own territory.."[42] This understanding of inalienable human rights both in the European and the North American political and legal thinking became widespread only after the shocks caused by Hitler and tyrannical communistic dictatorships.[43]

From this point of view we can understand the conditions which now cause the negation of the universal character of inalienable human rights by some political regimes. For example, some politicians especially in the Eastern countries tried to present a category of human rights as a special phenomenon produced by "western civilizations," as if human rights do not agree with the national cultural traditions of those countries. Unfortunately similar statements appeared in the Russian Federation and some specialists tried to reject the theory of natural law; in this way, they rejected the absolute character of human rights and the freedom of individuals. It would follow that the most important social values which are inherent to Russian history and cultural traditions can be only the idea of "statehood."[44]

Pokrovsky tried to smooth away the essential distortion between proclaimed natural rights, freedom and responsibilities, including moral responsibility. In particular, personal responsibility becomes an especially actual idea in attempting to define the idea of social solidarity and civil society formation.[45] But the greatest contribution of the Russian thinker to natural law theory is the recognition of every person's right to unique individuality, and the acknowledgment of his or her distinctiveness as well.[46]

Pokrovsky's concept expresses an approach to human rights which deduces the legal status of the individuals on the bases of their interrelation with the state as a whole. This concept is connected with another important statement that inalienable human rights concern "the state as such" and consequently protect individuals from the arbitrariness of the state authority. This is because they concern individuals as spiritual entities and in this respect reflect not only "political rights" but first of all the spiritual and moral values of individuals.[47]

The Russian thinker concentrated on the natural law theory, which arose, first of all "in the struggle for religious independence; the first proclaimed inalienable right was the right to religious confessions." So "the first distinct formulation of the limits of the state interference took place

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[42] I. Pokrovsky, pp. 309-310.

[43] S. Alekseev, *Theory of Law: New Approaches,* p. 624.

[44] *Ibid.,* p. 624.

[45] I. Pokrovsky, *Irrationalism" and Law* (Moscow, 1914), p. 14.

[46] S. Alekseev, p. 185.

[47] *Ibid.,* p. 625.

when the question of free choice of some religious confession arose, i.e., in the sphere which is the center of the spiritual life of a human being."[48]

Pokrovsky wrote, that "in the huge dispute between the individuals and society it is necessary to distinguish two completely different parts of the realm under dispute: on the one hand, the internal, spiritual human life with its culmination in the religious sphere and, on the other hand, the external, mainly the economic relations. The spiritual interests pertain to the maintenance and the very essence of the human being."[49]

Pokrovsky' theory is very important because it helps to single out along with political and economic rights the central determining part of these rights connected with their spiritual essence: the basic moral principles and the freedom of the spirit. In turn, it helps one to see in inalienable human rights the phenomenon of a supreme spiritual order. The issues of this order do not belong to the material world only, but consist also in the transcendental essences of the universe. Pokrovsky said that moral progress can be achieved only in the sphere of individual freedom, and the supreme purpose of law can only be the creation of such social order which would let this creative freedom find the best conditions for realization."[50] All this gives the basis to consider (according to Kant) the Law as "the most sacred reality God has on earth."[51]

The humanitarian views based on Renaissance culture can achieve a higher level of development. On this level the recognition, originality and distinctiveness of individuals are reinforced. At the same time individuals begin to understand the requirement of the right to this originality and distinctiveness. This individual right, to a recognized unique and inimitable individuality, gives individuals the right to their unique originality.[52]

This idea is especially important because it helps to establish the new strategy of multiculturalism in the modern world and to acknowledge the autonomy and sovereignty of the "other." This is necessary in order to admit a new important human right—the right to be the "other." This important idea was central to the Russian thinker's investigation into the theory of human rights. For the Russian tradition Pokrovsky's ideas are very important because he tried to involve the idea of "human dignity" in the collectivistic tradition and employed this way to find the best ground for the unity of individual and collective issues.

Another Russian liberal thinker is Chicherin Boris Nikolaevich (1828-1904), a historian, a jurist, a philosopher, a politician and the tutor of Tsar Aleksandr II. His main works are *About Popular Representation, History of Politics, Science and Religion and Philosophy of Law*.

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[48] I. Pokrovsky, p. 81.
[49] *Ibid.*, p. 84.
[50] *Ibid.,* p. 320.
[51] S. Alekseev, p. 626.
[52] *Ibid.,* p. 627.

Chicherin's ideals in the religious, cultural and political spheres were based on the new liberal national legal culture. One of the tasks of Chicherin was to search for the self-identity of Russian society. He tried to find a middle path between the ultimate atomic individualism of the West with such negative consequences as egoism, rivalry, domination of material values over spiritual ones, on one hand, and Russian communal traditions without the opposition of personal and public sphere, and the fullness of the plenary powers of the Tsarist's autocracy, on the other.

Chicherin believed that Russian history had its own distinctive features. For instance, the social organization originated from "top to bottom" in contrast to western society which was mainly formed without potent interference in the heart of society. At the same time Chicherin considered that the world historical process is subordinated to universal principles. (V. Prilensky).

Under the influence of Alexis de Tocqueville's and Gneist Chicherin's thought, the supreme ideal for Russia was freedom. But at the same time he considered this freedom not as an absolute principle but as one of the choices of society: "It is impossible for the Russian to accept the western liberal viewpoint that gives freedom its absolute meaning and makes it the indispensable condition of all civil development"[53] because we cannot disown our identity based on the compatibility of autocracy, civility and enlightenment.[54] According to Chicherin, liberalism must rise above "self-interest and crass materialism and make place for the common good and human sociality."[55]

His middle path can be defined as "conservative liberalism combining liberal measures" with strong autocracy. Chicherin criticized the liberal thinkers who just proclaimed human rights, because "freedom is not acquiring an ever broadening list of human rights. Man has rights only because he has to fulfill obligations and vice versa. It is possible to demand that a man discharge his obligations only because he has rights. All the meaning of the human person and his rights are based on the assumption of the definition of the person as a reasonable and free being with a supreme moral law in his consciousness and free will, which enables one to do his duty."[56]

For Chicherin Russia is a European country because it has common historical epochs with European countries. But despite the common cradles of Russian and European civilizations they have different developments. In Russia the geopolitical factors played a very important role: to organize people over a huge area strong external power was necessary. The tendency

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[53] B. Chicherin, *About Popular Representation* (Moscow, 1899), p. 14.

[54] *Ibid.,* pp.16-17.

[55] See: N. Tarkov, *"Non-Lockean" Lock and the Character of Liberalism*: *Liberalism–Addresses, Essays, Lectures.*

[56] B. Chicherin, *Different Prospects of Liberalism*: *Philosophy of Law* (St. Petersburg, 1998), p. 463.

to strife is much weaker than the tendency to strict obedience. In Russia the beginnings of state power as the basis of unity were developed in contrast to the beginnings of law as the basis of personal rights.[57]

State power defined all the processes and spheres of Russian social life from the very outset of the Russian state. For all that, state power was very important for the history of Russian people. If in the Western countries personal origin was very strongly expressed and the person was the very basis of all social development, in Russia we can see actually the absence of a developed personal source. The ultimate expression of this can be seen in the official institute of civil serfdom of a significant part of the Russian population officially until 1861 and in fact until the beginning of the 20th century. In the Collectivist framework one had no significance apart from the community of which he happened to be a part. This society was dominated by central state power which almost totally ignored any civil, political or social rights. All this testifies to the dominance of state power over a personal source (V. Prilensky).

Personal freedom is the main principle of social development and the necessary condition for the achievement of its ultimate purpose, which is the Absolute as expressed by Hegel. The best way to achieve this purpose is to carry out liberal reforms which will guarantee personal freedom from serfdom, freedom of conscience, education, press, public judicial procedures, etc.

He was one of the first Russian thinkers to proclaim the new notion of pseudo-patriotism in the situation of the forced ideological isolation of Russian society from western influence. In that period the dominant ideology was expressed in the attempt to preserve the original traditions. Any changes were considered criminal as attempts on the "godlike power" of the Tsar. Any individualization was politically dangerous. Any discussions about human rights and freedom were considered encroachments on the imperial power.[58]

And if in the Western civilization predominantly in the Middle Ages "the political power of the Holy Roman Empire and the kings was an instrument of the spiritual aims of the Catholic Church,"[59] in Russia the Orthodox Church was the instrument of strong political power: the Tsar was traditionally the head of the Church.

The patience and tolerance of the Russian people to their own disasters can be understood through the distinctive features of the Orthodox outlook. In accordance with Orthodox ideology human life is perceived as full of sufferings and privation. Man deserves this because of his sinful essence. In this context the absence of law is rather natural for the humble, the weak and the submissive man, who is ready to adjust his destiny to

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[57] S. Glushkova, p. 135.

[58] S. Glushkova, p. 124.

[59] J. Maritan, *Man and the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 158.

injustices rather than to fight for the restoration of his violated rights.[60]

APPENDIX

Unfortunately it is easy to forget about negative consequences of the rejection of the main principles of natural law. These negative consequences are the following. (a) "The American notion of manifest destiny or the British colonial ideology of the white man's burden justified barbarous treatment of non-white peoples on the grounds of the superior virtue or moral development of the Americans or English."[61] (b) An absolutization of the principle of equality in the Soviet Union, cult of the superiority of race in Nazi Germany and its very extreme version of rights violation to "inferior races" on the grounds of moral and political superiority.[62] (c) Numerous crimes committed against humankind in the periods of the World War I and World War II. (d) The cult of an invulnerable western world, stable and happy which was destroyed September 11, with the destruction of the twin towers in New York. (e) The ideological division into different political systems predominantly into the Western and the Eastern. (f) Conflicts among the Western and the Eastern civilizations, and the Western and the Muslim worlds in the context of events in September 11, etc.

Liberal Western philosophers have made a great contribution and given positive impulse to the development of a universal culture and readied the base of a personalist approach for strengthening the priority of the person over society and the state. But the sole democratic proclamation of basic freedom and rights is not enough for the real functioning of the civil society. For this it is necessary for society to have, as Russian thinkers proved, an advanced sense of solidarity because this sense provides for the consolidation of all public spheres and tolerance towards the differencesof these.

Comparing the classical western liberal tradition with Russian neo-liberalism we may say that they both are quite complementary and interconnected. In the framework of the Russian doctrine the idea of social harmony was formed and it concentrated on the syncretic unity of western individualism, free personal development and the original Russian ideal of community based on the beginnings of solidarity, charity and tolerance.

Many Russian specialists from different branches of science inherit the old custom of considering Russia as a country with a unique destiny and a special way of development. As a rule they do not want to perceive humanistic ideas and acknowledge the human being to be the highest value because these ideas have mainly Western roots. In the place of this position

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[60] S.Glushkova, p. 136.

[61] J. Donally, *International Human Rights* (U.S.A.: Westview Press, 1993), p. 23.

[62] *Ibid.,* p. 23.

these specialists refer to the argument that some western humanistic ideas, including an "individualistic" understanding of the human being, are inapplicable in a country with collectivist values, especially in the past (civil slavery until 1861, paternalistic ideology, and communistic heritage), and with deep socio-economical and political problems in the present. But these statements are purely political positions.

Of course, it is not possible to proclaim in the manner of Locke, that "any country is a blank sheet on which one may scribble whatever one wills."[63] It is obvious that the cultural and historical heritage of Russia, its civil slavery (serfdom) which existed almost until the end of the 19th century, the cutting off of the first weak sprouts of the tradition for 70 years by Soviet power, the extremely unsuccessful experience of carrying out democratic reforms in the post-Soviet period, and a very complex economic situation—all these together make the transfer to a democratic political system difficult and do not nowadays promote the establishment of a basis for civil society. Undoubtedly the historical heritage causes troubles for the formation of civil society in Russia. But at the same time it is unjustified to maintain that our origins will determine our future and that we can never put an end to illegality. Finally, there is great hope for the future age of open civil societies which will provide the large number of civil, religious, political, cultural, and social rights based on human dignity and respect for freedom.

Twentieth century history demonstrated that it is necessary to involve new visions and conceptions of the interaction and interconnection of religion and law in the changing world. The problem of the universal character of human rights refers us to the problem of cultural relativism and different cultural and philosophical traditions. It is necessary to understand that the theory of human rights is not only a Western phenomenon, for there can be many common spiritual values for all mankind. In this way, human rights theory is probably one of the main foundations for the newly changing world and the world of civil society.

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[63] George F. McLean, *Philosophy and Civil Society: Its Nature, Its Past and Its Future,* (Washington D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1997), p. 36.

CHAPTER XIII

CIVIL SOCIETY AS AN ARENA OF CULTURAL COMPETATION: RECONSIDERING INDIAN ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

SEBASTIAN VELASSERY

The subject matter of culture and the thematic issues that accompany it provokes a plethora of problems although the term "culture" itself is widely known and popularly used by people from all walks of life. Contemporary philosophy considers culture as one of the important aspects through which we are able to look into the mystery of human beings. Unlike in traditional philosophy, which considered the human being exclusively in terms of 'rationality' and 'animality', contemporary thought looks at the human person from such perspectives as languages, corporeality and culture. Thus culture becomes an important notion in the philosophical arena of today's world-view. This paper attempts a philosophical review of the phenomenon of culture with special emphasis on two related aspects: (a) Can we locate and reasonably argue that the impregnation or insemination of a society is conditioned and propped up by the metaphysical/ ontological world-views that inseparably linked up with the cultural tradition of a state/society? (b) Can we say, then, that a meaningful and fully philosophical account of the foundations of a cultural tradition is dependent upon the function that ontology exercises in its tradition, which enables us to appreciate and appropriate the cultural and civic values it offers?

Accordingly, the basic conception of the present paper follows a four-fold path in which (1) we shall be attempting a conceptual history of civil society, which is predominantly and arguably a western concept; (2) retrieving or replanting this concept into a cultural tradition with which I am acquainted, i.e.; Indian cultural tradition, and finding its ontological moorings; (3) followed by a philosophical plea for two important dimensions of culture which are emphasized in the post-modern period, namely, rootedness in one's specific culture and openness to other cultures as in globalization; and (4) certain concluding reflections that follow therein. To state the above contentions in a different way, this paper intends to argue that the Indian cultural tradition is rooted in certain important ontological concepts such as the concepts of *Dharma, Rta and Yajna*, which are peculiarly Indian. These concepts are said to be ontological properties of theoretical and practical reflections for a thematic understanding of the cultural foundations of Indian society. To quote Professor McLean: "This calls for fusing the deep classical Indian sense of being as existence (sat),

consciousness (cit), and bliss (ananda) with the active independence and intersection of persons locally in civil society, as well as nationally in terms of democratic practice."[1]

CIVIL SOCIETY: A CONCEPTUAL HISTORY

The concept of civil society has been a path of the western intellectual tradition, developed along with material, political and intellectual events in western society. It has been inextricably bound up with such epochal changes in society as the emergence of secular authority, the development of the institution of private property, the appearance of an urban culture, the demise of absolutist states, the rise of democratic movements in the nineteenth century, modern constitutionalism and rule of law. Above all, it has been associated with the development of the capitalist economy and the resultant separation of the economic from the political. As such, it is said to be indisputably linked to the rise and consolidation of capitalism.[2]

Civil society gained coherence and lucidity as a concept only when the civil domain was able to come into its own. The centrality of civil society is closely associated with the rise of impersonal political power and the centrality of economic life under the capitalist arrangements of society. This group of ideas, affirms Bobbio, "accompanies the birth of the bourgeois world: the affirmation of natural rights belonging to the individual and to social groups independently of the state and which limit and restrain political power; the discovery of a sphere of inter-individual relations such as economic relations whose regulation does not need the existence of coercive power because they are self-regulating."[3]

Further this group of ideas is associated with the recognition of individual rights, particularly the right to private property; the sanctity of individual rights and freedom; the domination of market forces; individualism; and the emergence of the distinction between the public and the private. It has, in addition, been linked to the parliamentary institutions and doctrines, and the belief that state power must be controlled and limited. Each of these associated concepts, or cluster of concepts, was articulated in different phases of the evolution of the concept of the civil society. Each of them was prevalent in different historical periods. But

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[1] George F. McLean, *Reconstruction of the Person: Culture and Metaphysics*, Quoted from the lectures delivered in Punjab University, Chandigarh, through an invitation by the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, as the Philosopher of the Year 2004 in January, 2004.

[2] Neera Chandhoke, *State and Civil Society: Explorations in Political Theory* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 77.

[3] N. Bobbio, *Democracy and Dictatorship: The nature and limits of State Power*, trans. P. Kennedy (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), p. 22.

together they add up to defining the features of something that can be referred to as civil society.

Though initially the concept of civil society was used imprecisely, the properties of the concept became clearer over time as a series of conceptual oppositions developed between what came to be seen as civil society and its contraries. It was regarded as an attribute of 'polished' or advanced nations as opposed to primitive and barbaric societies in Adam Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*.[4] Later and in a similar vein, Hegel was to remark that earlier societies did not possess the basic features of civil society. To the contractarians, Hobbes and Locke, civil society was opposed to the state of nature. For Hegel, civil society was distinct from either the household or the state. It is in Hegelian theory that the concept comes to acquire specific connotations, because to the theorist civil society was a property of modern bourgeois societies. In German, civil society is *'burgerliche gesellschaft'*, thus for Hegel as for Marx, civil society is bourgeois society. However, the identification is by no means merely a literal translation; it refers to a particular kind of society that comes into prominence with the birth of capitalism. To Marx, civil society is an autonomous arena of economic exchanges dominated by the commodity principle; it is distinct from earlier forms where political and economic powers were conflated. Accordingly, in the Marxian tradition, civil society is identified with the realm of economic relations which have been privatized by the capitalist system. But political contestations about the nature of the capitalist economy and the state make this realm a public one; it is thereby the sphere of class struggle. For Gramsci, civil society came to symbolize a space where the state constructed a project of hegemony; it was a property of sophisticated opaque states as opposed to transparent and openly coercive states. For him, civil society is the domain where hegemonic relations are maintained in the sphere of private institutions and practices, such as the household, the church, educational and cultural institutions. The private and the public merge in the Gramscian notion of hegemony, because over-arching structures of domination construct every arena of everyday life.

Civil Society and the Rights Bearing Individual

Civil society as a peculiarly modern western concept emerges between the 17th and the 19th centuries. The appearance of this concept signified an important breakthrough in the notion of the rights-bearing individual, his relationship with the state, and with others in society. It is a modern concept because it epitomized a clear dichotomy between civil and political life, a dichotomy which was almost unknown in earlier times.

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[4] A. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. by D. Forbes (Edinburgh: 1767, 1966).

At the core of civil society is the stabilization of a system of rights and their codification in a legal and institutional order. Rights are fundamental in political life because they address the fundamental question of how human beings should be treated. They lay down categorical statements of what human beings are entitled to. Rights, in other words, define the fundamental inviolability of persons. And if the assertion that every individual should be treated with dignity is the basis of political morality and civility, then rights become weapons in the hands of individuals.

It is a historical fact that rights have never been as encompassing as they should be. Governments and civil societies have often maintained a truncated system of rights based upon exclusions rather than inclusions. The Enlightenment with its faith in human reason and its emphasis on the notion of law regulated the social universe in a manner akin to the physical world and conceptualized the social world. The task of knowledge, it was held, was to appropriate the social world through the medium of reason.

Civil society has indeed in many ways taken its revenge upon the state as numerous social movements have used the discourse of rights against the state itself. In India, for instance, these movements for people's rights, as they have come to be known, have contributed to the redefinition of governance, as it has been understood until now. Claims for these rights have emerged precisely from those areas which were not characterized by the presence of rights—from the rural poor, tribal, urban proletariat, caste groups and communities which had been marginalized by the activities of the state and placed outside the pale of civilized interaction. These are communities whose rights to live with dignity have been flouted and compromised because they have not found a place to articulate their oppressed feelings in a public sphere of debate and discussion. These rights claims have expanded the civil sphere by inserting their own discourse in the mélange of discourses constituting the sphere.

Civil Society and Cultural Contestation

Influenced by their own experiences and by post-modern elaborations, the theorists of new social movements emphasize the diversity and the incommensurability of the social bases, aims and ideologies of these movements. They argue that since society is constituted by a multiplicity of social relations, these relations could not be reduced to one central contradiction. Underlying this position is a more significant shift in the way society is conceptualized shifting from political engagement to cultural contestation. Accordingly, the role of culture in constituting and reproducing society has been highlighted and is now regarded as a framework of self-understanding for individuals and collectivities. Hence, culture is a constitutive factor in the identity formation of individals and in the production of meaning in society. Critical debates regard culture as a domain where meaning systems constructing the individual are constantly

being formulated. Touraine (1981), for instance, conceptualizes struggles in the field of culture as struggles over historicity, that is, the way a society's production of meaning is subverted, renegotiated and redefined.[5]

Attention now has shifted from the practices of the political domain, to those oriented towards the subversion, overturning and re-definition of those cultural codes and symbols by which a society regulates itself and re-produces its everyday life. The distinguishing dimensions of these new movements consciously and volitionally take a back seat in the participation of power. Feher and Heller remark: "Modern social movements are primarily social and not directly political in character. Their aim is the mobilization of civil society, not the seizure of power."[6]

The culture-centric approach, at least in India, has been able to focus on a single aspect, so to say, *Hindutva*, and have identified the movement with the particular aim of Hindu fundamentalism as its sole objective. Covertly, the Barathiya Janadha Party government in India was able to galvanize these movements and enabled the majority of the population to assemble themselves in a polity, which they fondly called cultural nationalism. These cultural nationalists, with the help of the state, motivated a large number of people in terms of religion, caste and ethnicity. They are organized in terms of the demands set up in order to highlight the identities of a particular set of people owing allegiance to a particular religion.

Cultural Contestation and the Post-Modern Thought

The cultural scenario of the world, from the traditional point of view, has been regarded as a hierarchical structure with different cultures placed one over another or one around another according to the priority of importance. Post-modern thought has destroyed this myth of the higher and the lower, or the center and the periphery. Leotard's definition of post-modernism as "incredulity towards meta-narratives,"[7] is indicative of this shift of thought. Jacques Derrida[8] has given greater clarity to it by his notion of the deconstruction of the binary opposites. According to him, western thinking has been based on a hierarchical system of binary opposites of the center and the periphery. The center has been taken as that which guarantees meaning and truth, and what is at the periphery has

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[5] Chandhoke, *Op.cit.*, p. 224.

[6] F. Feher and A. Heller, "From Red to Green," *Telos* No.59, (1983), p. 37.

[7] Francois Lyotard, *The Post-modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1979).

[8] Derrida is considered as the central figure in post-modern thought. Some of his important works are; *Of Grammatology* (1975), *Writing and Difference* (1978), *Dissemination* (1981), *Margins of Philosophy* (1982), etc.

meaning only in reference to the center.[9] Western thought and life have been exclusively built on the center while the periphery has been totally excluded.[10]

This post-modern philosophical conception is applied to culture too; thus today no culture can claim to be universal and perennial,[11] posing itself as the model and thus superior to the rest.[12] In Lyotard's terminology, there are no more cultural 'grand narratives'. It is sad but true that until recently most of the ancient cultures in the world, such as Indian culture, have been marginalized as primitive, barbaric and antiquated; they have been given only 'footnote-importance'. Many others have been branded as 'cultureless'. Everyone accepted a center, an apex, a model and a grand narrative in culture; and this center or the grand narrative was based on western culture as the model and reference point for all the others.

Universal Rationality to Localized Rationality

Post-modernism rejected the idea of cultural meta-narratives by blatant rejection of a transcendental ground for rationality as the norm for validating and appreciating other cultures. Accordingly, post-modernism rejected the idea of cultural meta-narratives and this rejection obviates the need to underline the fact that there are no 'big stories' in every culture. Every cultural expression is a 'small story'. Thus, in the post-modern context, emphasis shifts from a universal to a localized rationality. Consequently, many postmodern thinkers call into question in various ways the role of reason in Enlightenment philosophy whose primary objective was freedom from myth, superstition, mysterious powers and forces of nature. This emancipation was to be effected through the use of critical reason, which urged rational beings to seek a fuller unification of knowledge. Lyotard for instance, makes a distinction between a rationalist and a post-rationalist path by drawing out their political consequences. If the rationalist path suggests a desire to preserve existing rules that conform to the dictates of capitalism, the post-rationalist path leads to destabilization and the unbalancing of the structures needed for the performative functioning of knowledge—an example of power and capitalist

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[9] There are a number of binary opposites in which the first term stands for the privileged center and the second is excluded as the periphery: man-woman, Christian-pagan, reason-emotion, nature-culture, truth-falsity, sacred-profane etc. The second term inevitably gets a negative meaning: thus, woman is what is not man; pagan is the one who is not a Christian.

[10] Philosophy is based on what is true; ethics on what is right, aesthetics on what is beautiful, religion is what is sacred, etc. The periphery exists only as totally excluded.

[11] For more on post-modernism, cf. Johnson Puthenpurackal, ed., *The Post-Modern: A Siege of the Citadel of Reason* (Delhi: Media House, 2002).

[12] Bertram Morris, *Philosophical Aspects of Culture*, p. 24.

rationalization. Lyotard wants to save reason and free it together with knowledge from the bondage of capitalist authorities.[13]

Post-Modern Thought and the Limits of Reason

A good example of a post-modern thinker who recognizes the limits of reason is Betaille, who disputes the exalted claims made by rational philosophers for reason. Since the value of a person is not diminished by a lack of reason, reason should not be the primary and most valuable characteristic of a person—or humanity as a whole. Betaille sees no need to construct rational thought.[14] Various post-modern thinkers such as Lyotard, Betaille and Foucault have questioned, undermined and rejected rationality for a variety of motivations. Generally speaking, some of the post-modernists provide us a view that is not centred on the development of rationality nor on a rational self. Mark C. Taylor's conception of self, for instance, is without presence or it secures no identity—a marginal and liminal being. For Lacan, the self, a decentered subject, is alienated from itself and others. Not only does the self lack identity, it is also eccentric, narcissistic and lacks presence, which suggests that it is a poor candidate for the development of any rational power. The post-modern discussion of difference and identity tends to undermine unity, denies any unifying factor of life, and relativizes God or the Absolute. This mode of thought denies any transcendental ground for rationality. There is also no ontological basis for rationality because several post-modern thinkers inform us that being is anonymous, a burden, and lacks presence. Since there is a further lack in the other, the notion of ontology and alterity do not secure any stable ground for rationality.[15] These observations undergird the idea that post-modernism as a philosophical style has questioned the place of 'reason' and accorded rationality a very limited role: as localized and decentred.

Localized Rationality as Localized Faith

The fact that every access to 'culture' is made possible through a specific ontology, should give everyone pause before generalizing the insights of this tradition. Our truths, despite their universal claims, are valid only within the parameters of the ontological tradition of a people or a country. In the case of western ontology, the world of history is so serious that its approach to reality and truth are wholly determined by the said tradition. Indeed, only the historical is true and therefore real. What is not historical is illusory and therefore not true in this tradition. Accordingly, in

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[13] Carl Olson, *Indian Philosophers and Post-Modern Thinkers* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 244.

[14] Georges Betaille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, trans. and ed. Michael Richardson (New York: Verso, 1994).

[15] Carl Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 248.

the western world-view all things not only begin in time, they also develop in time. Hence, the concept of history is of paramount importance for the western mind.

In the Indian tradition, however, there is no such nonce for the beginning or end of all creation. The Hindu metaphysics and world-view consider that all things are potentially embedded in an inexhaustible ultimate Reality, which periodically manifests itself in multiplicity and eventually takes that multiplicity back into its unmanifest being. But this taking back or destruction means not total annihilation of being, but its transformation into another shape and another name; the new that is beginning now is being organically related to the old, which has come to an end. This is true of human beings as well; the law of Karma and rebirth ensuring that each new generation being born is a remodeling of the old that has died except for the liberated few.[16] It amounts to saying that Indian ontology is built on the reasoning of 'faith' rather than in abstract reason itself.

LOCALIZED FAITH: AN ONTOLOGY FROM THE INDIAN TRADITIONS

The early Vedic tradition offers a good example for such an 'ontological' approach. If western ontology is built on a historical world-view whose flagship is history enlightened by reason, Vedic ontology is based on a world-view based on faith. This means that Vedic ontology is a sort of theological ontology, which suggests that its structure is determined in advance by the Vedic faith-world. More specifically, the Vedic world of faith is steeped in Vedic myth. The western ontology is a product of the western myth of history where following reason has always been taken as reasonable, though there is no reason to justify reason. By the Vedic world of faith is meant negatively that history is of no consequence for ultimate liberation, and reason is not the main instrument for the reflection process. The Vedic world of faith neither starts from reason nor relies on reason as its main guide. The parameters of human existence and human understanding are set not by reason but by the world of faith. It is important to keep in mind that what is meant by faith is not merely a rational ascent to what is revealed, an existential openness to one's way of experiencing and understanding. More specifically, the Vedic way of experiencing and understanding reality demands an existential openness of the human self to itself. Vedic man lives, moves and has his being in the mode of such experiencing and understanding of reality.

Speaking positively, the Vedic faith-world corresponds to the Vedic Myth of *Yajna, Rta* and *Dharma*. Unlike the myth of history, the myth of

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[16] Pratima Bowes, *Hindu Intellectual Tradition* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers pvt. Ltd., 1977).

Yajna, Rta and *Dharma* is trans-historical.[17] That is to say that it neither concentrates on history nor considers history to be an important constituent of its perspectives. By contrast, in the myth of history, history is considered to be central[18] because it is the criterion of reality. In the Vedic world, the word for reality is *Yajna: Yajna* is reality and reality is *Yajna.*

Translated literally, the metaphor of *Yajna* means sacrifice. This is not sacrifice in the Judeo-Christian sense, but 'as the primordial act', or simply as Act, the act that makes beings to be and is thus responsible for their becoming, without the assuming a prior Being from which they come. *Yajna* refers to the process that reality is. The *Yajna* metaphor, therefore, symbolizes the way reality acts.

It is the Prajapati-sacrifice, in mythical terms, which gives birth to Being, as well as to beings, and which releases Being from the burden of having to be the origin and the cause of beings. At the origin of every being there is a sacrifice that has produced it. The texture of the universe is sacrifice, which is the act par excellence, which produces all that is.[19]

Sacrifice is an on-going act through which the universe comes into being. But that is not everything; there is also the process of dying. Sacrifice comprises the dual process of being born and of dying, but such that from death every time new life emerges; and when this dies new life emerges from it again in a process without without end. The specific characteristic of the whole process is that in it all things are interrelated and interdependent. *Yajna* means a reality where every single thing is interrelated and interdependent. Hence to be is to be real; to be real is to be interrelated; and to be interrelated is to be interdependent. To try to break away from this interrelationship and interdependence is to try to break away from reality and hence to become less real as it were. *Yajna* as reality is basically a network of real interrelationships. The depth and extent of our reality is in proportion to the depth and extent of our interrelationships because we are constituted by such interrelationships.

Seen thus, *Yajna* is primarily but not merely an ontological perspective which is intimately connected with and accompanied by a ritual perspective. Hence the myth of cosmic *Purusha* which narrates the story of the cosmic sacrifice embraces the whole of reality. After speaking to the all-embracing and all-comprehensive nature of *Purusha* the myth comes to the sacrifice of *Purusha* and enumerates the major emanations from it. Through sacrifice reality is maintained in existence for sacrifice is the re-building of

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[17] Francis D'Sa, "The Dharma of the Universe," *Satya Nilayam Journal of Intercultural Philosophy*, vol. 1 (February 2002), p .22

[18] Raymond Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramanjari, An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration* (London: darton, Longman and Todd, 1977), 347: "If one had to choose a single word to express the quintessence of Vedic Revelation, the word yajna, sacrifice, would perhaps be the most adequate. (Re-structure).

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 348-49.

the *Purusha* who is dismembered in the primordial sacrifice. Interestingly but less surprisingly there is no 'God' in the world of *Yajna* to whom the sacrifice is offered. The famous and most significant hymn of *Purusha sukta* (RgVeda X.90) says, "With sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice."[20]

This hymn to the *Purusha* projects the vision of a universe wherein everything is connected to everything.[21] Individual things do not exist; the full identity of any thing is to be found only in its relationships to the total whole. Herein lays the ontological rootedness of the interrelationship between the individual and society, ethics and religion, spirituality and mysticism in the Hindu/Indian cultural tradition. Professor McLean has underlined this basic philosophy in a different context in the following words: "It elaborates the distinction of the composite and differentiated from the incomposite and undifferentiated being, but avoids duality inasmuch as the very being or existing of the composite beings of the differentiated universe is nothing other than the participating—the sharing and manifesting—of That One. Further, it enters into the Absolute in order to learn more of that Wisdom and Love which is the Plenitude of perfection, unsublatable and creative."[22] This becomes clear when this understanding of *Yajna* is understood with two of its most important features: *Rta and Dharma*.

The process of *Yajna* is kept going by the dynamic principle known as *Rta*, which sees to the harmonious running of the cosmos. *Rta* is the soul of *Yajna*, which signifies the cosmic law that allows the universe to run smoothly. The Vedic Indians, like their Hellenist brothers, were struck by the law and order, rhythm and harmony, prevailing in the universe.[23] Behind the rhythmic occurrences of natural phenomena such as day and night, full moon and new moon, high tide and low tide, heat and cold, sunshine and rain, summer and winter, spring and autumn, the Vedic Indians detected the Eternal Law or the Perennial Order, which they called

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[20] RgVeda X. 19.16., *Hindu Scriptures*, Translated and edited by R.C. Zaehner (London: Everyman's University Library, 1966).

[21] R. Panikkar, *op.cit.*, p. 351. "By sacrifice Gods and Men collaborate, not only among themselves but also for the maintenance and very existence of the Universe. Reality subsists, thanks to sacrifice. But this truly primordial sacrifice is not left to the whim of either Men or Gods; it has an internal structure and mode of operation, namely, *Rta*. Without *Rta* the Vedic sacrifice would degenerate into a manipulation of the whole cosmic order by Gods or Men, and we would fall into a hideous world of magic, as men are sometimes prone to do.

[22] George F. McLean, *Plenitude and Participation*: *Sri L.D. Swamikannu Pillai Endowment Lectures, 1977-78* (Madras: Univversity of Madras, India).

[23] The Greeks had a conception of the universe as an orderly whole-cosmos that is opposed to chaos.

R*ta*.[24] The universe itself is said to be founded on *Rta*, and to move according to it: "The dawn follows the path of *Rta* (the right path), as if she knew it before. She, the dawn, never oversteps the regions. The sun follows the path of *Rta*" (Rgveda, 1.24.8). The concept of *Rta* as cosmic order was later extended to the field of sacrifice (*Yajna*), and to the sphere of human conduct. Zaehner notes that *Rta* is "the law that governs the universe, the law that operates rituals and sacrifices, and finally the moral law that with equal impartiality regulates the conduct of men."[25] The path of *Rta* is the right path, as is evidenced from the following prayer: "O Indra, lead us on the path of *Rta*, on the right path over all evils."[26] The Vedic concept of *Rta* is thus applicable to the course of the 'macrocosms' or universe as well as to the 'microcosm' that is man;[27] it is applicable also to the sacrifice that mirrors the 'macrocosms *in parvo*'. *Rta* can therefore be rendered as 'cosmic order', 'moral law', 'sacrificial law', 'truth', 'righteousness', etc.

The Eternal Law, *Rta*, according to the ancient Indians, is eternally established by God 'Varuna' and is zealously guarded by him. Hence any irregularity in the field of sacrifice or in the sphere of human conduct was deemed to be a breach of *Rta*, the universal law. Such breach of *Rta* was counted as a sin (*enas, agas*); which is an offence against Varuna-deva, the promulgator and guardian of eternal *Rta*. The offender of *Rta* is an offender of Varuna, and makes chains for himself; to transgress *Rta* means to make fetters by which the transgressor will be bound by Varuna.[28] Thus we see already in the Vedas the concept that the violation of moral law is a sin and that sin is a fetter. In the Upanishads we witness the belief that the arrows of Siva, the terrible God,[29] will pierce the sinner. Hence, *Rta* is the dynamic structure in which every object and all actions have their proper place in which all parts support and strengthen the whole in a flowing symbiosis. The word is related through **"***ars***"** to the Greek "*harmos*," from which is derived the English "harmony," and to the Latin "*ars*" (skill, craft), the source of the English "art" and "artist." Accordingly, the term "*Rta*" connotes the experience of a 'finely tuned' universe whose laws can give

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[24] Rtam (Sanskrit) Rhutmos, (Greek) Ordo, Ritus (Latin) rite, rhythm, order (English).

[25] R.C. Zaehner, *Hinduism* (Oxford, 1962), p. 39.

[26] *RgVeda*, X.133.6.

[27] It is interesting to note here that the Vedic conception of the universe is depicted as *Purusha* primary person or primeval personand man too was conceived as *purusha*. This bears a parallelism with the Greek view of the cosmos as the macro-cosmos and man as the micro-cosmos.

[28] *Rgveda*, VII.86.

[29] Revealer of the Vedic truths designs to make propitious that arrow which thou holdest in thy hand for shooting at the sinner. Svet. Up. 3.6.

creative power to those gods and the cultic specialists who understand its structures.[30]

The whole process of *Yajna* and all its sub-processes like the rising of the sun and the regularity of the seasons in *Yajna* are the creative concerns of *Rta*. Not surprisingly, *Rta* is intimately connected with truth (*satya*), which can be said to be the reflection of *Rta*, the ontological order. Accordingly, "*satya*," which is related to "*sat*," is the ontological truth because "Truth without *Rta* would not be true."[31] Within paranthesis one should note in this context that the opposite of *Rta* is "*Anrta*," "a synonymum in the RgVeda for "*Asatya*," 'untrue' in the sense of unreal.[32]

From here on there is further ontological development with the added significance of the metaphor of *Dharma*. It refers to the specific relationships a thing has to everything in the universe in the context of *Rta* and on the background of *Yajna*. The oldest sense of the word "*Dharma*," which appears as early as the Rgveda signifies cosmic ordinance, often in connection with the sense of natural or divine law. While the term "*Adharma*" does not appear until a few centuries later, the germ of the idea lies in the term "*Anrta*," a synonym in the Rgveda for "*Asatya*," 'untrue', in the sense of unreal. It suggests that improper action leads to the fall of the universe into unreality and thus into non-being. The implication here is that in classical literature, *Dharma* carries an ontological weight—meaning thereby that being arises out of proper activity while improper action leads to non-being. This ontological aspect leads to the normative notion that, in the Samhita literature, *Dharma* is the system of activity that guides the world in such a way that *Rta* is not violated.[33]

If *Yajna* is the world-process and *Rta* the principle that ensures harmony and order in that process, *Dharma* is the unique ontological relationship that a thing has to the rest of the world of relationships in the world process. The harmony of the world-process is preserved when each thing remains true to its *Dharma* and when we respect the *Dharma* of every being. We might call the *Dharma* of a thing its very nature. On such a background, one needs to respect the *Dharma* of a particular thing because of its deeply *Dharmic* or religious act. Accordingly, the practice of *Dharma* consists in the awareness of the *Dharma* of the universe and in a life that lives in consonance with this awareness.[34]

The above contentions obviate the need to appreciate and appropriate *Dharma* with its two aspects: the cosmic connections and the sacrificial effects. Integration into the cosmic sacrificial process demands that one

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[30] William K. Mahony, "Rta in The Encyclopedia of Religion," ed. Mircea Eliade (1987), Vol. 12, p. 480.

[31] R. Panikkar, *op.citp*., p. 350.

[32] William K. Mahoney, "Dharma," *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, op.cit. Vol.4, p. 329.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Francis D'Sa, SNCJ, *op.cit.*, p. 27.

respects the *Dharmic* relationships operative in the universe. And to respect the complex *Dharma* of the universe is to respect the law of cosmic harmony (*Rta*) and to become part of the cosmic sacrificial process (*Yajna*). It also presupposes the idea that one discovers oneself only by discovering one's relationship with the universe. And the more one discovers the universe the more one discovers oneself. Aurobindo correctly observes the following:

> Dharma, at once religious law of action and deepest law of our nature, is not, as in the western idea, a creed, cult or ideal inspiring an ethical and social rule; it is the right law of functioning of our life in all its parts. The tendency of man to seek after a just and perfect law of his living finds its truth and its justification in the Dharma. Everything indeed has its Dharma, its law of life imposed on it by its nature.[35]

The above reflections suggest that the cultural foundations of Indian society are deeply rooted in the ontological framework of *Dharma, Yajna and Rta.* The specific feature of these concepts is that they deal properly with the value of one's actions and thereby establish man's relation with society, which has also implicit cosmic significance. In fact, the authentic name of Hinduism is *Santana-Dharma* or Eternal Law. Etymologically, the term "*Dharma*" derives from the root "*Dhr-Dharati*" which means to hold fast, uphold, bear, support, keep in due order which is conceived to be that which maintains the universe in due order. Expressions such as *Dharma-Putra, Sahadharmini, Dharmikam, Dharmistha, Dana-Dharma, DharmaPada, Dharmasya Giani, Dharmacara, Dharmam Saranam Gacchami, Dharmo Raksati,* etc. are quite familiar words to the Indians. The concept stands for ethics, religion, morality, virtue, spirituality, truth, good conduct and so on.[36] It also stands for natural and positive laws, the moral code and the various distinct duties of the individual. The whole religio-philosophical and didactic literature of India lays great emphasis on the necessity of maintaining *Dharma* for spiritual realization. Various systems of Indian thought emphasize the observance of *Dharma* as a *conditio sine qua non* of internal purification leading to eternal bliss. Accordingly, in the Indian context, to exist as a human person is to exercise self-awareness and hence self-determination of one's *Dharma* in life. It is in this that freedom and individual rights exist in the Indian context. Looked at from this perspective, the individual is ontologically connected with the cosmos in the Indian tradition and is aware of such an interconnectedness, which allows for the conscious human being to live fully in a *Dharmic* manner. Such an ontological rootedness of the individual with the cosmos

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[35] Aurobindo, The Foundations of Indian Culture, p. 104.
[36] J. McKenzie, *Hindu Ethics*, pp. 87-88.

undergirds respect towards the other—that is, respecting others' rights—respect which is grounded on the acknowledgement that each one's existence bears possibilities for everyone.

The entire society, as envisaged by *Manu*, is classed under four groups, each with distinct spheres of duties and obligations. The basis of this classification is the "division of labor" or what is sometimes called "specialization of functions." The aim behind this classification was better service to society as a whole. This is what is erroneously and often contemptuously called 'caste system'. The four classes in which society came to be divided are—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishayas and Shudras. Each class was expected to devote itself to the performance of duties peculiar to it—Brahmins to intellectual and spiritual pursuits; Kshatriyas to soldiering and maintenance of law and order, and protection of the society from external threats and aggressions; Vaishyas to agriculture, commerce, trade, industry, animal husbandry and so on; and Shudras to the service of all others. All these classes could ensure perfect coherence, justice and harmony only if they worked in close liaison with one another. It was thought that such a division of labour would invariably result in greater degrees of specialization and acquisition of skill.

But in the course of time the entire scheme became so rigidly followed that it gave rise to castes and sub-castes; a group's birth, not worth, became the right to continue in one's ancestral group. A Brahmin's son, for instance, would become a Brahmin and would be so respected. There was no corrective to this growing and governing rigidity. That is why emphasis was laid not on merit (*guna*) but on birth (*Janma*).[37] Although the *Varna* system enabled Hindu society to survive, rather than completely disappear—as many other societies had disappeared under similar conditions—it could not uphold the spirit in which it was formed. Pratima Bowes argues,

> it happened because a society functioning on caste rules and regulations could somehow carry on under its own steam, so to say—albeit in a state of frozenness and without any visible institutions, like churches monasteries and so on, and it thus proved to be virtually indestructible. Besides this, there was the belief in a timeless being which through changes of progress and degeneration remains essentially the same. This made the Hindus believe that the Hindu religion, called '*Santana Dharma*' had always existed and would always exist whatever the ups and downs brought about by time, and this enabled them to accept the reverse in their fortunes with a certain degree of philosophical calm, resulting in their capacity to wait

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[37] Pratima Bowes, *Hindu Intellectual Tradition*, *op.cit.*, Chapter 4.

patiently for the next phase of change when time would inevitably alter the picture.[38]

Another classification is also mentioned based on the concept of *Ashrama*. Humanity is divided roughly into four stages—*Brahmacharya, Grahastha, Vanaprastha, and Samnyasa*. A *Brahmacharin* was a student who was supposed to live and study under the guidance of a qualified teacher and observe the various norms, such as studying religious texts, performance of *Yajnas*, abstinence from sense-enjoyment and faithfully serving the teacher. A *Grahastha* was a householder who was enjoined to lead a married life. He is required perform five great duties (*Yagnas*): (1) as a token of love and affection towards the gods, (2) gratitude to the saints and the seers of the past and the present for showing others the path of peace and progress, (3) respect and remembrance towards deceased ancestors, (4) of seeking the welfare of all human beings, and, (5) of all beings. A *Vanaprastha* was the one who sought to develop strong spiritual motivation, which he does by moving into the forest and living a life of austerity and meditation; and lastly, a *Samnyasin* was one who sought renunciation of all that was worldly and strove for spiritual enlightenment by undergoing various austerities. With the explicit aim of preparing the individual for effectively discharging the various obligations, both towards him and towards society, the early Hindus, thus, devised a four-fold scheme of life.

Accordingly, the Indian world-view, which was based on the doctrines of *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Dharma*, regulates the relationship between individuals, and the cosmos and individuals, thereby defining, in some ways, the nature of things themselves. This idea of an eternal cosmic order that pervades all of existence is found in the concepts of *Rta* and *Yajna* that occur in the Vedas and later in the concept of *Dharma*.

We stated earlier that it is in having *Dharma* that man is different. He is not just a cause but also a consequence of *Dharma*; thus *Dharma* circumscribes the individual and the social life of men. It conditions his past, his present and his future in terms of the ways he orients himself to them. Man's birth, his future course of birth or freedom from it, his socialization, his role and status in the family, caste and society, the meaning and aims of his life and his relation with the physical and the supernatural are defined by, and are dependent upon, *Dharma*. Individuals come and go but *Dharma* (*Manava-Dharma*) goes on. *Dharma* therefore, transcends man and accompanies him in the world hereafter. It is believed to be accumulated through the process of rebirth. It is a force or a power, but not a supernatural power in the religious sense of the term.

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[38] *Ibid.*

Dharma: Two Conceptions

In the Hindu tradition, the moral use of the term "*Dharma*" is a derivative of its natural use and ultimately something ought to be such and such because that will be the fulfillment of its nature. However, in the Hindu tradition, the moral use of the term "*Dharma*" became intertwined with its natural use, so that something which ought to be moral, is viewed as natural to it. Thus, in the Hindu tradition in the course of time there came about the wide acceptance of the idea of *Dharma* as the basis of all functioning in the universe. Without the support of any philosophical reflection there sets in an ambiguity in the understanding of the concept *Dharma*. This ambiguity hindered the development of a critical tradition in the sphere of social thinking. Whatever order happened to develop in the society through the natural process of interaction between various forces present therein was accepted as the working out of the principle of *Dharma*. Looked at in this way, *Dharma* has both descriptive and prescriptive contents: descriptive, the way things are and prescriptive, the way things ought to be. Both of these contents may be referred to as belonging to the nature of things particularly when we mean by nature the essential nature, not accidental properties, so that the distinction between nature and norm disappears. The above reflection suggests that Indian ethical theories are determined by certain metaphysical concepts. The value of an action is judged not only by the degree of personal sacrifice but also by the doctrine of *Dharma*. An action is good and meritorious when there is renunciation on the doer's part.

Want of philosophical reflection and critical attitude that engineered the Hindu society owing to its political, religious and cultural factors made Indian society hierarchical in character and confused two different conceptions of *Dharma*, one corresponding to the nature of a thing as it is, relevant to the idea of physical laws, and the other—the norm things are required to observe—relevant to the idea of social, political and religious laws. When it functions as a natural or descriptive concept (the way things are) *Dharma* is quite different from *Dharma* when it functions as a moral or prescriptive concept (the way things ought to be). Accordingly, there was a calculated and intentional confusion between the two uses of this term "*Dharma*" and the purely descriptive was taken as prescriptive: this is the belief that something is *Dharma* or morally commendable because it is *Dharma* or happens to be that way and hence it is its nature in the sense of what it is. This paved the way for the justification of the caste system and untouchability on the ground that it is part of *Dharma*, the implication being that the irregularities of the system ought to be there as lawful, right and virtuous, because it is the nature of the system. Since religious and lawful sanctions have been volitionally attached to it, the initial ideal was lost sight of and the system developed fissiparous tendencies and the code of inequities evolved. This has given the system a bad name outside as well as inside India. Unfortunately, the cultural and religious supremacy of the

Brahmins who were supposed to uphold the meaning and worth of the doctrine of *Dharma* could not do so and identified it with *Varna* and *Jati* with privileges based on birth and which prevented the concepts of rights and freedom in India. The essential basis of the *Varna* system, metamorphosed later as the caste system, resulted from what groups of individuals developed in consonance with their qualifications in virtue and justice; the keystone of the structure was not detachment but union. The element of exclusiveness and untouchability was otherwise repugnant to the social philosophy and tradition of not only the Aryan race but also of their philosophy, which was rooted in the doctrine of *Dharma*.

KAUTILYA'S ARTHASASTHRA AND THE POLITICAL TRADITION

We understand from the above that an idealistic conception of the universal unity predominated in the social and political scene in India, which was backed by concepts, such as *Rta*, *Yajna* and *Dharma*. Kautilya's *Arthasasthra* emphasized political practice based on the age-old Indian concepts of *Dharma* and *Varnasrama* and established the possibility of an authentic socio-community existence. Accordingly, in the Kautilyan society, people of all *Varnas* and *Asramas* were free to engage on shared understandings of economic and societal normative structures. *Varnasrama*, though a socio-pedagogic, ethico-economic term, was fundamentally a political concept with its rights and duties. It was an indispensable category in an organic world-view, which should not be confused with the organic theory of society.

The Indian political tradition as articulated in its most important text on politics—Kautilya's *Arthasasthra*—facilitated the inner strength and growth of groups of people. Although the Kautilyan tradition of theory and political practice conceptualized a notion of society in which individual rights were not given adequate emphasis, nevertheless participatory rights were accorded adequate weight and emphasis as it accommodated all *Varnas* and *Asramas* in the system. In the political tradition of Kautilya, there can be no such theory that can be theoretically constructed by a God. The theory is subject to, and implicated in, practice through the mediation of *Smrti* and *Sadacara*. In other words, the Indian classical political tradition conceptualized the relation between theory and practice in such a way that neither theory nor practice exists and functions independently of some less time-bound, if not time-less, category. One may then ask the question: under what structural conditions can such a theory function? The answer is that this is possible only in highly integrated communitarian societies in which the elite and the ordinary folks (Brahmin and Sudra) accept unquestioningly the authority, content and message of *Smrti* and where the *Sadacari* (exemplar) can be located and recognized without any conflict of interpretation and evaluation. The society in this political tradition was a society that internalized [authority] through disciplining the

individual's disposition to perform his function and duties, and the sum total of the performances by all the members of society led to orderly community existence. In short, the classical Indian political tradition was society-centered as it subordinated the state and government to societal mandates. This is the idea of the active involvement and participation of a group as a community in the conduct of the various institutions and organizations to which they belong in their day-to-day living; and this may exist in a system where the government at the centre is paternalistic.

The picture of the Indian society that one gets from the political treatises and the law books is that of a full-fledged caste society where all kinds of functions intellectual, religious, political, military, commercial and manual—were being carried on by hereditary groups. Each functioned according to the traditional rights as laws or according to rights/laws specially made by the group itself, such as a guild, or according to local customs and organizations such as caste and village councils in inter-dependence with one another but without much interference from outside agencies, even from the political authority itself. The various groups in the society thus enjoyed a large measure of internal autonomy, of course, within their own limitations, and the main functions of the society were carried on in a decentralized manner according to the customary laws of caste over which the king had no authority.

Such an idea of unity and plurality-relativity implied in India's social philosophy viewed the society as an organism. Accordingly, the Indian conception of a society was not a collection of individuals loosely joined by self-interest but an integral unit like an organism made up of many different but interrelated and mutually dependent parts. Thus if Sudras were required by 'sacred law' to be the servants of higher castes, the higher castes were ordained by the same law to look after Sudras and their families as a matter of duty, the infringement of which according to Kautilya, was a punishable offense. The interests of different groups were ameliorative and not antagonistic because they had basic needs and goals in common: Interdependence and harmony were therefore natural. Each part or group contributed to, and received from, the whole. The good of an individual was tied to the good of all.

Dharma: Moral Versus Legal

Such a social and political tradition in India accorded more importance to the state of existence in society than to an individuals' existence. Thus the relations among groups and men were a moral problem rather than a legal one in India's intellectual tradition. Added to this understanding was the concept of man that this tradition upheld. According to the Vedas, man is an integrated whole made up of the physical body (*Sarira*), sensitive mind (*Manas*) rational intellect (*Buddhi*) and enduring soul or self (*Atman*). Indian philosophy is unique in declaring '*Yatha Pinde Tatha Brahmande*', i.e. microcosm is macrocosm. Such an outlook and

conception when combined with its idea of society as an organism paved the way for a conception of unity at the cost of individual rights and freedom. Consequently, if Brahman is the Transcendent, the individual self (*Jiva*) too is considered as Transcendent in this tradition. In other words, individual consciousness is not enclosed in itself but constantly and progressively opens to the Reality, which is beyond it.

The Indian philosophy and world-view advances a four-fold nature of the human self that corresponds to *Brahman*. Man's soul or self is the infinite ground of his being. His intellectual/rational aspect is the cause of his personal being. However, in the case of man, body, mind and intellect are limited by time, space and causality. Man is not free at all these levels although he is endowed with the power of choice, freedom and volition. The integration, according to Indian ethics, goes a step further and is consummated when body, mind and intellect are centralized, harmonized and organized by the unitive *Atman,* thereby bringing about a unity in diversity and harmony in discord. This is said to be an actual human existence in the various philosophies of India.

The above considerations of the concept of man vis-à-vis the supreme Person points to the fact that Indian philosophical thought is devoid of all absolute distinctions. Accordingly, Indian philosophy generally maintains that all realms of existence are continuous, the physical, the vital, the mental and the spiritual. Thus there is no absolute barrier between the natural and the super-natural, the sentient and the insentient, the physical and the psychic, the sexual and the spiritual and indeed between God and man.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: THE INDIAN WORLD-VIEW

This tantalizing experiential metaphysics of the 'Indian' is the philosophy and world-view within which this culture thrived and progressed. It hardly ever took any interest in individual existences, but instead focused on socio-community existences. Accordingly, unlike the western tradition, this tradition to a certain extent could not develop the concept of a social justice based on the concept of a social equality of man. Rather, this tradition emphasized the concept of compassion and was sensitive enough to the distress and pain of the people one personally has to deal with. Justice compared to compassion is an abstract virtue and it is less dependent on personal involvement. Compassion is best exercised in one's immediate circle while justice refers to society at large. The traditional Hindu culture fosters a good deal of concern and affection to one's relations, dependents and friends and even those who personally seek help. But it was not concerned with social justice.

The above considerations obviate the need to understand and thematize the issue of individual Rights, which is predominantly a western concept from a different perspective. An issue becomes a problem only when it is present in our awareness as a privation. The issue of individual

rights had never been a problem for the Indian masses, as they were leading an individual existence with the support, concern and care of their social existence. In view of the predominance of social existence over individual existence, conceptually and ontologically, the essential being of man was viewed as part of the whole, the whole being the society or even the cosmos. Accordingly, it generated a sense of compassion rather than of social justice in man toward all beings.

The world-view, which this culture fostered and developed, was the universal unity and harmony of all beings. As a result, the issue of individual rights among men or *Varna* or *Jati* did not take the shape of a problem, nor did any form of struggling for individual rights become recognized as a legitimate moral activity. The philosophy of ideal unity, which this culture fostered, has its beginnings from Rgveda's Purusasukta onwards and generated the desire for cooperation rather than rebellion. Also, the desire for individual rights has never been a problem. The philosophical trend did not encourage struggling for power, dominance or self-advancement. Given the philosophical background and the conception of man as a part of the cosmic *Purusa* and also because of the ideal of harmony and unity, the issue of rights could not attain the status of a genuine and independent problem. Individual grievances and group grievances were sacrificed in relation to the value of universal unity. Hence, conceptually, not only were the actual experiences of human relations ignored but also the issue of rights never arose as a problem. For example, the idea of justice had never been regarded in this culture as the central idea in dealing with human relations. Harmony and the consequent equality of men were to be arrived at through compassion and the mutual conscious striving for harmony.

The historical evidence for the general inclination toward the philosophies of harmony can be seen from the fact that the logical school—the Navya Nyaya—never gained any real influence in the Indian consciousness. Their social positions were always secondary in comparison those of the schools that upheld a metaphysical view on universal harmony. Probably, the general masses were never quite conscious of having rights as citizens. Unfortunately, the Brahmins who had a monopoly over all thoughts and teaching were silent in making people understand their rights too.

Such a line of thinking and philosophy in this culture gave rise to the distinctive idea of social harmony and social democracy, which is rooted in the concepts of *Dharma*, *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Varnasrama*. They were meant to make the individual realize that the performance of one's own good leads to the good of the society. Such a societal order, along with its required social, economic and political aspects, has to follow from *Dharma* itself. Thus the presence of *Dharma* in the universe, underpinning the right functioning of things, sometimes thought of as their norm and sometimes simply as their nature, was taken for granted in India, not only by the Hindus but even by the Jains and the Buddhists. Hence the Indian social and religious

philosophy recognized an organic vision of society where all functions were recognized as essential parts of one order.

European Education and the Genesis of Rights

Due to the foreign invasions, especially the impact of the British Raj and the struggle for independence in 1857, Indians became increasingly conscious of the threat to their community existence and culture. This awareness was naturally more acute among those who received a European education through the medium of the English language. They became conscious of their nationality and of their rights and they organized people to secure their lawful rights. Consequently, a small segment of Indians felt the impact of English education and were moved by a western understanding of idealism, materialism, pragmatism and utilitarianism and the lawful rights. They felt that the philosophical ideals were no longer a safeguard against weapons and attitudes of the British. From that historical moment, there emerged the need and the desire for self-protection which triggered a series of social movements aiming at social, political and religious reformation. When all these changes rocked the social, political and religious climate in India, the British discovered 'the wonder that was India' and simultaneously the Brahmins lost their monopoly over the scriptures and their interpretation due to the introduction of the printing press. Tarachand says

> In order to understand the full significance of this impact, one has to remember that, in the first place, western knowledge as it arrived in India at the end of the eighteenth century differed profoundly in character from traditional Indian knowledge as it existed then. Secondly, the approach to knowledge and the purpose of the search for knowledge were not the same in the two systems. Thirdly, while western knowledge was the function of an open society and was not confined to any particular class, knowledge in the East was limited to closed groups.[39]

In the social, political and religious fronts leaders, such as Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub C. Sen, Dayananda, Tilak, Gokhale etc., engineered a new consciousness among the people. Dayananda's four principles— *Svarashtra*, *Svabhasa*, *Svadharma* and *Svadesi*—set off a new idealism for political, economic and religious self-determination and rights. This new idealism coupled with the national pride of Vivekananda and the philosophy of the superman of Aurobindo paved the way for a non-pacifist and individualistic attitude. It was this new consciousness that identified

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[39] Tarachand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, vol. II (New Delhi: Govt. of India), p. 172.

itself with the general desire for regaining the individual through struggle instead of submission. This was virtually the beginning of a consideration of the issue of individual rights in India.

In this social milieu, Gandhiji combined eclecticism and liberalism with catholicity, modernity with conservatism, humanism with nationalism and social reform with the politics of mass agitation. He restored a belief in Hinduism and affirmed its philosophy of pluralism, which underlies his well-known philosophy of non-violence.

GANDHI AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

According to Gandhi, it is the *telos* of man to be self-governing and therefore man can live effectively only in small self-governing, relatively autonomous communities. Gandhi considered the village to be an ideal to attain in order to meet all its primary needs and a good many secondary needs through its the efforts of individuals. For such needs as cannot be met by self-effort, neighboring village communities will voluntarily federate to form the Taluka community and set up the Taluka Panchayat. Likewise, Talukas may federate to form a district community with its national Panchayat.

As opposed to a powerful central government directly elected by the people, Gandhi saw Panchayats, which delegated powers upwards, as more in keeping with the self-governing nature of man. Since the highest tiers of government would be created only when necessary and entrusted with only such functions as were beyond the capacity of the lower tier, Gandhi called his system organic and compared it to a series of concentric oceanic circles at the center of which was the individual ready to sacrifice for the village or outer circle, the villages ready to sacrifice for Talukas, the Talukas for the district, and the district for the nation.

Gandhi advocated such a communitarian, participatory political system. According to Gandhi it accorded with the *telos* or self-governing nature of man. Gandhi also said that only a participatory system can be self-sustaining, that is to say, the qualities necessary to support it are generated by the very act of participation itself. Such a participatory system— democracy—recognizes the self-developmental character of man and enables him to gain in self-esteem. For Gandhi, participation is not a cost, but an activity of self-understanding. In the Gandhian view, man is a political animal and political activity, which means self-governing, is natural to him in the sense that it is a self-sufficient activity done for its own sake. Being self-governing is intrinsically worthwhile because it realizes man's natural capacity as a political being. One cannot delegate this activity to another.

When Gandhi advocates the *Varna* system but rejects Untouchability, or when he accepts the subordination of the state to society but does not reject the state, or when he attacks machinery as a violation of *Ahimsa* but also accepts machinery that can be shown to be more conducive

to *Ahimsa* than to *Himsa* in a given situation, he is trying hard to harness the ideal to an objective reality. This is not to compromise but rather to realize. This meant for Gandhi not compromising with everything but only with what was regarded as secondary and inessential to the ideal. So far as the essentials were concerned, Gandhi advocated the ultimate sacrifice of one's life. The Gandhian struggle was based on two principles—namely, non-violence involving the ultimate sacrifice of one's life and no-compromise on basics but reasonable compromise on inessentials. It is in this sense that Gandhi held that religion could not be separated from politics and religion here meant *Dharma*, which formed the basis for the distinction between the essential and the secondary. What is significant here is that Gandhi applied tradition to the new situation. He must have departed from the situation and tradition but only far enough to accommodate the objective pressure of what may be called existential modernity—that is, modernity as a set of concrete life conditions, which should be distinguished from modernity as an ideology accepted consciously after critical reflection. The first kind of modernity is inescapable to anyone living in a certain place at a certain time. The second kind, ideological modernity, is subject to critical reflection to a greater extent, and in fact, provides some space outside existential modernity from which one can see alternatives. I suggest that Gandhi has accommodated existential modernity without succumbing to ideological modernity.[40] Although the moral order that one sees behind the Gandhian position is close to the traditional/classical position, notwithstanding, the society that Gandhi envisaged exercises autonomy and performs utilitarian calculations where the utility it calculates is the moral good—*Dharma*.

AN INITIAL CONCLUSION

Let us recapitulate the essentials of the historical and cultural factors, which stimulated the rise of the issue of individual rights and freedom in Indian culture.

In the earliest period of Indian culture, there was idealism for universal unity so to say: an organic world-view, which predominated in the social, political and philosophical scene of Indian Life. Accordingly, man was said to have an ontological connection with the universal substance and attempts to actualize the natural state of harmony with all beings were expressed in the formulation of moral codes for both the ruler and the ruled. The idea of the four ends of life developed by this culture and philosophy may be said to be more religious than philosophical and political. But still it undergirded the development of a cultural continuum based on the doctrine of *Dharma*. In accordance with the organic view which the Indian tradition

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[40] I am indebted to a research paper, which was presented by Professor Sreenivasa Rao in Goa University (1992) where he made a distinction between ideological modernity and existential modernity in Gandhism.

developed, it always upheld that not only do differences participate in a unity but that each in their own ways reflects the totality of existence. The pursuit of four ends by men through four stages of life is indeed a pursuit of every kind of possibility that is open to man, righteousness, material well being, pleasure and liberation or spiritual well-being and freedom. The achievement of all these by a man means that he would have realized in his life the totality and unity of existence. Thus relations among men were a moral rather than a legal problem. Accordingly, in order to be a sage or a gentleman who wishes to perfect and transform himself one has to pattern himself after the ideal of the compassionate man. This kind of life perspective could not allow struggle for personal freedom at the expense of other people's happiness to be a genuine goal of morality. In other words, the general view of life for an Indian was to submerge his/her ego, to disappear, and to be absorbed into the universal harmony. Even during the period of the rationalistic school of Indian Philosophy—Navya-Nyaya— and the reformation movement by many leaders—Dayananda to Gandhi— moral philosophies had assumed a predominant role in the creation of an ideal society. This ideal of harmony persisted for a long time because there was no clear consciousness of the meaning of a person independent of the family and the society, and individual freedom as understood in western Philosophies was disvalued. Although there were many changes in the various communities and groups that held political power the people maintained the mentality of 'accepting' whatever living conditions were thrust upon them.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF FREEDOM AND RIGHTS

It is an amazing fact that there is no particular word in Sanskrit to signify 'Person'. Although "*Purusha*" is a term that denotes person, this term and its representation were regarded as the manifestation of the cosmic person in individual persons. Accordingly, the Indian cultural tradition regarded the attainment of self-realization as directed not only to the attainment of personal advantage, but also covertly to a rational and moral concern for the welfare of other members of the family or society/community. Hence, considerations of the concept of man as a person were fundamentally based on the moral dimensions of an individual whose existence was considered as an "existence of co-existence" with others and the supreme Reality. Hence, the freedom of the individual was not regarded as freedom to do what one likes; but rather, it was freedom to do what one does not like to do when a higher goal is to be attained—that is, out of concern for the welfare of others. This difference in the understanding and definition of freedom: not a 'freedom to' but a 'freedom from' was also conducive to the non-recognition of individual rights in the Indian cultural tradition. Thus the feeling of concern for the 'other' underlined all Indian philosophies generally and motivated people to transform themselves by being naturally and morally harmonious with the

'other'. Such an outlook and philosophy fostered the idea of the organic world-view and developed an intellectual basis for the oneness of all existence.

The unity which this tradition talked about is openly acknowledged to transcend reason. To say in this scheme that the doctrine of the unity of all existence is not rational is to utter a tautology, since it amounts to saying that unity cannot be comprehended by means of a device which works through mutual exclusion of polarized oppositions. Reason inevitably uses this device for doing the job it is supposed to do, namely, the discrimination of differences. In this tradition and culture the idea of the oneness of reality also helped to develop characteristic attitudes in the phenomenal sphere. It made Hindu phenomenal ontology pluralistic and led to the acceptance of a variety of conceptual schemata for phenomenal classification and explanation. The effect is that this tradition does not demand that all beings should be capable of being packed into one beautifully coherent system. The oneness-of-reality idea also led to a relativistic epistemology, the doctrine that no one conceptual schema can claim to constitute truth absolutely—truth being relative to its proper framework of reference. This led to a pluralistic methodology: 1. Empirical, based on perception and inference, as used by Nyaya, 2. Discriminative, based on conceptual or rational clarification as used by Samkhya meaning discrimination, and 3. Intuitive, as is used by Vedanta and others in different measures.

In the western conceptual framework, there is a duality within the nature of man, the physical aspect which includes all undesirable appetites and which is considered to represent the evil nature of man and the spiritual aspect which has a divine origin and which contains all good qualities in the human person. With this duality there arises the division between the mundane and the transcendent. Such a dualistic nature of man necessarily makes an external or supernatural cause—God—to intervene and to sustain man's worth, dignity and rights. In the case of Indian world-view, there is a force immanent in the human self that drives man toward being good. Man follows a pattern created by his own deeds in relation to his situation over several lives until the time he is liberated. The same *Jiva* (life-urge) may move backwards and forwards many times over before the goal is reached. And the goal is not just his rights in the phenomenal sphere, but also the rights of attaining Moksa or liberation.

Evidently there are two ways in which the individual acts in the world: with personal motivation or as belonging to social associations and organizations in the broadest sense of the word. The Indian world-view and philosophy has never claimed that individual rights are absolute or that the individual's reality must be recognized unconditionally and necessarily. The doctrines of *Dharma*, *Yajna* and *Rta* have provided the necessary tools for the realization of an ethics of rights inasmuch as they necessarily imply one's relation with the "other." It is not simply theoretical or a matter of preference. These doctrines/postulates are meant to make life ever more possible at exemplary levels with criteria and standards of quality, that is,

with a universally desirable value. Hence the concepts of *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Dharma* have accorded multiple meanings to the conception of communitary living as it provided and appreciated persons in community, their realities and possibilities.

THE CONCEPT OF *GURU* AND TRANSCENDENCE

Our reflections on the concepts of *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Dharma* as the foundations of Indian culture was meant to emphasize the idea that the Indian cultural tradition was forced to transcend the limitations of nature in its internal aspect—in the world within man. Culture in the Indian tradition consists of the transformation of self, the development of attitudes and the cherishing of values, which promote the integration of the society and the self. It consists in a value-seeking and value-affirming consciousness, whose practical embodiment is the concept of *Guru* in the Indian cultural tradition that formed the foundations of a qualitative life. An understanding of this cultural tradition as *Guru* tradition means that the deepest identity of a person as *Guru* is found precisely in transcending himself and reaching out to others by *Yajna* (sacrifice), *Rta* (order) and *Dharma* (righteousness), which are the grounds upon which this tradition has developed its identity as a people. Accordingly, it may be argued that the foundations of the meaning and quality of the social life of Indians have centred on *Gurus* as they realized the meaning of the Absolute or Transcendent. The earliest as well as the perfect expression of this concept is found in the Upanishads. As the ancient Indians put it, *Guru* is a man with *Trikaranasudh*i, a man whose feelings and thoughts, speech and action are in harmony with each other.

The *Guru*-tradition in India is based on a sound heritage stemming from its ancient civilization. It is the ancient and unbroken teaching system by which self knowledge is transmitted from the one enlightened about it to the one aspiring for it. The *Guru* is said to be the living force which has been present in Indian tradition, culture and life for thousands of years. Although scriptures such as the Rg Veda, the Upanishads, the Bhagvad Gita, and the Ramayana have the worship, devotion and respect of the people from all strata of Indian society throughout the ages, the presence of the *Guru*—the one who is enlightened on the truth of the scriptures and is thus the living scripture—continues to be the central force in Indian philosophy, spirituality, and culture.

The word "*Guru*," a Sanskrit term specifically used for describing the most elevated spiritual teacher, means "heavy or weighty"[41] with spiritual authority; its esoteric definition is derived from the Sanskrit roots "*Gu*," which means "darkness," and "*Ru*" which means "dispeller of."[42]

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[41] Sir Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (1899), (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990 [reprint]), p. 359.

[42] N.S. Subramanian, trans, *Encyclopedia of the Upanishad* (Delhi :Sterling Publications 1985), p. 385.

Guru, therefore, means the one who dispels darkness and brings forth light: he is the one who, by the weight of his own enlightenment, enlightens others. The word "darkness" specifically refers to the ignorance of the self, Brahman, the ultimate Reality, the one source and essence of all existence. Under the influence of the ignorance of the Self, a person mistakes the body and the mind to be his true reality. *Guru* is the one who assists in removing the ignorance of the self, by introducing self knowledge, or the knowledge of the indivisible whole.

Upanishads as the Source of Guru Tradition

Though Indian legend claims the existence of *Gurus* for thousands of years, the first scriptural evidence for the *Guru*-tradition is the Upanisads.[43] The subject of self knowledge is the central theme of the Upanishads and of the *Guru*-tradition both ancient and modern. Self knowledge is the state or condition of awareness attained by one who has become enlightened or liberated. Self knowledge is the original consciousness, prior to any state of consciousness that is affected by duality or ignorance. The nature of self knowledge is Oneness—*Brahma-vidya*—literally, *Brahma* means the "Self" and *Vidya*, means "Knowledge"—and is presented as both the original and the final knowledge or the realized knowledge, which is not subject to change or improvement. Hence, in the *Guru*-tradition, whether ancient, medieval, or modern, the subject and nature of self knowledge (*Brahma-vidya*) remains unchanged because self knowledge is not knowledge dependent on time; it is said to be eternal. Therefore, the Guru-tradition is not a tradition of accumulative knowledge, but of realized knowledge, which is both timeless and universal.

Guru Consciousness as Brahma-Cetana

The term "*Guru*" represents not only the enlightened teacher but also

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[43] The Upanishads are a body of scriptures which contain the esoteric knowledge of the Vedas. Traditionally, they are explained to be the Vedanta, literally the end of the Vedas, or the final compendium of the Vedas, in which the essential knowledge of the Self, *Brahman*, as revealed by the Vedic *Guru* has been recorded. The word 'Upanishad" literally translates into "sitting" down near" the *Guru* to receive the esoteric teachings: sit (verbal root "*sat*"), down (prefix "*ni*"), near (prefix "*upa*"). More specifically, and esoterically, in the Upanishads the word "Upanishads" is defined as "secret" (*Rahasya*) to indicate that these mystical teachings should be secret because their content is too elevated for the one who is not trained to receive them. In total there are proximately 108 Upanishads, with the oldest, the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, dating as for back as the ninth century B.C.E., and newer Upanishads, dating as the late fifteenth century C.E. The common ground of all the Upanishads is their exposition of B*rahman*, the self, and of *Brahma-Vidya* or self-knowledge.

the state of *Guru* Consciousness. *Guru* consciousness is synonymous with *Brahman*, a term first used in the Upanishads to represent the self, the one essential reality.[44] That person who transforms his or her dualistic consciousness by which he or she sees him or herself as a subject to an object and realizes the one indivisible reality of *Brahman*, becomes the embodiment of *Guru* consciousness. In this respect the state and the person who has attained the state are one and the same. Although *Brahman's* nature is essentially ineffable (*Anirvacaniya*) it is realizable through direct experience (*Atma-saksatkara*). And the one who realizes it is *Brahman* itself. Accordingly, *Brahman* is defined by such epithets as Freedom (*Svatantra*), perfection (*Purna*), infinity (*Ananta*): eternal existence (*Sat*), pure consciousness (*Cit*), and indivisible bliss (*Ananda*); the *Guru*, who has realized *Brahman*, can be defined by the very same epithets. However, in the Upanishads, which are the scriptures referred to as Vedanta (literally, "the end of the Vedas"), the *Guru* is repeatedly defined as that being who has dissolved or transformed the divided human consciousness back into its originality, *Brahman*. Here, *Guru* is presented not as deity, priest, poet, or teacher, but as consciousness: *Guru-cetana*—a transcendent consciousness identical with the ultimate reality—*Brahman* or *Brahma-cetana*. The one who has transformed his human nature as a result of directly realizing this *Brahma-cetana* becomes its embodiment and is, therefore entitled to be called *Guru* and to enact the role of the liberated teacher.

He is the Self, which is free from evil (*Apapa*), ageless (*Ajara*), deathless (*Amrtyu*), sorrowless (*Asoka*), and free from uncertainty, free from fetters, whose conception is the real, whose desire is the real. He is the supreme Lord, he is the ruler of beings, and he is the protector of beings.[45]

The Katha Upanishad states this vision of the Self and depicts the one perceiving it in the following way:

> In all beings, dwells this (*Purusa*)
> As *Atman*, invisible, concealed from view,
> He is only seen by the keenest thought,
> By the subtlest (intelligence) of those thinkers
> Who see into the subtle.[46]

Having attained the height of self knowledge, the enlightened being is no longer engaged in actions to become free. Freedom is the nature of the *Guru*. Thought and activity are known as the knowingness of the self. Relaxed in the knowledge of the all-permeating nature of the *Atman*, the *Guru* is not a vehicle for revealing self-knowledge. The ignorance does not

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[44] Here it may be noted that while the Upanishads have several orthodox (*Astika*) acceptable to the wide array of Indian Philosophical traditions, this paper is founded primarily on Advaita Vedanta.

[45] Maitri, VII, 7: Radhakrishnan, 854.

[46] Katha, I, 3, 12; Deussen, 1:288.

exist as a reality in the enlightened one, and the *Guru* acts for the liberation of all, while removing the darkness of ignorance by shedding the continuous light of the Self. In the Yoga-tattva Upanishad it is concisely expressed:

> At an unprohibited, far off, place.
> Calm and quiet, undisturbed,
> The Yogin guarantees protection
> To all beings, as to his own self.[47]

GURU: A POST-UPANISHADIC DEFINITION

The metaphysical culture of the Upanishads is the fertile ground from which other cultural traditions have arisen in India. Thus the descriptions of the person of the *Guru* in the *Kularnava Tantra*, "the Guru Gita" from the *Skanda Purana*, *Astavakra Gita*, *Tripura Rahasya*, *Uddhava Gita*, *Avadhuta Gita* and many other scriptures, are extensions of the Upanishadic archetype. It is essential for this examination of the *Guru* to refer even briefly to other scriptures within the philosophical and spiritual tradition of the Upanishads because these reveal the impact of the Upanisadic Guru-tradition in Post-Upanisadic times. The two representative scriptures to be examined here are the *Kularnava Tantra* and "the Guru Gita" from the *Skanda Purana*.

One of the most thorough descriptions of the nature, role and qualities of the *Guru* is located in the *Kularnava Tantra*.[48] This scripture describes the rarity of the enlightened being by the example of light, stating that many are those teachers who radiate light equivalent to lamps, but rare is the one who reflects the [light] comparable to the sun (XIII, 104).[49] According to the *Kularnava Tantra*, the *Guru* has the following qualities: He is charming (*Manohara*); endowed with all attributes (*Sarvalaksana-sampanna*); is a knower of all the *Agamas* (*Sarvagamartha-tattvajna*); knows the application of all the *Mantras* (*Mantra-vidhanavid*); bewitches the world (*Loka-sammohanakara*); is of happy countenance (*Sumukha*); is clean (*Svaccha*), is easily accessible (*Sulabha*); dissipates doubt and delusion (*Bhrama-samsayanasak*); looks upon the world with an inner vision (*Antarlaksya a Bhirdsti*); is all knowing (*Sarvajna*); knows the mysteries of time and place (*Desakalavid*); knows the meaning of gestures (*Ingitakaravid*); knows past, present, and future (Trikalajna); is capable of

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[47] Yoga-Tattva, 15; Deussen, 2: 716.

[48] The charismatic presence of the *Guru* is central to the pure tradition of *Tantra*; a rigorous sect of Hinduism which, contrary to modern western portrayal, aims at attaining *Moksa* through complete mastery of the senses. Inauthentic teachers, posing as *Gurus*, advocated indulging the senses.

[49] Ram Kumar Roy, trans., *Kularnava Tantra* (Varanasi: Prachya Prakashan, 1983), p. 257.

penetrating to the inner depths of the devotee's being (*Vedhaka*); is the illuminator (*Bodhaka*); is peaceful (*Santa*) ; is compassionate to all creatures (*Sarvajivadayapara*); can control the movement of the organs (*Svadhinendriya Sancara*); has conquered the six enemies, desire, anger, greed, delusion, jealousy, and pride (*Sadvargavidjayaksama*); can distinguish between the fit and unfit disciple (*Patrapatravisesavid*); is stainless (*Nirmala*); is ever content (*Nityasantusta*); is independent (*Svatantra*); is endowed with the power of *Mantra* (*Mantrasaktimana*); is a lover of genuine devotees (*Sadbhakta-vatsala*); is steadfast (*Dhira*); is merciful (i); speaks with a smile (*Smitapurnavak*); is dear to devotees (*Bhaktapriya)*; is ever generous (*Sadodara*); is profound (*Gambhira*); is an excellent practicant of the spiritual sciences (*Sistasadhaka*); is free from attachment, hate, fear, pain and ostentation (*Dambha*); can distinguish between what is good and what is bad (*Gunadosavibhedaka*); is unattached to the opposite sex and wealth, and dislikes bad company or other vices (*Anasakta*); has a feeling of oneness with all (*Sarvahambhavasanyukta*); has the power to be silent (Mauni); is free of preferences (*Nirapeksa*): is unaffected by praise or criticism (Tulyuaninidatuti) T).[50]

"The Guru Gita," the significant section of the *Skanda Purana* and an authoritative scripture about the *Guru*, states that unless one has understood the *Guru-tattva*, or the *Guru* principle, the Vedas, Sastras, Puranas, Smrtis, Mantras, Tantras, Vows, Penances, and Pilgrimages will not be comprehensible or beneficial. Those who attempt to study the sacred texts without comprehending the *Guru-tattva* will not be able to penetrate the essential meaning of its teachings, and license will make them liable to misinterpret them. "The Guru Gita" identifies the *Guru* as the bearer of light, and states: "He by whose light true knowledge arises is known by the word "*Guru*."[51] The enlightened intellect is the instrument by which an *Avidya*-ridden intellect can be illumined, much like a lit candle can be used to light an unlit one. This process of enlightenment cannot take place without the flame contacting the wick. In this respect the *Guru's* very presence is potent with knowledge; contact with it transforms the disciple into *Guru*. "The Guru Gita" claims that even by remembering the *Guru*, knowledge will spontaneously arise in the devotee.[52] The power of the Guru to illumine the devotee is so heightened that illumination can be attained even through the subtlety of thought.

TAPAS AND NYASA

In the development of the Hindu cultural tradition during the time of the Upanishads and even afterwards in various *Bhakti* movements, the model that came into prominence is centred on *Gurus*. What is strikingly

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[50] *Ibid.*, 36, XIII, 38-50: 247-248.
[51] Guru Gita, 10.10.
[52] *Ibid.*, 69, 26.

explicit is that the general orientations of this culture were predominantly rooted in two important Upanisadic concepts—*Tapas* and *Nyasa*. The reason why this culture pays great respect to *Sannyasins* is that the Indian tradition holds in high esteem the life of *Tapas* (austerity, penance, asceticism) and *Nyasa* (renunciation).[53] In fact, *Tapas* and *Nyasa* are the two leading doctrines of the Upanishads. *Tapas* or ascetic life is raised to a special vocation (*Dharma-skandha*) in the Chandogya Upanishad.[54] In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, we find men like Yajnavalkya departing to the solitude of the wilderness for the purpose of doing *Tapas* and contemplation of the *Atman*.[55]

The Chandogya describes the *Tapas* of *Upakosala*, the *Brahmacari*.[56] The same Upanishad, again, speaks of *Tapas* as the most important (*Prathamas Tapa Eva*).[57] Yajnavalkya instructs Gargi that one wins *Svarga* (a temporary heaven) if one performs sacrifice and worship even though one has not known the *Atman*.[58] The Brihadaranyaka imparts the noble idea that patient bearing with sickness (*Vyadhi*), taking part in a funeral procession and cremation ceremony etc. are the best sort of *Tapas*, viz., *Paraman* Tapas.[59] The Mahanarayanoparishad regards the renunciation of all (*Sannyasa*) as superior to all forms of *Tapas*.[60] The Kathopanisad speaks of *Tapas* as the foundation, basis or prerequisite (Pratistha) of *Brahma-vidya*. The Svetasvatara declares that *Paramatman* is intuited through *Tapas*;[61] *Atmavidya* is rooted in *Tapas*.[62] *Brahman* is known through *Tapas*; and the grace of God. According to Mundakopanishad, helps the performers of *Tapas* and knowers of Brahman to attain the "imperishable person."[63] The Prasna Upanishad exhorts us that "those who practice *Tapas* along with [the] virtues of chastity, faith and knowledge will win the eternal goal.[64] Deussen maintains that it is *Tapas* that later assumed the form of the *Vanaprastha-asrama* and *Nyasa* became later the *Sannyasa* Ashrama.[65]

Thus in terms of its own valuation, the Hindu cultural tradition must be considered as a tradition based on *Guru Cetana* whose foundations were

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[53] It is observed that probably *Tapas* in the forest were the forerunner of *Vanaprastha* and renunciation was the forerunner of *Sannyasa-asrama*.

[54] Chand. 2.2.3.

[55] Brh. 2.4.3

[56] Chand. 4. 10. 2.

[57] *Ibid*., 2.2.3.

[58] Brh. 3.8.10.

[59] *Ibid*., 5.11.1.l

[60] Mahanarayana, 62.1.

[61] Svet.1.15.

[62] Atma-vidya tapo-mulam Svet. 1.16.

[63] Mund. 1.2.11.

[64] Prasna. 1.10.

[65] P. Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 367.

built on *Tapas* and *Nyasa*. Accordingly this tradition rejected all absolute distinctions as it was rooted in the idea of an underlying unity that sustains all differences. Hence, this tradition was able to postulate and maintain that all realms of existence are continuous—the physical, the vital, the mental and the spiritual—and it is perfectly possible for one order of being to be transformed into another. In such a tradition and world-view the pattern of life events is interdependent as the tradition and the world-view are based on the doctrines of *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Dharma*. *Guru,* in this tradition has acquired and propelled these doctrines in their lives and is seen as a unitary consciousness. They were variously called *Brahma*, *Jnani*, *Brahma-saksatkari*, *Brahma-anubhavi*, etc. What this tradition undergirds, therefore, is the experiential realization where the *Guru Cetana* is the *Brahma Cetana*. *Guru*, therefore, in this tradition is not merely a person from the western perspective, but a unitary consciousness whose identities have achieved self-expression through *Rta, Yajna* and *Dharma*.

This positive notion of the *Guru* has always had an identical or unchanging meaning in the Indian philosophical tradition and culture. More than by mere accretion, *Guru* has managed to incorporate the great achievements of Indian cultural discovery for which, in turn, he has been both the stimulus and the goal. Having looked into this cultural tradition as based on the *Guru* Consciousness vis-à-vis *Brahma Cetana*, we have examined the nature of the *Guru* through reflection on a series of paired and progressively deeper dimensions: first, as a role, and as the one who lives out this role; second, as free self-consciousness that realizes itself as the Identity and as the subject of that freedom; and third, as moral agent who fulfils that plenitude of consciousness.

Accordingly the Indian cultural tradition, which is rooted in Guru-Consciousness as an image of the transcendent principle, transformed and sensitized its culture. Although Guru remains an image of the transcendent in man, he remains a subject and part of nature; he is not merely a producer or consumer of human nature but has been a creative and transforming center of human possibilities. This is an affirmation of existence as sharing in *sat*, *cit* and *ananda* and it reflects the meaning of the transcendent for man and of man in the Transcendent.

It would seem, therefore, that the *Guru* power or *Guru* consciousness is a creative stance reflecting the content, not only of the past, but also of the time in which one stands and of the life project in which one is engaged. It is a creative unveiling of the content of the tradition as this comes progressively and historically into the present and through the present, passes into the future. Conversely, it is this sense of the good or of value, which emerges through the concrete, lived experience of a guru throughout history and constitutes the cultural heritage of the Indian tradition as the rich cumulative expression of meaning evolved and manifested through the times to the point of normative and classical perfection. Although culture is historically and spatially conditioned, its expressions are trans-spatio-temporal. It is embodied personally in a Ramakrishna or a Vivekananda;

Aurobindo or a Gandhi, a Sankara or a Ramanuja in different eras of time. Variously termed charismatic personalities, paradigmatic individuals or characters that meld role and personality in providing a cultural, epistemic, political or moral ideal, they supersede mere historical facts. As concrete universals, they express the harmony and fullness of perfection, which is at once classical and historical, ideal and personal, uplifting and dynamizing, and in a word, liberating.

Unfortunately, this cultural tradition of India, which is rooted in *Yajna*, *Rta* and *Dharma* is in danger now because Indian society in general and civil society in particular as the arena of *Guru* consciousness, which guarantees democratic dialogue and contestation has not been appropriated by certain political parties and their ideologues. The votaries of 'cultural nationalists' do not provide any space for dialogue or compromise, contestation or mediation, which are the hallmark of any democratic polity. Though they claim to abide by all democratic norms, they are forming a counter civil society because their ideology provides privileges to religious affiliation over any other kind of identity. Kothari and Sethi speaking of modern India put it in the following way:

> It is in … situations where a well-defined civil society does not exist, where the culture, history and experiences of different communities are not only different but at variance with each other, and where the state does not enjoy an overriding moral authority in many spheres of social life, if not itself being the major perpetrator of violations, that a relevant politics of human rights needs to be defined.[66]

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[66] S. Kothari and H. Sethi, "On Categories and Interventions," in Kothari and Sethi, eds. *Rethinking Human Rights: Challenges for Theory and Action* (New York: New Horizons Press, 1991), p. 9.

PART IV

FAITH AND GLOBAL VISION

FAITH AS PHILOSOPHY FOR DIALOGUE IN A WORLD CULTURED BY DIFFERENCE

OGBO UGWUANYI

ABSTRACT: This paper seeks to establish the relevance of faith in a world of divergent world-views and philosophies. It does this by establishing that reason is a product of culture with strong limitations upon intellectual union. The paper sees philosophy as basically a cultural achievement which limits the strength of its mission for mankind. It enumerates the problems of western philosophy, and defines the need for an alternative world philosophy. First, its alienating character makes man a slave to reason. Second is its dualistic character by which it distances man from nature. Third is its tendency to separate by which it creates a world of opposites: good or bad, true or false, male or female, positive or negative, white or black, etc. These qualities define reality in terms of contrasts or negations whence emanate mental boundaries and conflicts in our world. The paper argues that these inherent weaknesses define the poverty of philosophy in the western tradition, which would remain the paradigm for any emergent tradition of philosophy for a long time to come. Alternative world philosophies such as oriental and African philosophy with their limited concerns are worthy alternatives to western philosophy. A critique of these alternatives establishes the urgency of faith as the basis for dialogue and discusses why and how this is so.

Introduction

The subject of a faith is important because it defines and unites mankind. Though the cultural expressions of faith may differ, its underlying implications are a compelling belief in God, and worship either at the personal or the institutional level, which constitutes a reliable bond among humankind. Not more than one percent of the population of the world is atheistic or un-believing; the other of ninety-nine percent has a common belief in God where the question is: faith in what, and by whom? Given the overwhelming influence of culture on man can we really achieve a world founded on faith in which faith serves to bridge human differences? This paper sets out to examine this question by way of postulating the grounds for the evolution of such a world. It begins by establishing the psychic and biological foundations of human culture. Then it goes further to establish how culture leads to a quest for difference. Thereafter it discusses how this is so in philosophy, which has served to establish the hegemony of one world culture. The paper discusses the effect of this in the quest for

difference by other world cultures through other cultural philosophies and goes further to look at the effect of this unending quest for differences and the conflict of reason emanating there from. On this ground it opts for faith as a neutral ground for the rational unity in the world.

Foundations of Culture

Culture is rooted in man's attempt to meet the biological and psychic features of his being in relation to his environmental conditions. According to biology, all living things possess seven characteristics. These living characteristics, which apply also to man, are: respiration, movement, nutrition, reproduction, irritability, growth and excretion. Although these biological features are common to all human beings the mode and manner of carrying them out differs from one place to another. The human response to these needs often depends on the social and environmental conditions of existence. This is much more salient with such features as nutrition, movement, irritability and excretion which are the characteristics that man fulfills with the cooperation of the environment or what we might call cooperative agents. While man can exercise other functions, such as respiration and reproduction unaided by the environment or without the presence of a mediating agent, he cannot exercise these functions without support or mediation of the environment. One instance of this is movement, which cannot take place without such supportive agents as land, sea or air. Another example is nutrition as man cannot feed without nature.

But the efficiency of these cooperative agents and the role they play differ from one place to another. The movement of a person living in a riverine area is essentially by boat or canoe just as movement for a man living in the desert is by horse. It should, therefore, be expected that the man living in a riverine area would value a canoe or boat more than a horse and verse versa. In the same vein, a Fulani nomad who lives all his life in the bush and defends himself with a stick would value a stick more than the man who lives in an urban area and protects himself with a gun. By the same contrast, a British woman, who wears jeans to protect herself against the cold weather of Britain, has reason to attach more value to jeans than the African woman who lives in the heat of the African sun and wears a wrapper throughout her life. All these are examples of how we respond to the same need in various ways, depending on the challenge of the environment: they are the environmental foundations of human culture.

The second natural foundation of human culture arises from the psychic nature of man. Man is a social being (*ens socialis*). He is born into a society and lives and grows there. Aristotle postulated this view when he defined man as a political animal who necessarily lives in a state and argued that he who does not live in society or does not need it must be a god or a beast. As a political animal, man needs language to communicate with other human beings. Given that man is a social and political animal who needs language to operate in society, the question is which language does he

choose to speak and why? The answer to this depends on the environment of the individual. A child who grows up in an *Igbo* world would define and achieve the first interpretation of the world through the medium of the *Igbo* language and culture. Again, the child who grows in a family of dumb people would easily understand sign language before he understands spoken language. In the same way, a child who grows in a community of touts and rogues will have a stronger predisposition to rough words and language than one who grows up in a civilized community. All these demonstrate the contribution of nature and environment in the shaping and making of human thought. They are the psychic foundations of human culture.

Two issues arise from this: firstly, human response to the challenges of his existence often grows through society. Culture transforms into a world-view or communal philosophy and becomes a historical bond. Secondly, given the different circumstances under which man exists and achieves a culture, it often translates into a principle of identity or difference becoming a community lens or spectacle. The farmer in an African village who lives and works with a hoe grows to see the hoe as a weapon of strength. Again, the Fulani nomad in Northern Nigeria who lives all his life with stick in the bush soon begins to build his identity in terms of the stick. Soon his cultural life begins to rotate around the stick as it assumes an important place in his culture. In the Fulani culture of Nigeria, for instance, part of the marriage rite is to whip a man to frenzy with a stick challenging his ability to endure the pain, following which he is given his bride. Similarly, in many agricultural tribes of Nigeria, it is part of the marriage rite to present yams to a bride's family, a sign of the man's capability to feed his bride. All these demonstrate culture as a principle of identity or difference.

Identity and Culture: Difference of Culture and Culture of Difference.

When a man is asked "who are you?" Many of his answers come within the purview of culture. To a question "who are you?" or "who am I?" the following answers would usually follow. "I am a Nigerian," "I am an *Igbo* man." "I am from *Mbu* town." Further attempts to explain these usually come from the cultural provisions of these units. Defining e myself as a Nigerian means that I locate myself within the modern Nigerian nation-state. The implications of this answer is that I am from a certain country in West Africa, south of the Sahara, in a former British colony, with two major religions (Christianity and Islam); a thickly populated country of black men and women. It will also be expected that I eat a certain type of food: rice, yam, garri, etc.; that I am familiar with certain types of fruit: paw-paw, mango, etc.

If I were to go further to define myself within my tribal identity in Nigeria, by saying that I am an Igbo man, the expectations would be sharper and clearer. It would be expected that I speak the Igbo language, that I have

a republican outlook on life, that I eat *tuwo* or *akpu* (pounded cassava), that I am familiar with *ofo symbol of justice*, that I am familiar with kola nut rituals and prayers and other cultural items of the Igbo world-view. If I identify myself more narrowly down my town, there would also be some other items of individuation and identity. All of these define culture as a tool for difference—as that which represents the achievement of man in his interaction with nature and environment.

It is often in this function of culture—that is, culture as a weapon for a world-view and as a principle for difference—that culture creates some problems that distort and disorganize human society. This is because it is where culture often sees "the other" in terms of difference only. Notwithstanding the fact that people meet the same need in different ways, they often grow to see themselves as different. The result is that certain elements of tension or discord begin to grow from this leading to a culture of difference. This tension is much more so, when a social group or human community believes that their cultural values are more relevant than those of another group. If a British woman concludes that putting on a pair of jeans gives her a worthier place among men, there is no reason why she would not begin to look down on any culture that forbids this practice for women.

Ali Mazrui, in his important work *The African Condition* (1979), enumerates seven functions of culture. According to Mazrui, culture "provides a worldview," "provides a standard of evaluation," "conditions motivation," is "a medium of communication," "the basis for stratification," "the agent that determines the production pattern of a people" and "the defining identity of a people." A close study of these functions shows that they generally revolve around culture as the basis of the identity of a people. By providing a world-view to a people, culture defines the world for that people in certain way. This means that we can anticipate or recognize as many world-views as there are cultures. Similarly, by providing motivation, culture empowers people to act in a certain direction by setting goals and rewarding the agents. As a medium of communication it is the basis of spiritual union between two or more people. Hence when people of the same cultural affiliation cling to a position tenaciously it is because a spiritual union is found in their culture at the level of understanding or interprete. Again, the production pattern of a people comes within the resources of their tools and training so that culture is an agent of identity creation since the tools themselves come only within the resources available in that environment. All these, attest to the strength of culture as a framework or basis for difference and identity. Apart from the universal definition of man as a rational animal therefore, every other attempt at conceptualizing man comes within the framework of one's culture as does every value we attach to the phenomenon of life. This is precisely why culture is a strong item of difference.

Western Philosophy as a Cultural Achievement

Identity or conscious quest for difference is not achieved in a vacuum but is largely a product of culture re-enforced and redefined by reason. Identity creates the self and provides it with esteem so that further growth and development can only be in this direction. Identity provides for development while development defines cultural growth which itself is an outcome of rational growth.

The growth of any society is squarely a result of the extension of reason and logic as the highest rational achievement of any race or people. Thus Western philosophy in all its major traditions, schools of thought, periods, etc., has operated as a cultural achievement of Europe. And as a result has nearly cut itself off from any rational dialogue with other world cultures. This is evident from the fact that there are hardly any great names in this discipline except for those that have participated in this culture.Thus, Fredrick Hegel made this the center of his own philosophy; identifying reason purely and definitively with European thought as summarized in German idealism. The African thinker Sedar Senghor questioned why *reason is Greek and Greek is reason* though no non-European culture has strongly acculturated to this philosophy and the world-view that gave birth to it. Thus while the Egyptians are widely acclaimed as the fathers of western philosophy they have not, until recently been mentioned as the originators of philosophy, apparently because they do not share the culture of the people that developed this philosophy. As a result of this there is hardly any emphasis on African contribution to philosophy in all the major histories of philosophy. Even William Amo, a worthy contemporary of Kant from Ghana in West Africa who wrote important philosophical works in the area of epistemology, hardly gains a relevant mention in the major works of the history of western philosophy. The implication of this is that philosophy itself is seen and appreciated as a legacy of the western world to which others must remain listeners. At a more serious level this intellectual achievement is often used as a weapon of imperialism to subjugate, interrogate and misrepresent non-western cultures. One only needs to read and digest Hegel's *Philosophy of History* to appreciate this position and to clearly understand the fact that despite its claim to universality, philosophy in the western culture is nothing more than the love of wisdom in the western culture and tradition.

The second problem with philosophy in the western tradition that defines it as cultural philosophy with strong limitations for other sections of humanity is its separationist tendency. From Socrates to Sartre philosophy in the western tradition promises man a proper understanding of reality. To do this, it provides the tools of logic and criticism. With metaphysics as its root, philosophy in the western tradition is an unending search for truth that thrives on contradictions. A.J Ayer provides a stimulating characterization of philosophy in this regard by defining the philosopher as an "intellectual troublemaker." From this inherent controversial quality, it creates a world

of opposites where reason seeks difference rather than similarity. It promotes a culture of reason where reality is defined in terms of contrasts and opposites and thus thrives on destruction since this is what provides a justification for reconstruction. In western philosophy, it is good or bad, truth or false, right or wrong. There is hardly a basis for rational unity even in logic, the law of thought that should serve others and cohesion.This is hardly the case in other world cultures and traditions such as the oriental and African worlds. A strong attempt to provide a logical representation of reason in Africa would show that in some regards an issue must not be designated as wrong because it is not right given the communal foundations of reason and logic in traditional African thought.This is the point demonstrated by C.S.Momoh when he argues that:

> Logic in African philosophy has to be communal and co-operative logic as opposed to the prevailing tendency in western philosophy where logic is imperialistic in the sense in which one main connective or symbol (>,V,; ,=), dominates a proposition and situates its valuation. In the African world-view elements or constituents co-operate in a communality and "connectiveness" [and] are dynamic not satic, spiritual not material, moral not imperialistic, and these peculiarities must characterize an authentic logic in African philosophy. (C.S. Momoh, 1989:184)

The third problem that limits the relevance of philosophy in the western tradition is its dualistic tendency. Philosophy in western culture and tradition separates man from nature. It is a trend of thought where man is meant to interpret and understand nature with the aim of achieving a more rational life. The concept of nature in western philosophy opposite to that of man. Save for metaphysics where nature gains a place as an integral part of being, western philosophy in its other branches does not locate nature on the same mental axis with man with whom it deserves a closer categorization or place in human wisdom. If we interpret nature as the given outside human culture, interaction and invention, we can easily recognize the limits of any mental construct that ignores nature for such effort is, as it were trying to invent another kind of human being.

The fourth problem of western philosophy is that it makes man a slave to reason. Philosophy in the western tradition seeks to advance reason unrestrictedly. It is simply the love of wisdom to which it wishes no limit. A philosopher, as Nietzsche defined him, is " a man who never ceases to experience, see, hear, expect, hope and dream extraordinary things." (Cited in Martin Heidegger, 1961:10). A philosopher borrowing from this important designation is then the man whose achievement can only be measured by the limitless potentiality of his intellectual reflection. In seeking to achieve this end and develop reason unrestrictedly this pattern of philosophizing makes wisdom an end unto itself, discounting the relevance

of any wisdom gained or achieved. This makes its relevance highly doubtful because any mental venture that enslaves man is hardly worthwhile. If knowledge and wisdom are desirable it is because of what they should be or can contribute to the growth of man and human welfare. These and the other deficiencies outlined explain the poverty of western philosophy as the final gateway to the realization of humanity.

Alternatives to Western philosophy

An important response to the shortcomings of philosophy in the western tradition has been the effort to develop other traditions of philosophy that do not harbour its potential for failure. These cultural philosophies include: Oriental philosophy and African philosophy. Oriental philosophy expounds some form of metaphysical monism that unites nature with man. In its major schools of thought: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, oriental philosophy seeks to make man participate in, or attain, reality in a manner that invites one to seek self-development as the gateway to being. God and nature are all one, only separated by layers of being, which can be overcome or broken through by religious disposition to these truths. In the Buddhist thought pattern "Good and evil are not unchanging entities indeed, good contains within it evil, and evil contains within it good." (Ikeda, 2000:4).

The search for an alternative world philosophy has also come from the African viewpoint. This has been known in recent philosophical circles as African or African-American philosophy. This dimension of philosophy, which arose as a response to the intellectual denigration of the African, seeks to establish reason as a reliable aspect of African thought and culture. Clearly cultural from its inception, African philosophy is a systematic documentation of the thoughts and wisdom of African peoples with a view to presenting the items in them that defend and therefore define the African person and thereby authenticate the rationality of the African difference. African philosophy, stands as an intellectual reply or antithesis to western philosophy as rendered in the thesis of such imperialist scholars as Levy-Bruhl who held African thought pattern to be pre-scientific and prelogical. It has four major schools of thought: ethno-philosophy, national-ideological philosophy, critical currents of thought and philosophical sagacity, all of which are built from and around the African experience and generally emphasize a defense of truth in favour of the African.

African philosophy emerges from an ambition to negate colonialism, which, through its Eurocentric education, "shattered the mirror" in order to render the African mind black and prepare or condition it for the absorption of an alien system of education and the foreign values contained therein" (Koka, 1995:12). Thus it comes out of a desire to reverse the "de-education, miseducation, de-culturization, and de-spiritualization of the African people (Koka, 1995:13).

But alternative cultural philosophies do not seem to serve as adequate answers to the desire for an alternative world philosophy. This becomes clear when we consider the limited concern of these philosophies which often address one or two cultural concerns of a people without further extension. While oriental philosophy, for instance, focuses on the religio-psychological aspect of man, ignoring thereby other aspects, African philosophy only narrows its mission to asserting, defending or defining the logic found in African rationality. Thus the limited concerns of these philosophies make them a weak response to the poverty of philosophy so that they have not attracted great attention in other sections of humanity. While African universities are overpopulated with books, ideas and theories derived from western and eastern philosophies and scholarship, there is hardly any serious attention to African philosophy in western universities. I see no other reason for this than a contempt for African philosophy as a narrow cultural discourse that does not deserve the interest of mankind as a whole. But this is again due to the inherent imperialism, or what the Buddhist philosopher Daisaku Ikeda calls "excessive attachment to difference" (Ikeda, 2000: 17), and the *separationist* and alienating tendencies of philosophy emanating from the western tradition. This position is confirmed by the fact that philosophy in the western tradition has denied its an Egyptian-African heritage. This goes to explain all the more the superman, master-slave, superior-inferior, imperial, wordl-view of the western philosophy, for which it creates and recreates a culture of denial and difference.

Faith as a More Reliable Alternative

Have alternatives to the western-tradition of philosophy served in effective measure to counter the failure of philosophy? My answer is "no." To begin with, western philosophy has served as the stimulus for the birth, growth and development of modernity. As a result of this it becomes very difficult to negate or displace western philosophy since, by implication, this requires negating the ideals of western philosophy by proffering a worthy replacement. This is the point being addressed by the Bennois philosopher, Paulin Hountondji, in his work *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*. For Hountondji, there might be no achievable special mission for alternative world philosophies like African philosophy because unlike the west, Africa has not recorded the strong contribution to modernity whereupon the relevance of her philosophy could be explored. Thus only by entering the universal world of discourse can the African make the impact required to acquire the desired attention. For this reason African philosophy can only be defined within the history of the African philosopher as an African, and not essentially as a corpus of wisdom with enough rational justification on its own to be explored and critiqued. In the same vein oriental philosophy remains a sectional philosophy read more or less for cultural familiarity with the eastern world-view and philosophy than anything else. It is yet to

achieve the kind of global attention, which it needs to serve as a worthy alternative to western philosophy. Although it shares the same ancient history with western philosophy (Buddha and Lao-Tzu, etc., being ancient heirs to wisdom), it has not extended its wisdom with significant cross cultural, interdisciplinary and geographical boundaries as western philosophy and hence remains an unreliable alternative to western philosophy.

Beyond these reasons, however, there is an important item that weakens the strength of oriental and African philosophies as alternative world philosophies. This has to do with their nature as an academic extension of the method of western philosophy. These alternative world philosophies often display some inherent tendency toward conflict and controversy, which forms a major feature of western philosophy. The effect of this is an unrelenting effort at difference by which they again undermine their uniqueness as an alternative to world philosophy and doomed to suffer the fate of western philosophy.

It is in the light of the foregoing point that faith asserts itself as a reliable alternative to a more coherent rational world. Faith transcends continental, racial or rational divides. At the level of faith human reason is humbled to see its limit and is invited to re-appraise its limitations in the light of a more certain truth beyond its comprehension. Here, the arrogance and self-acclaimed authority of philosophy is brought to a point where it yields to a greater inner logic of dependence and thereby made to see the limits of what it can be and what it can do for man.

The question that arises from this is: "faith in what or in whom?" A direct answer is: faith in God defined as absolute, total and final wisdom. My reason for this is simple. Man's highest intellectual achievement is philosophy yet philosophy has not served man. Through a rational culture that defines being and wisdom form a defective world of difference, philosophy has not provided man the final answer to the innermost longings of his being. It is still a world where a search for difference or diversity stands as the bedrock of wisdom. At the heart of this achievement is often the pride that destroys the worth of its intellectual achievement. But faith as the foundation of reason has an alternative advantage. Here, truth can be tested with the common denominator of divine truth.

Faith has an important advantage that overrides the differences engineered and promoted by philosophy. Faith is trust as an inner virtue that defines a lack. It is a waiting. To have faith in someone express as confidence in his ability to provide for, and respond to, a lack. But this desire must come with some humility, which is the foundation of wisdom. Thus, faith is not only trust or confidence but an invitation to waiting. This quality of faith is essentially what philosophy in the western tradition has lacked and still stands to gain. Wisdom founded and nurtured by faith has the potential to achieve a more humble world and by so doing create an environment for a more tolerable and humanworld.

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CHAPTER XV

SOME REFLECTIONS ON FAITH AND REASON IN GLOBALIZATION

D. PAUL SULLINS

THE MODERN PROBLEM

While faith and reason may be distinguished analytically, taking them as entirely separate modes of human activity or being precipitates what I take to be the central intellectual problem of modernity. Descartes had the capacity but also the need to assert his famous syllogism, only on a precondition of complete doubt. That is, only by attempting to eliminate faith completely, to operate entirely in the realm of reason, does the Cartesian dilemma emerge. As many have noted, the ambivalent subject of "cogito" and "sum," solves the problem of metaphysics at the cost of creating an inescapable mind/body dualism, which lies at the root of the modern dilemma. On reason alone, as Kant made clear, one can make metaphysical statements with certainty, or empirical statements that are indeterminate, but not both at once. So, modern metaphysics has increasingly addressed vapid technical questions, while empiricism corrodes any sense of a supernatural order of reality.

A number of ways to resolve this dilemma have been examined throughout this seminar. It has been proposed that phenomenology may allow us to "get behind" the subject-object dualism to an integrated personalism that can ground both faith and reason; or that universal psychological structures of the development of the reasoning capacity in individuals may correspond to universal ontological structures of reason. These views offer significant advances and insights, but they do not address the problem of community. The problem of faith and reason is still located primarily in the individual subject. Perhaps the subject is now both rational and pistic in some sense, instead of only rational, or either rational or pistic: but he is still an individual reasoner and/or believer. Because of this, neither of these views can get at the question of globalization, since they cannot address the central problem of culture. Personalism addresses well the reductionism of analytic philosophy, but only within a fairly specific intellectual context; the phenomenological perceptions of those in disparate cultures are themselves quite disparate. Likewise, the claim that ontogeny recapitulates ontology is subject to the disparate results of developmental research, which strongly suggests that, like the quest for the historical Jesus, images of psychological development reflect the prior ideals of the experimenter as much as anything else; much like, in an earlier age, research made implausible the claim that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.

On the other hand, it has been proposed that restricting the metaphysical ambitions of reason by concerning ourselves only with bounded procedural rationality, and/or restricting faith-based universal truth-claims in the interest of tolerance, and/or shifting the emphasis from individual rights to collective obligations; are all ways to permit human collectivities to function, even flourish, in the absence of a normative solution to the problem of faith and reason. These views also have much to commend them, but they do not propose to solve the problem of faith and reason so much as to work around it. They begin, in fact, with the axiom that agreement on matters of faith (and possibly also rational metaphysics) is not possible—a fortiori due to globalization. These views, then, can be, at best, only holding actions, allowing us to manage the concrete engagement of conflicting religious faiths and political interests while the fundamental question of faith and reason remains unresolved. The question may, of course, be irresolvable, and managing concrete conflicts may be the best we can do. Pascal's concern, that what is truth on one side of the Pyrenees is error on the other, then becomes not a problem of truth but a concession to relativism. If truth is truly balkanized in this way, however, then the whole philosophical or humanistic project is at risk: metaphysics is not worth discussing, it is not clear how truth can be falsified, and the root affirmation of faith, that what is believed is greater than oneself, is no longer possible.

THOUGHTS TOWARD A SOLUTION

I do not pretend to have a way out of this thicket. But I would like to propose some reflections that may help to carve a path. These are Charles Horton Cooley's notion of the looking-glass self, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's concept of the social construction of reality, Berger's more recent discussion of the social options attending globalization, and Hans urs von Balthasar's notion of philosophical truth.

In his 1902 book *Human Nature and the Social Order*, Cooley proposed that one's concept of "self"—the "I" of Descartes' verbs—is not possible for an isolated individual, but has meaning only with reference to a prior, more general sense of human society. Cooley argues: "What we call "me," "mine," or "myself" is ... a militant social tendency, working to hold and enlarge its place in the general current of tendencies. ... To think of it as apart from society is a palpable absurdity of which no one could be guilty who really saw it as a fact of life."[1] In part, the self is a social assertion because thought itself is social, never individual: "That the "I" of common speech has a meaning which includes some sort of reference to other persons is involved in the very fact that the word and the ideas it stands for are phenomena of language and the communicative." The self-concept,

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[1] All quotes in this and the next two paragraphs are from Cooley, Charles Horton. *Human Nature and the Social Order* (New York: Scribner's, 1902), pp. 179-185.

however, is particularly social, precipitated and constituted by a reciprocal awareness of others that Cooley likens to gazing at oneself in a mirror.

> ... the social reference takes the form of a somewhat definite imagination of how one's self—that is, any idea he appropriates—appears in a particular mind, and the kind of self-feeling one has is determined by the attitude toward this attributed to that other mind. A social self of this sort might be called the reflected or looking glass self. "Each to each a looking-glass/ Reflects the other that doth pass." As we see our face, figure, and dress in the glass, and are interested in them because they are ours, and pleased or otherwise with them according as they do or do not answer to what we should like them to be; so in imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it.

It is clear from this that the self "is not to be understood or predicted except in connection with the general life. Although special, it is in no way separate—speciality and separateness are not only different but also contradictory, since the former implies connection with a whole. The object of self-feeling is affected by the general course of history, by the particular development of nations, classes, and professions, and other conditions of this sort.

Here we see that the "self" is simply an emphasis within the general field of consciousness (Cooley compares it to a brightly lit section of a wall), not a "subject" that stands radically over against an "object." In this view, the human being does not stand apart from being in general, but is in some sense continuous with it. The body is also an expression of self—always, if animate, "my" body in contrast to some other—as are objects of knowledge and activity with which the self becomes identified.

As Cooley suggests, such knowledge is precarious, affected by changing collectivities and conditions. Some Eastern religious traditions, particularly Buddhism, find common cause with postmodern thought in affirming this sense of the evanescence of the personal self. In their classic treatise on the sociology of knowledge,[2] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann point out that such contingency, due to the fact of death, is an inescapable element of social life, and drives the establishment of two mechanisms to provide permanence, continuity, and ultimately meaning to selves. The first mechanism is the establishment of institutions that regularize and order change in society, and thus in social selves. The second

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[2] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966). Numbers in parentheses in the text refer to page numbers in this edition.

is the development of a symbolic universe that legitimates, co-ordinates and ultimately universalizes social institutions, providing a comprehensive way of understanding reality *sub specie aeternitatis*. This process—of institutionalization and the construction of symbolic universes—as call externalization. As Berger and Luckmann put it: "The origins of a symbolic universe have their roots in the construction of man. ... Human existence is, *ab initio*, an ongoing externalization. As man externalizes himself, he constructs the world into which he externalizes himself. In the process of externalization, he projects his own meaning into reality. Symbolic universes, which proclaim that all reality is humanly meaningful and call upon the entire cosmos to signify the validity of human existence, constitute the farther reaches of this projection." (104) In this way, reality is socially constructed.

This view expands Cooley's social psychology into an entire sociology of knowledge, and in the process turns Cartesian rationalism on its head. To the formula "I think, therefore I am," Berger and Luckmann reply, in effect, "I am, therefore I think." More precisely, they propose that being and thinking are correlative, dialectical processes for human beings, understood always as persons in society.

If reason may be considered that part of the process in which the dynamic begins with "objective" being, and faith that part in which the dynamic begins with the self, then we may say that faith and reason are themselves correlative, dialectic, mutually reinforcing and correcting processes of knowledge. A corollary of this thesis is that (true) knowledge cannot be attained by reason alone nor by faith alone: both faith and reason are requisite features of the recognition or construction of knowledge.

The Christian philosopher Hans urs von Balthasar proposes a conception of truth that, in a different ontological context, recognizes the same sociality of knowledge and self as do Berger and Luckmann.[3] For Balthasar, truth (*a-letheia*, "unveiling, or unforgetting") also contains a double dynamic: on the one hand, it involves an apprehension of being which is direct, open and certain; on the other hand, it involves the recognition that being is not fully revealed, and ultimately always remains at least partly concealed. Knowledge of the truth, then, always involves both certitude and mystery, held together in a tension that creates a reciprocal polarity between the subject and the object. (43) As a result, says Balthasar, "Subject and object comprehend each other reciprocally, in the sense that the subject is introduced into the ever more vast world of the object, while the object's appearance opens it to be surveyed and judged from the subject's more comprehensive vantage point." Indeed, "the human subject enjoys ... a special participation in the power of the divine intelligence positively to bring truth into being ... no act that expresses the

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[3] Han urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Logic, Volume 1: The Truth of the World.* Translated from the German by A.J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000, 1985). Numbers in parentheses in the text refer to page numbers in this edition.

subject's spontaneity in any way can be a matter simply of objectively recording the world to the exclusion of creatively determining it." (42)

These considerations suggest that what we call "faith" and "reason" are not distinct epistemological realities but are simply distinguishable ways of understanding the unitary apprehension of being, the behavior that every existent human being engages in, *mutatis mutandis* with regard to culture and language, in the presence of, or search for, truth. From the most skeptical empiricist to the most enraptured mystic, such an apprehension communicates both certitude and mystery, both things that always have been and could not be otherwise and things that are only now coming into being and may disappear momentarily.

Furthermore, each apprehension, by discovering something of truth that was not known previously, creates the condition for further, deeper apprehensions yet to come. In this way each moment of truth points beyond itself, as truth builds on truth. In this way, as well, each moment of truth involves both reason and faith, yet is never entirely reasonable nor entirely believable. This is not the case because being is necessarily expansive in the presence of our understanding; it may well be the case that thought does not necessarily correspond to any "objective" order of being, or that such an order, in its innermost levels, lies beyond discursive thought. But whatever "objective" reality is, or appears to be for any observer, its apprehension changes the observer, and thereby also the community of observers. The subject is not simply static or alone in the face of an ever-growing understanding of being. Rather, the proximate apprehension of being, in engagement with others who both do and do not share such an apprehension, changes the self-understanding of the subject, and hence of all involved subjects in relation, creating at the same time the conditions for both reasoning and believing and for both community and enlightenment.

To the extent that there is a common field of communicative actors, this process tends toward the convergence of variant constructions of reality. That such a common field is present or emerging today might be considered the definition of globalization. As linguistic and cultural barriers that have kept humans isolated until very recently continue to lower, the resulting worldwide communication and transmission of cultural goods creates the possiblility for larger common elements in the construction of reality.

It is saying nothing new to note that today there is the emergence of a global over-culture, a set of generally universal norms and beliefs, complete with growing linguistic homogeneity and common religious sensibilities. While each local culture has its own language, in this global culture everyone also speaks English. While local cultures have disparate beliefs, it is believed that in the global culture religions share many beliefs in common. The global culture affirms, almost without question, certain moral and social norms, although these are instantiated to a greater or lesser extent in actual local cultures: the primacy of conscience, the legitimacy of

democratic institutions; abhorrence of slavery; and the existence of human rights, to name just a few.

This is not to say that cultural comity is inevitable. In a much later work,[4] Peter Berger argues that the central imperative of globalization, for cultures and individuals, is how to deal with the changes induced by a radically increased sphere of freedom. Whatever else technology and development bring, they greatly increase the set of choices available to individuals and collectivities at all social levels. In the face of such change, Berger argues, that persons or groups will adopt one of three possible strategies: 1) resist the change, with the result of becoming isolated or encapsulated; 2) accept the change, and with it the loss of cultural distinctiveness, or 3) accommodate the change, adapting local institutions and their symbolic universe to the new reality of the global world. Berger, while affirming the third strategy as the most effective, argues that each is a possible choice, and that different cultures, religions and persons will make different strategic choices. Jonathan White, an expert on terrorism, argues that future religious terrorism will stem from groups that have adopted the first option (resistance).[5]

Clearly, cultural comity is impossible among the religiously violent, or even among those who reject violence but still choose a strategy of resistance. What is less recognized in the global culture is that cultural comity is also made impossible among those who choose Berger's second strategy (acceptance). Those who concede religious or cultural distinctiveness to the advance of globalization suffer the loss of such social identity as would make engagement meaningful. In Weber's terms, this is a tension between rationalization and charisma; or we might say, reason and faith, as they operate in society. The social problematic of the engagement of faith and reason in a globalizing world, then, is not just that the collision of cultures may spark violence, even terrorism, but also that, perhaps in reaction to the possibility of terrorism, distinctive religious and cultural institutions and norms may be so subsumed to the global overculture as to lose their identity.[6]

Thus, any productive engagement of religions or cultures can occur only among those who have chosen Berger's third option (accommodation). Whatever future shape such engagement may take, it would be a mistake to suppose that any convergence will occur as the direct result of cultural transmission, or of any significant change in perspective on anyone's part. In general, social change is induced not by collective personal change but as a result of cohort replacement. Worldviews are seldom altered in any

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[4] Peter Berger, *The Heretical Imperative* (New York: Doubleday, 1979).

[5] Jonathan R. White, *Defending the Homeland: Domestic Intelligence, Law Enforcement and Security* (Wadsworth, 2003).

[6] The tension between these twin perils is more or less what Benjamin Barber explores in *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (New York: Ballantine, 1996).

substantial way by individual persons, no matter how open-minded or truth-seeking, or how coerced, they may be. As Berger and Luckmann put it, the process of externalization is, for any individual, made possible only by prior internalization. None of us constructs symbolic reality *de novo*; rather, we learn it, along with language and a sense of self, from our parents or their designates. As sociologists and psychologists have long pointed out, we are socialized into the web of symbolic and institutional arrangements known as culture, and we have, for better or worse, no other tools with which to confront the chaos of perceptions. Any comity of cultures, therefore, will be a process for which the proper time frame is not the span of an individual life, but the procession of successive generations.

It would also be a mistake to suppose that a convergence of cultures will lead to less conflict between cultures and the religions that are at their heart; in fact, the opposite is more likely the case. This supposition, a staple of the developing over-culture, assumes that if we can find common ground in reason, we can manage differences of faith. This is not the case, not because the conclusion does not follow from the premise, but because the assumption is wrong. In the social realities of the globalized world, faiths do not collide because they reason differently, but because they reason too much alike. The conflict is not between reason and faith as intellectual abstractions, but between conflicting notions of collective rationality and of existent faiths as they are lived out in communities of persons. In actual discourse, the inability to fully reconcile notions of faith and reason is seen to be a problem only to the extent that it induces religious or political conflicts that harm persons by denying them basic rights.

This suggests, furthermore, that not all faiths will collide to the same extent. As we have noted, not all religions, and certainly not all religious ideas, are incommensurable. Perhaps we can go further: only religions that assert universal truth-claims have a philosophical basis for conflict, and only those with a salvific imperative have a practical or social basis for conflict. As just noted, they conflict precisely because they agree too much. If I assert that everyone ought to believe as I do, that statement is not conflictual for you, unless you agree with it. And it is only a problem for you that I am trying to convert you if you are also similarly trying to convert me. Thus Christianity is not likely to conflict with the Eastern religions, but only the other Abrahamic faiths, that is, Judaism and Islam. In the same way, the Abrahamic faith itself was originally not a problem for the local deities it displaced, but they were a problem for it. Therefore Huntington's thesis—that religious issues will dominate civilizational clashes—appears to be true only for the Abrahamic faiths; for the confrontation of other world religions, e.g., Buddhism and Hinduism, Benjamin Barber's alternate thesis, that religious conflict and terrorism is a reaction to economic displacement, may prove more accurate. Barber, however, predicts far more limited violence as economic development continues to spread. Globalization, it appears, is only a problem for religions which themselves aspire to be global.

The 20th century saw two great world wars that polarized nations against one another. The 21st century begins with the new possibility of a great world peace such as has not been seen in the West since the ascendancy of Rome. The great bipolar political alignments have evaporated, but so has the legitimacy of realpolitik and the Clausewitzian paradigm of war. The engagement of the new world order will be not between nation-states but between cultures, and religions at the heart of cultures. As early modernity saw religious conflicts pursued via the nation-state, so late modernity will witness what are essentially political conflicts pursued via religion. Such engagements need not be violent. Indeed, while violence may attain certain short-term political goals, the convergence of the truly cultural and religious issues of modernity can begin to occur only when their engagement is not violent.

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CHAPTER XVI

BEYOND CHRISTENDOM: FUTURE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERGENCE AND POLITICAL SECULARIZATION FOR PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS[1]

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ABSTRACT: Using actual and projected population data from the World Christian Database, this article qualifies Philip Jenkins' argument that the center of global Christianity is moving from the Euro-American center (the "global North") to the developing world (the "global South") by disaggregating the different outcomes of this shift for Protestants and Catholics. Demographically, Protestants will concentrate in Africa, but Catholics in Latin America, and Protestants will decline more in the North than Catholics. The population shifts will have greater implications for church culture and doctrine for Protestants, as worldwide religious authority becomes more dispersed in Protestantism but more concentrated in Catholicism. The argument is extended to advance and test a general prediction that, due to advancing globalization and technical rationality, both Protestants and Catholics, and perhaps all world religions, will become less dominant within nations during the next generation as the nation-state declines in autonomy and legitimacy.

INTRODUCTION

Over the next generation, as the remaining societies of the world traverse the demographic transition, the preponderance of world population will shift to the continents of what is now known as the developing world, principally Africa and Asia. On a planet that is rapidly democratizing and globalizing, it is inevitable that this shift will be accompanied by global political and economic realignments. Cultural historians have also predicted an attendant shift in world culture, a decline of the West and/or clash of civilizations. Recently Philip Jenkins has given further shape to this discussion by proposing that global demographic realignments will lead to a fundamental reorientation and revitalization of the Christianity. Jenkins notes that the Christian religion in very traditional forms is being rapidly adopted in the (swiftly-growing) developing world, while it, and its traditional expressions *a fortiori*, is stagnant or declining in the (stable or

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[1] Much of the material of this chapter also appeared in Sullins, DP. 2006. "Beyond Christendom: Protestant/Catholic Distinctions in the Coming Global Christianity." *Religion* 36(4):197-213.

shrinking) developed world. As a result, in a generation or two the vast majority of Christians will be nonwhite, traditional, and not of European origin. This portends a major realignment of the center of Christian culture from the global North (developed world) to the global South (developing world), the establishment of what Jenkins proposes will be (as he titles his book) "The Next Christendom."

Christianity, however, comes with a number of competing doctrinal and institutional divisions, principally (though by no means solely) that between Protestant and Catholic. Whether or not Jenkins' prediction is accurate for Protestants, in this essay I will endeavor to show that it is not accurate for Catholics. The effect of the global restructuring of world population and Christians will be quite different for Catholics than for Protestants. In general, population shifts will be both more complicated and less transforming for the Catholic Church than Jenkins suggests. The shift from North to South will be much less extreme, with a counter-posing shift from South to North. The Africanization of the Church will be much less pronounced than its Latinization. While the Church grows in the South, it will not decline, as does Protestantism, in the North. The conservative/liberal divide among Catholics, moreover, is much less aligned with a South/North axis than may be true for Protestants.

At least three broad observations—empirical, institutional and sociopolitical—underlie these projected differences. Empirically, the projected population shifts are quite different in the Catholic world than for Protestants. Second, the institutional structure of Catholicism induces a different set of susceptibilities and responses, in particular in relation to the nation-state, in the face of such changes. More fundamentally, the projected Protestant/Catholic population trends reveal common elements that militate against the image of a new Christendom, understood as a resurgent Christian dominance, in the world. I will discuss each of these issues in turn, in the context of Jenkins' claims and with special application to the American Catholic Church.

DATA

The primary data source for this analysis is the World Christian Database (WCD: Johnson 2004), an exhaustive repository of demographic and institutional indicators on world religions maintained by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The WCD provides almost 400 variables on 238 countries, all major and minor world religions, including over 9,000 separate Christian denominations, for six points in time from 1900 and projected to 2050. This is the most pertinent resource for the analysis of this paper, since it is the source of information for the World Christian Encyclopedia (Barrett 2000), upon which Jenkins (2002) bases his argument.

While not perfect, for the purpose of examining broad trends, the WCD is probably the best source of information on world religions

currently available. Its weakness is that it must rely on institutionally derived information, and applies estimates or interpolates when such information is missing; hence the quality of the data may be uneven. However, aggressive attempts are made to be thorough and accurate in obtaining institutional measures; and estimation procedures, when used, are conservative and thoroughly documented. A comparison of summary information for three U.S. denominations that independently publish institutional data—the Roman Catholic Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Episcopal Church—found no significant variance on numbers of parishioners, parishes, or pastors reported for the year 2000.

A DIFFERENT SOUTH

For Jenkins, Christianity in the global North is "headed South" in both a literal and figurative sense: literally, as the center of the Christian population shifts to Africa, and figuratively, as the formerly dominant North enters a secularized post-Christian era. In both of these senses the shift will be quite different for Catholics than for Protestants. While the Catholic demographic center is, like Protestantism, moving from north to south, for Catholics the move is from a different north to a different south. In broad terms, the Protestant center is shifting from North America to Africa; the Catholic population center is shifting, somewhat less radically, from Europe to Latin America.

African Protestants, Latino Catholics

If Protestants are headed toward Africa, Catholics are headed toward Latin America. Jenkins points out that "by 2025, Africans and Latin Americans combined will make up about 60 percent of Catholics" (2002:195), but it is the Latin Americans who make up the bulk (73 percent) of that combination. Figures 1A and 1B show the trends for Catholics and Protestants respectively. These figures compare, for Protestants and Catholics, the proportion of adherents by continent in 1900, 2000 and projected for 2050. Today, 43 percent of all Catholics are Latin American. By 2025 Africa will have added 108 million Catholics, almost doubling its Catholic population—but Latin American Catholics will have increased by 145 million, to almost 45 percent of world Catholics. If we include the populations outside of Latin America that are also generally defined as ethnically Hispanic—those of Spain, Portugal and Latino immigrants in North America—by 2025 or shortly thereafter a full half of the world's Catholics will be Latino. This milestone will be short-lived, slowly eroded by the burgeoning population of Asia, but the difference in Catholic and Protestant demographic trajectories will persist in broad terms: by 2050, about half (47 percent) of the world's Catholics will be Latino, but about half (51 percent) of the world's Protestants, including Anglicans, will be African.

Some question this claim of Catholic vitality in Latin America due to the dramatic growth of Protestant groups observed there in recent years. However, while a great deal of scholarly attention has been (justifiably) focused on the growth of Protestant evangelical and Pentecostal groups in Latin America, the numerical effect of these inroads on the growth of the Catholic population of the continent has been and will continue to be quite small. There are three reasons for this. First, while these non-Catholic groups are growing rapidly in percentage terms, the denominator for the percentages is many times smaller than the Catholic population. In raw numbers the relative growth is much smaller than it appears as a percentage. Second, at the same time, the Latin American population as a whole is growing rapidly. Third, the growth of non-Catholic groups in Latin America has already slowed dramatically from just a decade ago, and will continue to decline through the next several decades. The resultant of these contrasting trends is that, while the Catholic proportion of the population will decline by single digits, the size of the Catholic population will grow by double digits. Brazil, the typical and largest case, offers a good example. The Catholic proportion of the Brazilian population is projected to decline by 6 percent (from 86 percent to 80 percent) between 2000 and 2050. But during the same period the number of Catholics in Brazil will increase by 35 percent, from 147 million in 2000 to 198 million in 2050, because the total population of Brazil will increase by almost half. The proportional decline of Catholics in Brazil, moreover, is petering out. See Figure 2. After dropping by 4 percent during the 1990s, it is now projected to take until 2025 to decline another 4 percent, and then will decrease by only 2 percent between 2025 and 2050. The rate of decline today, then, is less than half what it was during the 1990s, and will halve again in another 20 years.

For Protestants the South may be evangelizing the North, but for U.S. Catholics the South is moving North, as the American Catholic Church is becoming home to increasing millions of Latino immigrants. Today about two-thirds of Hispanic immigrants report Catholic affiliation (ARIS: Kosmin et al. 2001),[2] a proportion that, despite much-publicized Protestant defections, has remained stable for over 20 years. The U.S. Census projects that in the next 45 years the U.S. Hispanic population will triple, to over 100 million persons. Barring a dramatic change in Hispanic religious practices, then, the number of Hispanic Catholics in the United States can be projected to grow to about 66 million persons. Thus by 2050 there will be more Hispanic Catholics in the United States than there are total Catholics today.

For Protestants the rise of a new African center is accompanied by a decline of the old Euro-American dominance, but this is not the case for

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[2] On the ARIS 2001 survey, twenty-nine percent of surveyed Catholics identified as Hispanic—a proportion acknowledged to be low, since the survey was only administered in English. This computes to about 20 million of the 65 million U.S. Catholics, or about two-thirds of the 35 million U.S. Hispanics.

Catholics. The proportion of Protestants in both Europe and North American has declined by about half since 1900, and will continue to decline in the future. This is true for Catholics in Europe, but not North America. The proportion of Catholics in North America has never been large, and will only change slightly in the future. Today only 7 percent of the world's Catholics are in North America, a proportion that has been, and will continue to be, relatively stable since 1900.

The overall population shifts, however, can be somewhat misleading when talking about the cultural or religious "center" of the Christian world. This is because a large part of these population shifts is due, not to religious growth or decline, but to an overall shift in world population. In 1900 25 percent of the population of the planet was European, and only 7 percent was in Africa. By 2050, those proportions will be largely reversed: Europe will comprise only 6 percent of world population, and Africa almost 22 percent. The growth of Christians in Africa, therefore, is a result of both the Christianization of Africa and the growth of African population. Likewise, the numerical drop in the proportion of Christians in Europe is a result of both de-Christianization, that is, a shrinking proportion of Christians in Europe, and a relative decline in the European population.

Figure 3A and 3B decompose these combined trends to show the respective relative concentrations of Catholics and Protestants net of overall shifts in population. The statistic reported is the ratio of the proportion of Catholics or Protestants to the overall proportion of world population for each continent. This can best be thought of as an index of concentration for each group. If all group members (Catholics in Figure 3A, Protestants in Figure 3B) were distributed equally in the world population, all areas would have a value of 1.0 for this index. In Figure 3A, for example, values greater than one indicate that the concentration of Catholics is greater than that of overall population in that area, and can be interpreted to the effect that that area is more pervasively Catholic than the norm. A value less than one, on the other hand, indicates that Catholics are more sparse in that area than in the world as a whole. Figure 3B shows the corresponding indices for Protestants. These figures show, then, the concentration of Catholics and Protestants that can be attributed to cultural dominance or continued evangelization rather than simply to population growth.

These figures show clearly that, while there will be some dramatic shifts in the Protestant center, changes in the relative concentration of Catholics in the near-term future will be modest. Within this overall picture, they bring three trends into sharp focus. First, they show clearly that the growth of Christian concentration due to evangelization in the global south—Africa, Asia and Latin America—has already occurred. The increased concentration in these areas in the next 50 years will be due entirely to population growth, not to any particular affinity of Christianity to the culture of these continents nor (as I discuss further below) to any general global advance of Christianity relative to other religions. In fact, the cultural concentration of Catholics in Latin America and of Protestants in

Africa will decrease slightly over the next 5 decades. (The concentration of Anglicans in Africa will drop the most, from 4.0 today to 3.6 in 2050.) Second, Latin America is now and will continue to be several times more dominant for Catholics than is Africa, or than either Latin America or Africa are for Protestants. Catholics will remain about 5 times more concentrated in Latin America than they are worldwide, including Africa and North America, which are both just at the world average. Both Catholics and Protestants will remain marginal in Asia. Third, the changing center of Protestantism will be due entirely to decline in the first world, not cultural increase in the third world, as their relative dominance in Europe and North America continues to plummet. (By contrast, the Catholic concentration in North America will remain virtually unchanged, and is projected to increase slightly in Europe.) Despite this decline, by 2050 Protestants will still be slightly more concentrated in North America than they are in either Africa or Latin America.

The predominance of Latin America in the global Catholic population is actually nothing new. Although Latinos are still growing in their numerical dominance in the Church, Latin American culture was already more pervasively Catholic than Europe a hundred years ago. Catholics have consistently been about five times as concentrated in Latin America as that area is in the world population—about double the concentration of Europe.

Conservative North vs. Liberal South?

Just as Catholic demographic changes do not neatly align with a global North to South shift, so the stereotypical identification of liberalism (or dissent) with the North and conservatism (or orthodoxy) with the South does not easily fit the Catholic reality. A good case could be made that the opposite is more accurate. The liberal dissent of the North over contraception or even gay marriage is positively mild compared to the dissent in Africa over polygamy. Jenkins points out that there are now more Jesuits in India than in the United States, but fails to note that, in both the United States and India, the Jesuits are among the most liberal of Catholics. In 1998 the writings of the Indian Jesuit Anthony DeMello were proscribed by the Church as heretical, an assimilation to Buddhist teachings, in probably the most theologically serious such action of recent decades. Latin America has given rise to some of the most progressive, functionally Marxist theology and ecclesial movements in this or any age of the Church; and its theologians and bishops have been duly and repeatedly rebuked by the Holy See.[3] Priests in Europe or North America may question the rule of

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[3] Jenkins claims (2002:198), " Liberal criticism derives especially from only selected regions of the world—and moreover, the very regions in which Catholic numbers are stagnant, or worse [i.e., the global North]." He (2002: 145-147) duly chronicles the radical Marxist tendency of Latin American

celibacy, but at least a third (by conservative estimates) of rural priests in Latin America live in thinly hidden concubinage.

Despite the pretensions of some in the liberal Catholic media, which Jenkins (2002:194-198) adopts at face value, the United States and Europe, not the global South, are the source of some of the most conservative movements in the Catholic Church. Numerous indications suggest that younger Americans, including Catholics, are growing more religious. The massive annual youth survey *Monitoring the Future* reports that the percentage of eighth graders who report that religion plays a very important role in their lives increased by 8 percent during the 1990s.[4] A 1999 study by pollster George Barna found that Americans under age 35 are more likely than their parents to attend church, read the Bible and pray (Winner 2000). A Gallup poll on The Spiritual Life of Young Americans in the same year found that almost 90 percent of teenagers, including Catholics, said they believed in the divinity of Jesus. The 2002 General Social Survey (Davis et al.) reports that a higher proportion of Catholics under 30 than those over 45 reported that they believed the Bible to be the "actual Word of God, to be taken literally, word for word" (23 percent vs. 16 percent), and that they had "a great deal" of confidence in organized religion (29 percent vs. 24 percent). In a study of young adult Catholics, Hoge et al. (1998) reported that the faith of young Catholics was centered in three core elements which are all traditional, orthodox components of the faith: Marian devotion, God's presence in the sacraments, and concern for the poor. These trends are suggestive, but still too new and too weak to be compelling. Carroll (2002), in a book subtitled "Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy," argues that young adult traditionalists, while numerically small, have a disproportionately powerful cultural influence in reshaping American Christianity, including Catholicism. Whether this turns out to be the case remains to be seen.

While the evidence is not yet conclusive for Catholic laity, among priests the trend is clear: younger, newly ordained priests today in the Catholic West are far more traditional than the preceding generation. Periodic surveys of American priests going back to 1970 have shown that newer ordinands have been growing more conservative since the early 1980s, to the point that the most recently-ordained priests today express levels of belief and devotion that are comparable to priests ordained during

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Catholicism as evidence of the Church's political participation in Latin America, but misinterprets the imposition of orthodox bishops by Rome as an indigenous rightward turn, and fails to see the implications of this obvious counter-example for his overall thesis. With similar confusion, he argues in one place (2002:144) that Brazilian Catholicism instantiates increasing nationalism in the global South, and in another that it is questionable whether Brazil will even remain " a major Catholic state" (2002:92).

[4] As reported by Child Trends, an independent youth research organization, January 2002.

the 1950s, when traditionalism was at its height. Hoge and Wenger's recent (2003) interviews with priests found that, in contrast to priests ordained in past decades, today's new ordinands express a less reformist and more traditional view of the Church and the priesthood, centered in personal piety and in touch with the ancient roots of Catholic life, and yearn for a restoration of traditional elements in the liturgy. A spate of surveys of Catholic priests during 2002 (commissioned by media organizations for background on the sexual abuse scandal) have provided a wealth of documentation on the growth of traditional, orthodox beliefs among younger clergy. In a July 2002 survey by the *Los Angeles Times,* 72 percent of Catholic priests agreed that "younger clergy in America are more theologically conservative—that is, more religiously orthodox—than their older counterparts," and 76 percent believed that "younger priests today are more theologically conservative than they were in the 1970s or 1980s." The *Los Angeles Times* (October 21, 2002: A1) summarized its findings:

> Clerics under age 41 expressed more allegiance to the clerical hierarchy, less dissent against traditional church teachings, and more certainty about the sinfulness of homosexuality, abortion, artificial birth control, and other moral issues than did their elders. Those attitudes place the younger priests at odds with many priests who were shaped by the liberal reforms of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s and who tend to support further changes in the church—including women priests, optional celibacy, more lay empowerment, and the direct election of bishops.

> These shifts in attitudes are confirmed by recruitment trends. U. S. dioceses whose bishops are outspokenly orthodox have seen an influx of priestly aspirants, as have several relatively new orders of priests that emphasize fidelity rather than reform. Fifteen percent of current seminarians in the United States are members of just one of these orders, the Legionaries of Christ.[5] Conservatism is also clearly on the rise among Catholic nuns and monks in the West. In the last 20 years a new group of Catholic religious orders that have emphasized orthodox fidelity and have reinstated the traditional disciplines of communal living and prayer and wearing distinctive garb, have attracted thousands of young new postulants in Europe and North America, while orders that discontinued such practices in the 1960s in favor a liberal theology of social justice have seen scant new vocations. This evidence directly contradicts Jenkins' claim (2002:198) that "much of the liberal dissidence within Catholicism stems not from the laity but from clergy themselves, ... [who] are much more likely to be located in the North than the South."

> In sum, it appears that the reports of the demise of traditional Catholicism in the West, and its rise in the South, have been greatly exaggerated. Whether or not the opposite turns out to be the case, it is clear

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[5] The Legionaries of Christ report " almost 700" in formation to become priests, out of a population of seminarians reported (Kenedy 2000; includes both diocesan and religious) of 4,826.

that the distribution of orthodox and progressive elements in global Catholicism is far more complex and diverse than the picture of Christendom headed south would suggest.

GLOBAL(IZED) CHRISTIANITY

The differences in demography are only partly accountable for the divergent futures of Protestantism and Catholicism. Even if the population shifts are more isometric than has been projected, such shifts will be mediated through a disparate set of institutional alignments and political and cultural realities. The most significant of these, in this late (perhaps post) modern age, is the relation of each of these religions to the pre-eminent social reality of modernity: the nation-state.

Protestant Particularity vs. Catholic Centrality

In broad terms, the rise of the nation-state inhibited inherently fractive tendencies in Protestantism and inherently cohesive ones of Catholicism. A little history may provide some context for this statement. Protestantism and the modern nation-state rose together, and symbiotically, at the time of the Reformation. Luther's revolt against Rome was famously abetted and made effective by the political support of local princes feeling their way toward a German national identity—on which Lutheranism in turn bestowed legitimacy. In a similar way the Church *in* England" (ecclesia anglicana) became the Church *of* England (ecclesia anglicanae) during the 16th century, so assimilated to national identity that the King, who was understood to rule by divine right, was in turn declared the head of the church, which by the 19th century was described as merely "the nation of England at prayer." Within a generation, both England and Germany were preoccupied with internal religious dissent, while the so-called Catholic nations addressed themselves to asserting greater independence from Rome.

The Catholic Church, on the other hand, predates the modern nation-state, and remains the only truly global Christian institution. Unlike all Protestant denominations, the center of the Catholic Church is not in any nation. Although its ruling structures are in Italy, it is not in any constitutive sense the Italian Catholic Church. The offices of the Pope, in fact, technically form a separate nation to itself (Vatican City), a sign of the Church's independence from all nations. To underscore this unique independence, Vatican City is the only universally recognized national entity that is not a member of the United Nations.

Today, prompted by the twin forces of post-modernity and globalization, both the legitimacy and autonomy of the nation-state is eroding. In the face of this reality, Protestant church order, aligned with political entities, tends to lead to either balkanized certainty or collegial relativism. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, as a kind of

multinational religious corporation, is led by the same forces to constrain local (that is, national) variation in the service of global coherence. Thus the decline of the nation-state will lead Protestant denominations to fracture further while the Catholic Church to become more centralized. Increasingly deprived (or free) of national support, Protestantism's strength for the future lies in its increasing adaptation to a diverse array of particular communities; Catholicism's strength for the future lies in the concentration of authority in a single person, with care for every member of the faithful on the entire planet. This is, of course, a broad simplification, and there are many qualifications and exceptions. Yet the most distinct institutional trends observed in these religions today strongly bear out this analysis. These trends are the rise of postdenominationalism among Protestants and, for Catholics, the increasing centralization of church authority in the Pope.

These counter-posing tendencies represent, in part, a sharp reversal from the recent past. Just 40 years ago the Catholic Church was making breathtaking moves to diversify its life and mission in local cultures. At the same time, Protestants were pursuing a vision of combined mission and ministry in larger ecumenical associations and world councils. Both parts of the separated Body of Christ seemed to some observers to be converging on a common ground of conciliarism. But such a unity never emerged, and both communions are today moving in opposite directions on the issue of centralization.

Barrett and Johnson (2001) chronicle the further splintering of Protestantism. In a further consideration of the data, these authors of the World Christian Encyclopedia make the case that the newest, rapidly emerging "global megabloc" of alignments in Christianity is a phenomenon they term "postdenominationalism":

Contemporary postdenominationalism is a movement sweeping throughout the churches worldwide. It is a vast, scattered movement of many distinct and separate protests, revolts, schisms, secessions, rebellions, independencies, reformations, and renewals. Today it includes over 20,000 movements, networks, or new denominations with 394 million church members. ... Basically it stands for a rejection of historic denominationalism. ... At origin these new groups unilaterally adopt a markedly different church lifestyle from that of their parent bodies, rejecting the authority of existing parent denominations and many established aspects of denominationalist faith and life, and putting in their place new authority, new structures, new names, new beliefs, new solutions, and new forms of church life. ... These churches are among the fastest-growing in the world. By A.D. 2025 the independents, who numbered less than half the size of Protestants in 1970, will have nearly 115 million more members than Protestants.

The "parent bodies" involved here, of course, are overwhelmingly the established Reformation and post-Reformation Protestant denominations. In this sense the rise of postdenominationalism is but a further extension of the fissiparous tendency of Protestantism.

At the same time, the Catholic Church has not only resisted splintering but has even become much more centralized. Two relatively recent factors in the Church's life have prepared it for this result: the recognition of the development of doctrine, and the establishment of papal infallibility. Strikingly, both of these are less than 150 years old. They are "post-modern" developments, in the strict sense that they emerged subsequent to the birth of modernity. Together, they have uniquely positioned the Catholic Church and faith to engage the twin forces of globalization and postmodernity, by allowing a balance of continuity and change, variation within limits. With respect to global demographic change, in recent times the emphasis in the Catholic Church has clearly been on continuity and limits, by regularizing the rapidly diversifying global Church under the unifying central authority of the Pope.

The Catholic Church today is rapidly centralizing and regularizing every aspect of Church life. While liberal Catholics received the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s as a manifesto for local autonomy, a better case can be made that the purpose of the council was to direct and regulate, not to promote or legitimate, local variation in the Church. As a matter of simple fact, in the period following the council, assertions of centralized regulation have occurred at a pace seldom if ever before matched in the history of the Church. In the last forty years the Catholic Church has issued (a) new or updated universal: lectionary, code of canon law, catechism (the first in 400 years), general instruction for the liturgy, general directory for catechesis, and norms for Catholic universities and schools, to mention only the most significant. During the same period the Pope has issued more universal teaching documents, not just slightly more but several times as many, than at any previous time in the history of the Church. By some measures, more doctrine and discipline has been promulgated from Rome during the last 40 years than in all the previous ages of the Church combined.

It is difficult to be sure, but the likelihood is that such centralization will continue for the foreseeable future. It is common today to think of the Catholic Church as having always been a steeply hierarchical institution, but the level of centralization and worldwide integration of authority that exists in the Church today is, in historical terms, a fairly recent development. Through most of the Church's history the type of pre-eminent authority the Pope exercises today has been challenged by the centrifugal forces of conciliarism (rule by church councils) and gallicanism (rule by national assemblies of bishops). Eight hundred years ago conciliarism was at its height; during most of the twelfth century there were two rival popes supported by competing councils. Gallicanism was in ascendancy just two centuries ago, when the prerogatives of the Pope were severely circumscribed following the French revolution. The doctrine popularly known as papal infallibility specifically establishes that the Pope's interpretation of doctrine cannot be over-ridden by a council or national assembly, and was only declared in 1870. The first and only subsequent use

of such authority did not occur for eighty years, when in 1950 Pope Pius XII defined the Assumption of Mary as dogma.

From National to Global

Thus far I have argued that the notion of a coming Christendom must be, at minimum, qualified by the recognition of divergent demographic and institutional trends in the two largest branches of Christianity. There is, however, more compelling evidence against the perception of a resurgent Christian dominance, evidence that is grounded not in the differences between Protestants and Catholics but in common elements of their history and social context.

The assertion of a general Christian resurgence is contradicted by the simple fact that Christianity is not growing. Although the shift in the Christian population has prompted a certain triumphalism regarding the growing global South, and corresponding despair or criticism regarding the declining global North, the net effect of such shifts on the worldwide Christian population, for both Protestants and Catholics, has been zero. Figure 4 reports the proportion of the population that is Christian for the world and its major continents from 1900 to 2050.

In 1900, 34.6 percent of the world's population was Christian. By 2000, after a century that saw the vigorous expansion of Christian missions, that proportion had declined slightly, to 33.0 percent. By 2050, it is projected to again grow slightly, to 34.2 percent—still below what it was 150 years earlier. This small variation is well within the range of uncertainty of measurement and projection in these data. Thus, despite large realignments of the Christian population by continent, there is no trend toward growing Christian dominance in the world. Generally speaking, the Christian share appears to be stable at about a third of world population.

In addition to the lack of growing numerical dominance, Christianity is also declining in political hegemony. This condition is predicted by the theory of modernity, or what sociologists, following Weber (1946, 1968/1921), identify as the spread of technical rationality. Such rationalization (or modernity), perhaps by definition, valorizes secularity at the expense of public religion, that is, religion that serves as a basis for statecraft and public policy. In modernity, formerly established or dominant state religions are delegitimated in favor of an ideal of religious freedom. By the same token, however, modernity also stimulates the growth of private, pietistic religion, as the worldwide resurgence of local and ethnic identities and religious fundamentalisms attests. Thus, as a general rule, the advent of modernity in a nation de-legitimates formerly dominant faiths and legitimates formerly marginal ones. In either case, religion becomes less connected to national identity in favor of both global and local alignments.

For example, consider the situation of the Tory immediately following the American revolution. As an effect of the establishment of religious freedom, Anglicanism went practically overnight from established

religion to outcast to a minority denomination. At the same time, the Methodists and the Baptists went from persecuted dissident minorities to legally unencumbered existence. To the extent that its legitimacy was bound up the legitimacy of the state, the dominant religion lost, but the marginal religion gained, by the advent of a secular, that is officially non-religious, state.

If this theory is accurate, we would expect to see, synchronous with the rise of globalization, a general decline of dominant national churches. Figures 3-5 provide evidence that this is the case. Figure 3 compares the trends from 1900-2050 for nations where Catholics comprise less than 5 percent of the population with those in which more than 80 percent of the population is Catholic. In missiological research, these proportions are generally considered the respective thresholds of sustainability and dominance for a religion in a nation. Figure 4 shows the corresponding data for Protestants. Each bar in these figures reports the number of nations in each category, from among the approximately 234 nations[6] that existed in 2000. As the figures show, the number of nations in which Catholic or Protestant churches are dominant has been declining over the past 100 years, and will continue to decline for the next 50. At the same time, nations in which these churches are marginal have also declined. In 1900, Catholics dominated 48 nations and were marginal in 130; by 2050, those numbers will decline to 30 and 71 nations respectively. With few exceptions, both Catholics and Protestants today are growing the least— even declining—where they are numerically the strongest, and growing the most where they are numerically weakest.

Figure 5, based on a different set of data, confirms these findings for Catholics. This figure reports the proportion of nations in 2000 in which more than 80 percent of the population is Catholic, by three measures: the proportion of current adults who were baptized Catholic, the proportion who currently identify themselves as Catholic, and the proportion of infants who are currently baptized Catholic. Thus, they provide a crude measure of the past, present and future Catholic population. By these measures, the percentage of nations in which Catholics make up more than 80 percent of the population will have dropped by half from the generation just past to the one just ahead.

The Christian religion, both Protestant and Catholic, is becoming less a phenomenon of nations, and more a phenomenon of the globe. For some years religious scholars have noted that the classic liberal-

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[6] The United Nations currently (2004) identifies 234 national entities on the planet, of which 193 are U.N. members. The WCD definition differs slightly, identifying 238 nations or sovereign territories. For nations that did not exist in 1900, the corresponding territorial entity or geographical area is reported. For details, see the article " Methodology" in Barrett (2001).

conservative alignments in U.S. religion are becoming less congruent with denominational identities and more with opposing sub-groups within denominations, a process known as "restructuring" (Wuthnow 1990). In a similar way, religions worldwide are being restructured with regard to nationalism, becoming less identified with national identities and increasingly adopting minority status alongside other religious options, both in nations where they formerly were dominant and in those where they formerly were nonexistent.

There is probably no better illustration of this decline among formerly "Catholic" nations than Ireland. Unbending, literally insular in its strict devotion to Catholicism, in the early Middle Ages the Irish "saved the civilization" of Christian learning while the rest of Europe descended into relative anarchy. Until recently it seemed impervious to the forces of global modernity as well. As late as 1980 Ireland had the religious demographics of medieval Spain: divorce and abortion were unheard of and illegal, the average family had 4 children, and 95 percent of the population was at Mass each Sunday. Today in Ireland both abortion and divorce have been legalized, and are growing in practice. Total fertility (lifetime births per woman) has plummeted from over 4 in 1970 to under 2 (below replacement rate) in 2000. Mass attendance is dropping, and for the first time anyone can recall, Ireland has such a dearth of priest aspirants that it is importing foreign priests (Jenkins 2003: 204). Not coincidentally, buoyed by the expanded market of the European Union, Ireland has prospered in the new economy, posting double-digit annual gains in GDP. Here, in arguably the world's most culturally Catholic country for over a millennium, Catholicism is in the process of being decoupled from nationalism.

It is not clear whether this restructuring is a cause or an effect, or both, of shifts in the Christian population. It is clear, however, that this general decoupling of Christianity from the nation-state is not the grounds for a new global center. It is not a new Christendom but a loss of Christendom—prospectively, a movement beyond Christendom—altogether.

CONCLUSION

As Europe entered the modern world, the elements of the medieval synthesis of the sacred and secular were precipitated into three social realities held in tension: the continuing Catholic Church, the emergent Protestant churches, and the religiously autonomous nation-state. In the 20th century the decline of European imperialism and global progress of technical rationality set the stage for a realignment of these realities as we move into the 21st century. Over the next 50 years, as their centers of population are flung from their common origins in Europe, Protestants and Catholics will find divergent new centers of concentration in Africa and South America respectively. With decline of the European nation-state, religious authority will become more dispersed in Protestantism and more concentrated in

Catholicism. Protestants, more closely allied to nations to begin with, will experience a greater decline of dominance in the North; and the liberal/orthodox (or progressive/traditional) doctrinal responses to modernity will, for Catholics, be much less aligned with a global North/South tension. The net effect of these changes will be more than just a transfer of venue of Christian dominance from North to South. Both Protestants and Catholics will experience a global decline of dominance within nations, as they (and perhaps all global religions) increasingly intermingle and compete within, but are decreasingly identified with, the emerging political entities of the 21st century.

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Figure 1A
Global Shifts in Catholic Population
1900-2050

Percent of Worldwide Catholics

Source: WCD 2003

1900   2000   2050 (proj.)
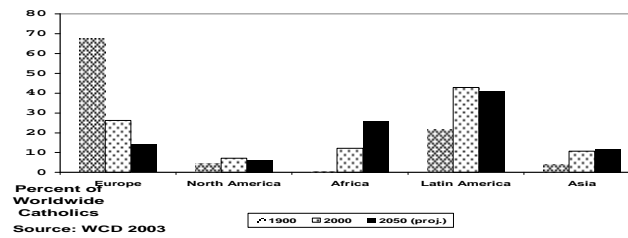
Figure 1B
Global Shifts in Protestant Population
1900-2050

Percent of Worldwide Protestants

Source: WCD 2003

1900   2000   2050 (proj.)
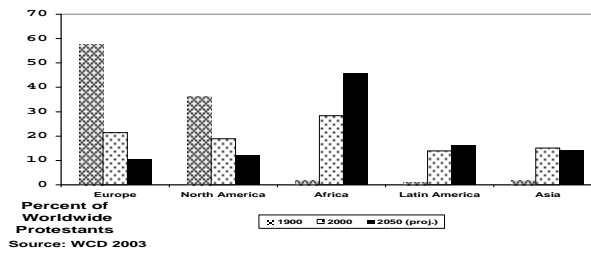
Figure 2
Current and Projected Decadal Rate of Decline of Catholics
in Brazil 1990-2050: WCD 2003
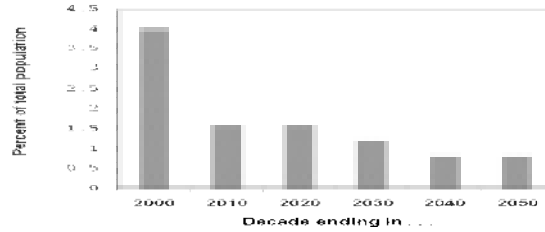
Figure 3
Past, Present and Projected Global Concentration of
Catholics by Nation: WCD 2003

	< 5%	> 80%	# 80+ in LA
1900	130	48	24
2000	106	43	16
2050	71	30	14

# of nations
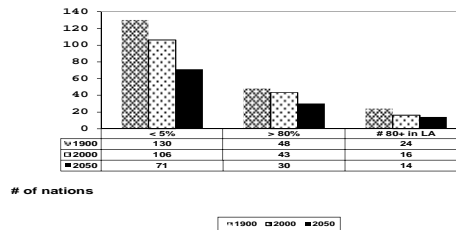
1900   2000   2050

Figure 3A
Global Cultural Concentration of Catholics
1900-2050

Index of Concentration (1=Average)

1900   2000   2050 (proj.)
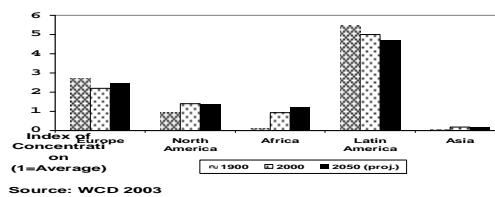
Source: WCD 2003

Figure 4
Past, Present and Projected Global Concentration of
Protestants by Nation: WCD 2003

	< 5%	> 80%	# 80+ in LA
1900	161	17	2
2000	106	10	0
2050	96	8	0

# of nations

1900   2000   2050
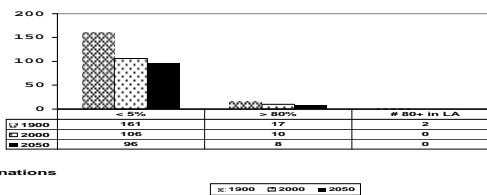
Figure 5
Past, Present and Projected Global Concentration of
Catholics by Nation

% of nations (n=193)		> 80%
▪ Past (Adults Baptized Catholic)		16.1
▪ Present (Current affiliation)		12.4
▪ Projected (Infants Baptized Catholic)		7.8
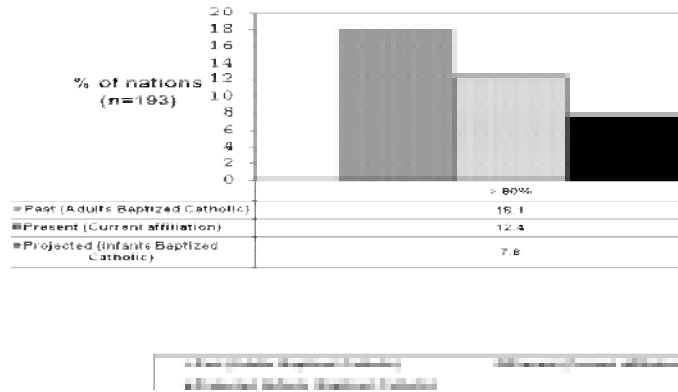
Source: Froehle and Gautier 2003: 144, Table A.1.

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CHAPTER XVII

DECLINE OF REASON AND
ITS REVIVAL AS DIALOGICAL

ZBIGNIEW WENDLAND

ABSTRACT: After acknowledging that the crisis of the present-day-world is in its very essence the crisis of reason, this study considers both the logical notion of reason and the odyssey which reason has made within modern and postmodern Western history. This regards reason not as a subjective power of man, but as a conventional and formal notion which in itself means less unless seen in the action of great groups of people and in connection with material contents, of which the most important are values or sets of values. Reason in action means "reasoning" and that reasoning of men and peoples can take place and have historical significance, only when based on values, which are not the matter of reason nor of experience, but of faith.

Considering the life of reason within the Western civilization, this study first indicates the two main kinds of hitherto existing rationality as paradigms of acting reason: (1) *metaphysical rationality* and (2) *instrumantal rationality*. Then it advances a thesis that in all contemporary conditionings: social, cultural, political, also philosophical and others, the two paradigms of rationality have now exhausted their creative possibilities. It is time to look for another kind of rationality which could better correspond to present challenges as well as better fit the state of contemporary philosophical awareness. Instrumental rationality seems ambiguous in consequence and, additionally, has an inclination to turn into irrationality. On the other hand, the metaphysical rationality has lost its power because of the historical evolution of the philosophy itself. By many currents of contemporary philosophy, and by many philosophers, the 20th century has been proclaimed as post-metaphysical or even anti-metaphysical. However, metaphysics may yet be worth defending, and there are many who successfully do so.

The position of the study is that, taking into account the many essential threats to the further existence of humankind as well as of the physical world, the problem of metaphysics, at least the so-called metaphysics of foundations, has lost its importance. All efforts of philosophers, and all reasoning and acting peoples, should be directed to shaping a new kind of rationality as a new paradigm which could function within all present civilizations. This proposal is to label this new kind of rationality *dialogical rationality*. This rationality could unite peoples, nations, regions, civilizations, cultures, religions, philosophical directions, etc., beyond all hitherto existing differences and controversies, in the name

of the most important present values, as well as diminishing, if not annihilating, great threats. The conception of dialogical rationality is discussed on the basis of views belonging to the greatest achievements of contemporary philosophy such as Jaspers, Popper, Habermas, representatives of postmodernism, and others.

CRISIS OF CIVILIZATION AS CRISIS OF REASON

One of the most characteristic features of present awareness is that of a deep crisis into which, gradually but inevitably, our Western civilization, if not the whole world, is sinking. People feel that this is a crisis of human existence in which civilization may perish and history may come to an end.

The awareness of the crisis of society and culture has its own long history reaching at least to the end of 19th century [1] as well as great breadth embracing many spheres of social life, politics, culture and sciences in which it was generated. From there it has spread, embracing to ever more people. It sometimes seems, as if we all were living the sense of an all-embracing crisis, without being able to qualify clearly its exact range or reasons. Anxieties and worries are omnipresent. No matter which sphere of life is considered, everywhere we have an irresistible inclination to raise the question: "what happened to this?" Thus, we ask: what happened to nature, to the environment, to peoples, to economy, to politics, to morality, to religion, to democracy, to family, to art, to sex, etc. More and more voices affirm that rational progress, formerly inscribed into Western civilization, has come to an end. It seems that long ago the period passed wherein the world was seen as perfectly well-ordered, when it was exactly known, where there was good and evil, truth and falseness, when all the criteria on which we made our judgments and evaluations were united at the top by some objective wisdom or divine absolute.

The crisis of the once well-ordered world into the present manner came to light in the twentieth century in the shape of an evident imbalance between the high level of the development of sciences and techniques and the relatively low degree of respect for personal values or, speaking more generally, in the shape of a disastrous imbalance between material and spiritual developments in the so-called industrial and post-industrial society.

In the total crisis, wherein the present Western World finds itself, a very important part is played by the series of concrete negative phenomena and historical disasters which with special intensity appeared in the 20th

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[1] L. Kolakowski is of the opinion that the critique of our modernity, connected with the process of industrialization, began together with this modernity and since then has incessantly grown. Cf. L. Kolakowski, *Modernity on Endless Trial*, Polish Edition, *Cywilizacja na ławie oskarzonych*, in *Moje sluszne poglady na wszystko* [My Rightful Opinions on Everything] (Kraków, 2000), pp. 197-198;

century as, for example, two cases of destructive totalitarianism, two World Wars, the Holocaust during the Second World War, many indications of genocide in the period up to the end of the last century, numerous cases of power-abuse by criminal systems, the phenomenon of intensified terrorism with which humankind entered the 21st century, and the deep economic imbalance between rich and poor regions of the world with all its resulting consequences.

One cannot understand this crisis on a purely economic level, as a matter involving the creation of economic arrangements; or on a purely political level, as a matter of correct organizational structures; or as a matter of individual psychology, confined to the analysis of the individual lives of men. All of these and still other basic matters are inseparably related in making effective explorations of a correct understanding of the roots of the crisis. It is a great challenge for philosophy to explore the nature of the present crisis and to search for ways which would enable finding reasonable solutions on the basis of all prior experience and all capabilities of the human intellect. What our future will become depends in large degree on our philosophical understanding and knowledge from which may result some efficient steps.

Thus, one of the indications of an increasing general awareness of crisis in the twentieth century was the appearance of many outstanding philosophers who, from different standpoints, denounced in so-called industrial and mass-society the progressive collapse of fundamental values on which depend the meaning of life for individuals and the harmonious coexistence of social groups. They stigmatized the corresponding type of rationality which has been acknowledged as the main cause of all these negative phenomena. Among them, in the philosophical arena of the thirties of the 20th century, at the time of Hitlerism in Germany, Husserl attacked the inability of contemporary science, in its spirit of positivism and skepticism to achieve an effective understanding of its objects. He stigmatized its self-satisfaction in scientific exactitude which improves our power of forecasting future events and manipulating things at the cost of a lack of comprehension of their essences. In the opinion of the author of *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften* (*The Crisis of European Sciences*) contemporary science has nothing to say on the burning questions about the essence of man or the sense or nonsense of human life—questions which in those unfortunate times were subjected to topics of far-reaching historical consequences. Empirical scientificness, reducing man to a mere fact, requires that an explorer interested in problems of the human being and the products of culture should exclude from his research formalizing any positions of a value character. He should, for example, throw away all questions concerning the rational and irrational in life or the social order.

In turn, Heidegger, the successor of Husserl in phenomenology, suspected that the causes of our sliding into anonymity and untruth was in forgetting the ontological difference between *beings* (*das Seiende*) and *the being* (*das Sein*) and in confusing the *being* with *beings*. This forgetfulness

does not result from simple philosophical neglect, but has its own cause in the development of present-day science and techniques. Thereby the only acknowledged form of rationality became the so-called "calculative thinking," i.e., thinking which pays attention only to what can be useful in an operative-technical activity. Heidegger contrasted to this "calculative thinking" a "contemplative reflection" (*Besinnung*) which could display the "truth of the being." Philosophy, in his opinion, is "the immediately useless but dominant knowledge proceeding from contemplative reflection as an inquiry regarding the meaning, i.e., the truth, of being."[2]

Simultaneously with Heidegger, Jaspers perceived the crisis of the contemporary epoch as one of "unheard of collapse." He found that scientific-technological progress connected with the historical transformation of awareness and of forms of human coexistence had marked by the phenomenon "of mass production based on technical inventions."[3] In another of his books Jaspers wrote: "The course of events has led us from an era of bourgeois contentment, progress and education, which pointed to the historical past as proof that it had achieved security, into an age of devastating wars, mass death and mass murder (accompanied by an inexhaustible generation of new masses), of the most terrible sense of menace, an age in which humanity is being extinguished and chaotic disintegration seems to be the master of all things."[4] In general, the author of these weighty accusations suspected the causes of the crisis to lie in the spread of an aversion to self-reflection which looks for the meaning of life in history, and in the abandonment of the search for truth and for the measure of our humanity in unconditional communication among people and in the discovery and deciphering of codes of transcendence.

Besides the above, three eminent philosophers from the circle of phenomenology and existentialism, one can mention such other philosophers, humanists and theoreticians of society as, e g., Bergson, Spengler, Ortega y Gasset, Maritain, Mounier, Sartre, Orwell, Aldous Huxley and others. With similar energy, though often proceeding from different philosophical foundations, they uncovered and stigmatized negative aspects of the present mass-society and the so-called scientific-technical civilization. Excessively sharp criticism of the present society appeared in thirties, and after the Second World War from the Frankfurt school. In the last decades of the twentieth century the critique was taken over in different countries by various forms postmodernism.

Just before the end of the 20th century the critique of Western civilization, propagated for many decades by several generations of

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[2] M. Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (*vom Ereignis*) (Frankfurt a. M., 1989), Polish Edition, *Przyczynki do filozofii (Z wydarzenia)* (Krakow, 1996), pp. 47-48.

[3] K. Jaspers, *Die geistige Situation der Zeit* (Berlin, 1971), p. 31.

[4] K. Jaspers, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy* (New York, 1949), p. 159.

philosophers, was supported by analyses elaborated by influential representatives of other scientific disciplines. They pointed out the danger of the extermination of life on a global-scale, due to the real possibility of crossing ecologically allowable limits recognized by scientific analyses. They identified as well the danger of a mutual destruction of several main world-civilizations due to probable future clashes culminating in total extermination. An example of analyses pointing at the possibility of such a pessimistic ecological prognosis is the book: *Beyond the Limits. Global Collapse or a Sustainable Future* whose authors were the couple, Meadows and Jorgen Randers.[5] A most spectacular example of such analyses is that of Samuel Huntington about the possible clash of civilizations. [6]

The twentieth century, beyond any other, provided many arguments on so-called negative utopias, i.e., opinions and works whose creators assume the primordial impossibility of the realization, and even the complete decay of traditional humanism as outlined by former ideologists. European cultural circles had long spoken of the end of the age of ideology. Some ideologies ended due to the growth of the scientific consciousness; others went bankrupt uncovering the fraudulence of unsuccessful political practice. This end of ideologies as mental complexes made clear how man ought to live and what could be expected, signifying, among other things, the end of positive thinking of the future. Presently, this prevailing negative thinking underlines a specific paradox as a distinctive feature of the Western civilization. This relies on a universally detected disparity between, on the one hand, basic scientific-technological possibilities, material wealth, and a high level of the consumption which characterizes this civilization, and, on the other hand, the underdevelopment of the spiritual sphere, above all, of morality, in present-day society.

It is symptomatic for the critical-negative thinking about present society and its future state that the crisis of civilization has been brought to a crisis of reason; and, in turn, the fall of reason is treated as the most important symptom and, simultaneously, the cause of the downfall of the whole of Western civilization. As a consequence of this, critics perceive a declining significance of the present model of Western rationalism which earlier had been acknowledged as the main determinant of the progress of civilization, the synonym of Enlightenment and modernity. In the past, Enlightenment and rationality had been connected with progress and modernity, whereas, at present, rationality realized by science, technology, economy and systems of power proved to be a very ambiguous tool. Frequently it led to deceptive, absurd, even criminal results. Their symbols were the smoke stacks in Auschwitz and Gulags behind the Ural

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[5] D.H. Meadows, D.L. Medows and J. Randers, *Beyond the Limits. Global Collapse or a Sustainable Future* (London, 1992).
[6] S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order 1996*; Polish Edition, *Zderzenie Cywilizacji i nowy ksztalt ladu swiatowego* (Warsaw, 2004).

Mountains. Not too long ago, there were the cases of genocide in Africa and in the Balkans as well. This has been followed by the devastation of the twin-towers of the Trade Center in New York, and the death of hundreds of children in Beslan (Russia).[7] The awareness that man, who so elaborately meditates on his actions, and from the daybreak of Western civilization has been qualified as a rational creature and creator of goodness and other positive values, can cause so much rationally organized evil, even disaster, had to shake faith in the reliability of reason.

The tradition of the cult of enlightened reason dates back to Descartes. Subsequently, it was grounded and enriched by means of motifs from English empiricism at the time of French Enlightenment. German Enlightenment, and in particular the philosophy of Kant, Hegel and Marx, also contributed greatly to reinforcing the position of reason as a guide for humankind. This is witnessed by the famous Kantian declaration of the Enlightenment: "Enlightenment is the exit of man from an infancy into which he fell of his own fault."[8]

In the wake of Kant, Hegel evaluated historical events exclusively upon the basis of the degree to which they constituted the actualization of reason. He adhered to the philosophical premise, essential for his system that the course of history inevitably leads to a complete self-realization of reason. Reality as a whole comprises a march of the spirit of the world (*Weltgeist*) toward an ultimate conciliation of the rational idea and reality.

In turn, Marx, following the footsteps of Hegel, wrote with similar enthusiasm about the modern epoch as a time of development, of rapid growth of production, of constantly increasing power of human reason over nature, and of universal emancipation from the forces that for centuries had hampered the creative human potential. This process is the consequence of a rapid acceleration of the development of creative forces which, in turn, are associated with the development of science, progress in innovative technical thought and the rationalization of life.

The quintessence of the view identifying rationality with modern society was the vision of history created by Max Weber who assumed that the development of a universal history consists of a permanently progressing rationalization. Nonetheless, Weber went on to describe contemporary culture as the dissolution of traditional substantial reason into three separate spheres: truth, goodness and beauty. The consequence of this situation, Weber maintained, was the fact that in contemporary society reason does not appear as the discoverer of objective values in any of those

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[7] I mean the terrorist action which took place at the beginning of September 2004 in one town of North Kaukaz as a result of which many hundreds of children and adults were murdered.

[8] Cf. I. Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*, in *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, Vol. IV (Berlin, 1784), Polish Edition, *Co to jest Oswiecenie?* [What is Enlightenment?], in T. Kronski, *Kant* (Warszawa, 1966), p. 164.

spheres. This, in turn, undermines the faith in the meaning of everything. In such a situation all scientific arguments, justifying the correctness of the selection of a certain system of values, are meaningless. Every choice becomes possible. We, as people involved in the process of selection, are free from tradition, metaphysical providence, objective values, and objective or transcendental reason. We are free of everything.

Weber initiated a current of cultural pessimism in twentieth-century European philosophy. His diagnosis of society and culture, based on a presupposition about the self-destruction of reason, proved to be apt and influential. After Weber's death (1920) it was shared by members of the Frankfurt school: Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Marcuse as well as other representatives of western Marxism (e.g., Bloch). Subsequently, similar views of the fall of reason were to be proclaimed by representatives of existentialism and Heidegger. At the end of the twentieth century it became apparent that Weber could be unreservedly, and in some regards, placed on a list of the precursors of postmodernism.

An authoritative presentation of the opinions of the Frankfurt school on the problem of the fall of reason was published in 1947 in the work of Max Horkheimer and Theodore W. Adorno: *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (*Dialectic of the Enlightenment*) [9] as well as the book written in the same year by Horkheimer alone: *Eclipse of Reason* [10]. The impact of the first of these two books upon the philosophical awareness of the Europeans, including the significance of the *Dialectics of the Enlightenment* for the process of molding postmodernism, is simply inestimable.

The two founders of the Frankfurt school maintained that in the context of a highly developed scientific-technical civilization society had become the victim of an incurable disease that leads humankind towards self-destruction. All fundamental values, which have granted meaning to human existence, such as: truth, goodness, beauty, personality, individuality, liberty, justice, etc. are being eroded. The twentieth century in particular, together with its high level of the development of science and technology, could render possible the realization of even the most audacious dreams, cherished by thinkers who in the past devised positive visions of a truly humane world.

According to the founders of the Frankfurt school, the twentieth century was a time of the ultimate dismissal of illusions. The authors of *Dialectics of Enlightenment* argued that Enlightenment, identified with humanism, changed into its own opposite, in other words, into anti-Enlightenment: *Enlightenment* became *counter-Enlightenment*. A perspective of self-destruction has replaced the emancipation of mankind:

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[9] M. Horkheimer, T.W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente* (Amsterdam, 1947), Polish Edition, *Dialektyka oswiecenia* (Warszawa, 1994).

[10] Cf., M. Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, German Edition, *Zur Kritik der instrumentellen Vernuft* (Frankfurt a. Main, 1967).

Erlösung (liberation) changed into *Selbstzerstörung* (self-destruction). Why did this happen? The cause lies in a self-mutilation or self-undoing of reason, in a process which consists in the fact, nowadays recognized, that rationality constituted an exclusively instrumental mode of reason. This has been replaced by its substantial role as in the past when culture was based on permanent metaphysical foundations. In a word, the cause of the transformation of Enlightenment into counter-Enlightenment has been the change of *substantial reason* which created a permanent metaphysical base for truth, beauty, goodness, etc., into the so-called *instrumental reason* which deals exclusively with the supplying means for assorted useful aims. Today, nobody inquires after the rationality of aims.

Horkheimer and Adorno concluded that modern rationality found its best fulfillment in pragmatism and logical positivism, which renounced all claims to theoretical cognition for the sake of knowledge that serves a solely technical usefulness. Both authors of *Dialectics of Enlightenment* tried to show that reason had been banished from science, because it was concerned only with usefulness but not with truth. There is no reason in morality and law because the dissolution of the religious-metaphysical imaginary of the world was tantamount to a loss of the reliability of all normative criteria. A similar situation exists in the realm of twentieth-century art which changed into empty entertainment. Deprived of all utopian and critical content it was unable to reinforce the affirmative character of contemporary culture.

In the past, the prime obstacle to the realization of fundamental values were the insufficiency of reason, lack of Enlightenment, and low level of technology. This situation kept people in the state of material poverty, and in a sense of being threatened by natural forces hostile to. This was the cause for servility towards all sorts of irrational derivatives created by people (myths, prejudices, superstitions, false deities, etc.), which, in turn, caused unjust social relations. This also explains why the supporters of the theory of progress linked their hopes for emancipating the humankind from material poverty, from a life deprived of opportunities for self-realization, and from existence in conditions determined by subjugation with the emancipation and maximum activity of reason. By endowing man with knowledge and enlightening him in all domains, reason was supposed to enable him to dominate nature and be freed from rule by his own irrational products. The foremost slogan of humanism was Enlightenment. Much substantial thinking on the critical situation of contemporary society and on the fall of reason as the base of the crisis was formulated by creators and representatives of the first generation of the Frankfurt school. This was done by placing special accent upon the negative aspect of the dialectics of reason and reality.

Today, these views are being continued by Jürgen Habermas. However, it must be said that although Habermas' point of view concerning the "dialectics of Enlightenment" generally fits within the framework delineated by his predecessors, his position is decidedly less pessimistic. It

consists in recognizing that contemporary society should not give up the project of rationality, that despite the tide of the instrumental and the irrational, rationality constitutes an "unfinished project," worthy of being continued; it should not be abandoned.[11] Willing to continue the project of modernity—based on the idea of Enlightenment, formulated during the eighteenth century, and still "inexhaustible" and "incomplete"—since the beginning of the 1980s Habermas has conducted the great polemic with postmodernists who to him seem to be conservatives, wishing to shift the discourse of modernity to pre-Enlightenment positions.[12]

NOTION OF RATIONALITY

Considering the critique of Western civilization by many distinguished thinkers it is notable that thinkers who have treated the decline of civilization as the fall of reason have in mind not reason as an objective being or a narrowly comprehended cognitive ability of individual man. Rather they have in mind the prevailing present-day type of rationality, very near to the Kuhnian conception of *paradigm*.[13]

Generally speaking, there exist different notions and types of rationality. Rationality is never undetermined but is always in some manner specific, e.g., by referring to some active subject (e.g., the rationality of a child, or an adult, individual or collective rationality, etc.), or it refers to a certain kind of activity as shaping such concrete activities as, for example, rational decisions, convictions, activities, ideas, faith etc. Furthermore, rationality can be related to some wide sphere of activity, e.g., rationality in the economy, in art, in common life, in mathematics or in logic. Finally, we speak accordingly about different kinds of rationality regarding the ends of any human activity or the sources determining these ends (e.g., scientific rationality, technical rationality, metaphysical rationality, etc.).

It is of great significance for the goal of this chapter to accentuate that the most important feature common to all kinds and models of rationality is that rationality in every case is indispensably connected with some kind of human activity or with some concrete activities in which one or another mode of rationality finds its application.

At the very basis of rationality in all its diversity lies the fundamental Western supposition that man is a rational being. Thence, it follows that man in whichever activity is undertaken always carefully meditates, considers, chooses what can be an object or an aim of his activity, as well as

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[11] Cf. J. Habermas, *Modernity—An Incomplete Project*, Polish Edition, *Modernizm—niedokonczony projekt*, in *Postmodernizm. Antologia przekladow* (Krakow, 1998).

[12] Cf. J. Habermas, *Modernizm—niedokonczony projekt*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–46.

[13] Cf. Th.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

the way and with regard to which values any given activity is being undertaken. A given type of rationality appears in which an individual, social group, or society as a whole, in a given historical epoch or cultural circle, determines and realizes their aims and activities, as well as their dependence on specific concrete values and how this appears in their context.

However, it must be said that reasoning man in undertaking whichever activity is guided in his choices of aims and actions by motives, values, etc., which are not exclusively the results of the activities of his reason. Human reason is in itself only a formal power or ability, empty in regard of any possible content. I speak here about the so-called subjective reason which is in itself only a formal ability to realize various mental or logical operations as a result of which some decisions and actions are undertaken. Which concrete operations are realized by man's reason, how they proceed as well as which decisions and actions are definitely being chosen, is relative to the material content of reason which consist of rules of thinking (rules of logic), information resources about the world, and sets of values which have the greatest influence on our activity and, consequently, on the character of rationality.

From almost the daybreak of our civilization man was considered not only as a rational being, leading oneself by reason, but also as a being which is free, i.e., gifted with free will. In the relationship with this, one is a being having the possibility of executing his choices according to his own decisions. The outstanding Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), defined the human person by the highest attribute in the temporal world, namely, the kind of freedom he termed "freedom of independence." This he described by noting that as equipped with free will the human person is a sufficient reason or cause of all his decisions and actions. Thus, rationality is always relative to the material contents of reason, mostly to values, and essentially related to human freedom. All material contents of reason: knowledge about the world, rules of logical thinking as well as values which are of decisive importance for human life, are matters of selection and choice; they are essentially free. Some elements are accepted by us, assimilated, and put into consciousness, while others are not. The sciences which are of present interest to man and society, such as psychology, biology, theory of education and sociology, have a very large cognitive content. This includes our individuality and the contents of our consciousness relative to environment, social groups and education, as well as to the inheritance and biological equipment of the organism, yet no empirical knowledge rules out the free will of man. The results of scientific research do not cancel that in fundamental matters regarding our existence we have the possibility of executing free choices in accordance with the characteristics Maritain attributes to the freedom of human person as "the

power of choices, beyond all necessities, even internal, and all determinism." [14]

RATIONALITY AND FAITH

The considerations on the notion of rationality permit one to distinguish within this notion the following three components: (1) reason as the formal power of man, (2) the material contents of reason, and (3) the free will of the human person. The fourth component of each kind of rationality as a specific paradigm of human action is *faith*. As an inseparable component of every kind of rationality faith deserves special attention. This is because every process of reasoning, as a result of which any activity takes place, is in an essential manner related with an act of faith. Our faith to the greatest degree prejudges our choice of values which provide the solid ground for our practical activity. At this point I fully agree with George McLean when he writes that "faith is not a superstructure which can be dispensed with, but is foundational and indispensable; nor is it a constraint upon reason, but its natural context, inspiration and support." [15]

Faith is an indispensable link between human reason and his decisions and activities, because, as we know from the most valuable heritage of European philosophy, there is no direct passage between knowledge and values, empirical facts and decisions or, as some say, between being and duty (for German philosophers between: *Sein* und *Sollen*). In the opinion of Karl Popper (1900-1994), one of the most outstanding philosophers: "Neither nature nor history can tell us what we ought to do. Facts, whether those of nature or those of history, cannot make the decision for us, they cannot determine the ends we are going to choose. ... It is up to us to decide what shall be our purpose in life, to determine our ends. This dualism of facts and decisions is, I believe, fundamental." [16]

In the transition from non-knowledge to knowledge, especially from knowledge about empirical reality to the convictions on rightness of one or another set of values as well as in undertaking all our choices and decisions, inevitably there appears at some moment the aspect of faith. Thus Kant, after making an unusually arduous journey aimed through a critical examination of reason to bring the problem of science and metaphysics—of knowledge and faith—into essential homogeneity. In the end he felt obliged

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[14] J. Maritain, *Principes d'une politique humaniste* (Paris, 1945), p. 16.

[15] G.F. McLean, *Faith, Reason and Philosophy: Lectures at the Al.-Azhar, Qum, Teheran, Lahore, Beijing* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000), Introduction, p. 2.

[16] K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 2 (London and Hensley, 1962), pp. 278-279.

to make a sincere confession: "I had to suspend knowledge, to make room for faith."[17]

One can venture the statement that in all arguments and reasoning there is, after all, faith which determines in the end the type of rationality which manifests itself in the various choices and activities. Faith prejudges which values are for man the most important, in the name of which values man qualifies his practical aims, which activities are undertaken, how he realizes them, etc. All acts of practical reason, which result in concrete deeds, are compatible with acts of faith, and are undertaken and realized according to some acts of faith. In other terms, human rationality, no matter what kind, remains in the closest relationship with something in which man believes, to what he has the greatest confidence, and with which he binds all his hopes and his life.

Two very important arguments underline the importance of belief in the research on truth in the opinions of John Paul II. The first, clearly cognitive in character, is contained in two assertions: (1) ."... there are in the life of a human being many more truths which are simply believed than truths which are acquired by way of personal verification. ... Who could personally examine the flow of information which comes day after day from all parts of the world and which is generally accepted as true."[18]; and (2) based on the first argument: "In believing, we entrust ourselves to the knowledge acquired by other people."[19] The second argument, possessing the very interesting humanistic-existential character, is contained in the words of the Pope: "…belief is often humanly richer than mere evidence, because it involves an interpersonal relationship and brings into play not only a person's capacity to know but also the deeper capacity to entrust oneself to others, to enter into a relationship with them which is intimate and enduring."[20]

METAPHYSICAL RATIONALITY AND INSTRUMENTAL RATIONALITY

There exist different kinds of rationality depending upon various kinds of activity in which each finds its expression in dependence upon criteria of valuing, and the values themselves, which exert a decisive impact the particular activity undertaken. There seem to exist two main types of rationality which in a particular manner have stamped our Western civilization. Analyzing them can be a good starting point to reveal the

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[17] I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Polish Edition, *Krytyka czystego rozumu* (Warszawa, 1957), Vol.I, p. 43.

[18] John Paul II, Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, par. 31, in G.F. McLean, *Faith, Reason and Philosophy: Lectures at the Al.-Azhar, Qum, Teheran, Lahore, Beijing*, *op. cit.*, appendix.

[19] *Ibid.*, par. 32.

[20] *Ibid.*

perspective of a new type of rationality which could have a very decisive influence upon the present processes of globalization and in realizing in contemporary conditions the idea of civil society. The positive results of this third kind of rationality, postulated in this chapter, would affect not only Western civilization, but also all actually existing civilizations and all people living in the world. This type of rationality would shape the human activity in the so-called post-metaphysical epoch and in the future "post-post-modern society." This will supersede our present post-modern society by, not Huntington's conflict of civilizations but their cooperation in a gradually shrinking world.

Whereas the two classical types of rationality which have existed up to now in the frame of Western civilization are: the *metaphysical rationality* and *the instrumental rationality*, this postulated new type of rationality is a *dialogical rationality* resting on the fundamental postulate and method of dialogue.

Metaphysical Rationality

From the tradition of great European philosophical systems there has appeared a type of rationality for which the most suitable name is metaphysical rationality. One can detect the remote sources of this rationality in Greek philosophers, mainly with Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle. Later, in the middle Ages, this kind of rationality was enriched by the views of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. It found its classical expression in philosophical systems of the 17th and 18th centuries, including the system of Hegel where metaphysical rationality took it most extreme form. Before Hegel, the metaphysical rationality found the strong grounding in philosophical systems of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz.

Metaphysical rationality possessed a number of distinctive features. The most important of them was the conviction of the necessary connection (sameness) between reason and being. This found its expression in faith as an objective reasonableness granting order and positive moral value to all that exists. This rationality assumed that the world was organized wisely and purposely, because it owed its existence and ordering to the existence and efficient power of the divine Absolute seen as identical with reason by Parmenides, *nous* by Anaxagoras, *divine builder* or *Demiurge* by Plato, *first substance* by Aristotle, *God* by Christian philosophers, *substance* by Spinoza, or *absolute idea* by Hegel. In each case it was dependent upon the existence of an objective cause that warranted law and order in the temporal world, even if in certain details one perceived some defects and lack. In spite of certain imperfections, the world as a whole appeared in the frame of metaphysical rationality to be the best possible, as a reflection of the divine Absolute. Metaphysical rationality excluded any accidentality. There was no existence without reason; everything that exists had a meaning and is purposeful for it results from a kind of timeless and necessary order which

can be grasped in exact logical-mathematical or natural laws originating from objective reason.

In metaphysical rationality reasonableness is an attribute of both being and man, which is quite obvious considering the fact that man, like all other beings, is a component part of the one all-embracing reality. The human intellect, *ratio*, is a participant or special case of the universal resonableness. However, only man among all empirical beings was equipped with reason as a part of universal reason; he received reason in order to comprehend and disclose the reasonableness of the whole of being. This exceptional position of man was underlined in the philosophical system of Hegel, wherein the cognition of being and the grasping of truth in notions was understood as reaching cognition about himself. This was to achieve so-called absolute knowledge, which is the self-cognition of the absolute itself. The cognition, accomplished by man, is fully reliable and can serve as self-knowledge of the absolute because the logic proper to the human intellect corresponds to the logical structure of being itself. In the model of metaphysical rationality, whose quintessence was the philosophy of Hegel, such categories as being, reason, objective order, necessity, finality, logic, notion, knowledge, and man, are closely related to one another. "Reason, wrote Hegel, is the certitude of consciousness that it is all-embracing-reality." [21] Rationality belongs to being itself where objective rationality warrants law and order to all what exists. The thinking which takes place in the human mind displays the truth of being and is a road on which being itself arrives at the true knowledge about himself.

From the standpoint of metaphysical rationality the world is full of meaning; all that exists is endowed with meaning: the world of nature as well as human history. In this image of the universal rationality the knowledge composed by people is an activity which mirrors and shows the objective meaning of things, and therefore acquires the positive moral value. As delivering the truth of all things, it becomes good, i.e. something desirable *per se*, useful and valued. As its very existing is itself good, knowledge contributes to bringing further goods if it binds with other kinds of human activity which are immediate causes of various occurrences. Rational behavior, being compatible with an objective order, is always moral and is directed towards ever more new values. Hereby, and this is perhaps also one of the most important features of metaphysical rationality––ideas of truth and goodness appear co-related. So originated, for example, the *amor Dei intellectualis* of Spinoza who considered the highest good to be the cognition of the substance, i.e., the God-Nature, which inevitably elicits love and gives man happiness.[22] The cognition of the substance, the

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[21] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, Polish Edition, *Fenomenologia ducha* (Warszawa, 1965), Vol. 2, p. 269.

[22] Cf. L. Kolakowski, *Jednostka i nieskonczonosc. Wolnosc i antynomie wolnosci w filozofii Spinozy* [The Individual and Infinity. Fredom and

insight into the harmonious structure of the eternal universe on the part of man determines his moral behavior. Similarly the recognition of the greatness and genius of any human person arouses the moral acceptance and desire to imitate this person. In a similar way arose also the Hegelian notion of the *moral genius* which, as Hegel wrote, "realizes the intrinsic voice of his immediate knowledge as God's voice. And since in this knowledge he is also directly aware of being, so he is therefore a divine creative power in which notion is contained life. This is also a divine service, because his activity consists in viewing his own divinity." [23]

The other great rationalistic systems of the past also emphasized that in the essences of things reason recognizes itself and from such recognition flows, among others, the rightful behavior of man. The creators of those systems believed that coming from the cognition of nature *lumen naturale* penetrates man so deeply that it gives him a key for reconciling his life with the functioning of objective reality. Thus, e. g., in terms of metaphysical rationality the political system has been interpreted as an expression of rules originating from objective reason and reasonable legislation was acknowledged as laws accordant with objective reason. Thus domestic as well as international policy was evaluated according to its conformability to the guidelines of objective reason which the ideas of justice, equality, happiness, democracy and ownership have been referred to as the objective rational order of all-reality. Reason had to regulate all our decisions as well as our relations to other people and to nature.

As is seen in the above argumentation, metaphysical rationality rests on the view that reason exists as the definite real and potential power not only in the human mind but, first of all, in the objective world, i. e., in nature and its manifestations, in social institutions, in inter-human relations and in the life of individuals. Such a notion of objective reason never excluded subjective reason, but the latter was acknowledged as a partial, special expression of the former. The former functioned as a universal reasonableness from which one deduced the criteria for all things and all living creatures. The most important aim of subjective reasoning as an activity of human individuals was to bring existence including the private affairs of individuals into concordance with the objective order, or, speaking with Hegel's words, to render "everything rational."

Instrumental Rationality

The second type of rationality which has emerged as if it were a result of the simple denial of the metaphysical rationality is that rationality whose most proper name is "instrumental rationality," or as some critics called it: "means-end-rationality." From the historical viewpoint, this kind

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Antynomies of Fredoom in Philosophy of Spinoza] (Warszawa, 1958), pp. 428-431.
   [23] G.W.F. Hegel, *Fenomenologia ducha*, Vol. 2, *op.cit.*, p. 257.

of rationality was, on the one hand, the result of the destruction of the classical rationalism resting on metaphysics, and, on the other hand, an effect of the synthesis of positivistic phenomenalism with the scientist attitude and the cult of techniques, together with obedience to the technocrat ideologies particularly widespread in the 20th century . Phenomenalism removed from the awareness of people the need to seek and take account of a transcendent being as well as the hidden essences under the surface of phenomena. Scientism, confining man to the closed circle of positive science, fixed him in the false conviction that relying exclusively on empirical knowledge would assure freedom from the trouble of valuing and acknowledging anything in accordance with his faith. In turn, the 20th century materialistic-technocrat-ideologies steered the people's awareness and activity exclusively to achieving improvised, accidental, practical, i. e., material and consumer, aims.

Many 20th century philosophers, among them Max Weber, representatives of the Frankfurt school, Heidegger, Jaspers and others wrote about the transformation of metaphysical into instrumental rationality. Max Horkheimer, the founder of the Frankfurt school, regarded this process as an "eclipse of reason," leading to the downfall of the whole of Western civilization. In accord with Horkheimer's analyses the idea of rationality was fundamentally changed. It lost all its transcendent and objective references, e.g., to *God*, *Logos*, *objective reason*, *objective order,* etc.; instead, it became exclusively connected with a human subjective reasoning subordinated in the form of instrumental tools to the realization of aims about whose reasonableness nobody inquired. In modern times, at least beginning from the period of Enlightenment, reason developed the tendency to destroy its own objective content. The progress of the Enlightenment gradually took down the idea of objective reason while successively deepening the sense of subjective reason. This process led to a situation, in which reason completely destroyed itself as a medium of metaphysical, ethical and religious insight and, as a result, annihilated itself as a power of moral judgment.

The transition from objective to subjective reason made reason exclusively an instrument; its only value became utilitarian rather than substantial, i.e., the value of operating tools which serve to calculate, count, compare costs and profits, or compute the probability of desired or expected effects at given costs. Subjective reason has, in fact, to do with analyzing optional proceedings, and this solely with reference to supposed effects. Its activity is *in toto* exhausted by the examination of the adequacy of means to established aims proposed in an entirely free and accidental manner. In the present epoch in which instrumental rationality dominates, one does not perceive the need for any reasonable substantiation of aims. Reasonable means only efficient and imperatively low-priced.

The transformation of metaphysical rationality into instrumental is treated in the Encyclical *Fides et ratio* of Pope John Paul II who as both

head of the Catholic church and a philosopher references what other philosophers wrote earlier on this theme.

> It should also be borne in mind that the role of philosophy itself has changed in modern culture. From universal wisdom and learning, it has been gradually reduced to one of the many fields of human knowing; indeed in some ways it has been consigned to a wholly marginal role. Other forms of rationality have acquired an ever higher profile, making philosophical learning appear all the more peripheral. These forms of rationality are directed not towards the contemplation of truth and the search for the ultimate goal and meaning of life; but instead, as "instrumental reason," they are directed—actually or potentially—towards the promotion of utilitarian ends, towards enjoyment or power.[24]

What results from this instrumentalization of reason, and what to do with these very troublesome changes in the sphere of reason has absorbed many critics of the present civilization. Attention has mostly turned on this that in the era of instrumental reason all important ideas such as human person, freedom, justice, equality, happiness, tolerance etc, which were formerly derived from reason or had been sanctioned by it, have now lost their spiritual roots. Even if they still are acknowledged as aims for which one strives, there is no rational instance entitled to giving them value and reconciling them with the objective reality. Being approved by the respected historical documents and constitutions of many countries, these ideas can enjoy prestige and be acknowledged as values. Nevertheless, they lack the sanction of reason. Who can today ascertain that any of these fundamental values is stronger than its opposite? The statement that justice and freedom are more valuable then injustice and oppression is from the viewpoint of the present rationality unverifiable and useless. Since aims are already not certified in the light of objective reason, no one can say that some economic or political systems, even cruel and despotic, are less rational than any other.

Nevertheless, I would like to defend here the thesis that such an exclusively negative point of view on this kind of rationality seems to be one-sided; furthermore, it is to a high degree ineffective and even sometimes detrimental because it leads to social pessimism, anarchistic behavior and activities directed against the society. People who evaluate the present world exclusively in a negative manne—as the denial of reason—as a rule fall into a deep pessimism seeing no possibility of repairing the world, or they take up an attitude of entire rejection of reason together with

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[24] John Paul II, Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, par. 47, *op. cit.*

the condemnation and rejection of all hitherto acquired possessions of the civilization.

An example of this attitude of metaphysical pessimism is the pessimism of the first generation of representatives of the Frankfurt school, proclaimed in its most extreme form by Horkheimer and Adorno. Other examples of the attitude resulting from a lack of perception of any positive role of reason as a guide of mankind are the various youth counter-cultures of the second half of the twentieth century, as well as anarchistic and terrorist ideologies and social movements at the beginning of the 21st century. Exclusively directed to the destruction of the acquired possessions of civilization they strive for a withdrawal of the civilization to pre-Enlightenment-positions, which contradict all the principles of reason and humanism which come from the Enlightenment tradition, and in spite of all are still acknowledged by the majority of humankind.

Incontestably the balance of the progress of science, technology, culture and rationality is more complicated than has been supposed by those who detect in it a performance of negative moments, thereby binding progress exclusively with the crisis or downfall of Western civilization. The last 150 years, wherein the present model of the rationality has been shaped, and especially in the course of the second half of the 20th century, when there was the greatest talk about the crisis of Western civilization and all the negative phenomena to which it gave birth—were nevertheless extremely rich, creating splendid works in science, technology, art, philosophy, literature—practically all spheres of social life. The criteria of logical, methodological and instrumental rationality found wide application in all spheres of human activity as science, technology, economy, and organization of collective life. Rationality has been universally identified with perfection, splendor, profit and material abundance. Hence, we feel obliged to a continuous rationalization of our human existence, our thinking and acting. In the stereotype of instrumental rationality the qualification "rational," despite all the objections we can have to it, has also meant consistent with scientific methods, resting on the knowledge about causality and other laws of nature, allowing the achievement of established aims, foreseeing future events, and optimizing human actions and all forms of life.

It must be kept in mind that rationality in its present shape has been required by the objective living conditions of humankind. This is true particularly of all technical inventions and technology, of the creation of continually new systems of knowledge in the sciences: from physics to biology and ecology, as well as in the social sciences and humanities: from economy to psychology and ethics. These are indispensable for our survival as a species in ever more difficult environmental and social conditions; they are also positive factors in view of the unheard of quantitative growth of human population, and in view of more and more difficult existential problems. The more humankind knows about the world and itself, the better it can create living conditions and the more effectively it can respond to the

powers of nature, incorporating and adapting them to the satisfaction of human needs. Rational knowledge, resting on the model of instrumental rationality, has seemed the best and most efficient instrument for the creation of conditions of a prosperous life for people.

However, we must also acknowledge— and this is the other side of the same process of progressive rationalization, compatible with the ominous screenplays of the critics of instrumental reason—that if our consciously and unconsciously directed evolution proceeds farther in the same direction, the final consequence of a full instrumentalization of reason can be the situation in which we as people make ourselves similar to the technical mechanisms which are our products. All this could mean an erasing of the essence of humanity; in the final account it would be inhuman and irrational.

Hence there are voices which postulate that rationality must be somehow limited, because it inevitably reduces our possibility for free choices, responsible decisions, and creative actions such that it is practically impossible to have creative activity in a fully rationalized situation. In such a situation we can act only reproductively, but not creatively. Such regularity can be observed: the more advanced the rationalization, the more developed our imitative faculty, the lesser the possibility of creative action. Creative activity begins when we are not forced to unequivocal decisions, i.e., if we have many alternative free choices; and this is possible only in situations that are not fully rationalized. Therefore, rationality seems to be an enemy of creativity. It also contradicts our freedom and reduces the possibilities of the development of individuals and societies. High rationalization degrades our personality, for it causes uniformity, homogenization, equalizing, submission to mass standards, reduction of critical thinking, etc.

These are reasons why nowadays we should be heading towards the end of instrumental rationality. In further rationalization of this kind we can see irrational action: rationalization beyond a rational extent must lead to some kind of irrationality, for it threatens our humanity. The critics of Western civilization are right when they say that the rise of rationality beyond a rational measure brings humankind to the edge of self-extermination. We cannot exclude that a limitation of rationality in many spheres of our activity will give us better chances for a sober life, and, perhaps, for further survival as a species.

In any case, at present one of the widespread negative reactions to the excessive of growth instrumental rationality in our civilization is the phenomenon of a spontaneous degeneration of rationality into its opposite, i.e., into irrationality. It seems as if the overgrowth of instrumental rationality in the life of individuals and societies awoke an instinctive resistance against it in the form of an escape of reason. Some analysts of the

present society [25] perceive that after nearly two and a half millennia the Aristotelian definition of man as *rational animal* awakens more and more reservations. It seems rather that, at present, people sense more irrationality than rationality. As we enter the twenty-first century, when officially there still prevails the rationalistic-scientist-ideology, one perceives the considerable increase of irrational components in our culture, e. g. such as feelings, intuition, irrational inclinations, references to para-scientific knowledge, etc. Presently people are more and more producing irrational ideologies, as well as making use of many symbols and things of an irrational character. It was already long ago shown that certain irrational presuppositions lie at the very grounds of the sciences (even of physics), technology and economy, and that they are by no means to be eliminated. For example, contemporary researches in the scope of the theory of human behaviors (economics of behaviors)[26] confirm the growth of irrational behaviors on the part of customers.

It can be said that, generally, in economic decisions reason plays an ever more diminishing part. The notion of "*homo economicus*," rested on the recognition of an inclination of man to rational economic behavior, and has become to a large degree an anachronism. The vision of Herbert Simon about "the world of limited rationality" proved prophetic. Also R. Selten (Nobel award in economics in 1994) showed, based on empirical materials, that in the processes of making our decisions reason is only one of many "advisers," and not at all the most important[27]. In any case, even those who want to think and act exclusively rationally must in ever greater degree take into account irrational behaviors of other people, because this is increasingly taking place. For example, some rules of the present-day marketing, as well as ways and means to influence potential consumers by advertising already suppose that in the sphere of consumption the decisions and activities of people do not proceed in a the rational , but in an irrational mode. The rationality of the contemporary market consists in the acknowledgement of activities which in mass-society cause irrational behaviors, because these have the greatest influence on the increase of consumption and production.

The efficiency and increasing range of irrational layers of the human individuality have significant impact not only on economic decisions, but, for example, also on the political. This becomes very apparent in the periods of important elections (presidential, parliamentary), and various organized actions in association with elections. All this drives the reflection, that the prevailing at present model of instrumental rationality, efficiently transforming the human person into an instrument, must be

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[25] Cf. W. Sztumski, *Are We Really More Rational?* in *World Affairs*, Vol. Seven, No. three (July-September 2003), pp. 102-105.

[26] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[27] The examples of R. Selten and H. Semon taken from: W. Sztumski, *Are We Really More Rational?*, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

replaced with some other model wherein the human person will retrieve all that belongs to its rights and dignity.

My own view is not that there is need to limit existing rationality or to return to some kind of irrationality or to a metaphysical rationality based on a traditional metaphysics of foundations. Rather, the only right thing to do now is to make a basic change in the type of rationality, namely, to transit from the instrumental to dialogical rationality. This is the only path by which as the human we race can escape the threat of self-destruction and preserve our freedom, creativity, humanity, and ability to develop peacefully on a global scale.

OUTLOOK OF DIALOGICAL RATIONALITY

In relation to the problem of rationality one can put three questions to Kant which exhaust the range of philosophical inquiry: (1) "What can I know?" (*Was kann ich wissen*?); (2) "What should I do? " (*Was soll ich tun*?); (3) "What may I hope?" (*Was darf ich hoffen*?) [28]. With reference to the theme of this chapter, the problem of rationality, Kant's questions become the following three concrete issues: (1) What is presently happening in the sphere of rationality which could be the subject of our knowledge on this theme? (2) Which direction should our conscious activities take for turning the present instrumental rationality into rationality of another kind? (3) What would be predictable consequences—beneficial for world and people—of our aware transformation of the instrumental rationality into a rationality of another kind?

As presented hitherto in this chapter, the transformation of metaphysical into instrumental rationality was situated in the range of the first Kantian question. Further considerations concern the next two questions of Kant: "what should I do" and "what may I hope?" In the sphere of rationality, or, speaking more concretely, how and in which direction to transform the present instrumental rationality which has many negative consequences accompanied by an increase of irrational elements. In an epoch called "post-metaphysical" or even "anti-metaphysical," it is not possible simply return to return to the former model of metaphysical rationality. The twentieth century turned away from former endeavors of philosophy identifying first and final foundations of reality and looking beyond empirical sources of our knowledge about the world.

That process of the destruction of the metaphysics began earlier in the views of the sophists and skeptics in the period of Antiquity and nominalist views expounded by certain scholastics during the middle Ages. In modern philosophy this road was proclaimed by Hume, Kant, Nietzsche and representatives of positivism. Most influential in this line in the 20th century were *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* of Wittgenstein (1921) and *Sein und Zeit* of Heidegger" (1927). The *Tractatus* put metaphysics outside

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[28] Cf., I. Kant, *Krytyka czystego rozumu*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 548.

the limits of science and philosophy, whereas in the Heidegger's work metaphysics was rebuilt into an existential analytics of *Dasein* (sometimes called metaphysics of *Dasein*). In the last decades of the twentieth century postmodernism joined this trend.

The critique of metaphysics, on the one hand, and of present-day society and civilization, on the other, in the 20th century joined with an investigation of a new non-metaphysical thinking regarding reality. This fashioned a new paradigm of rationality for the realm of practical action and of people's moral attitudes. The present, prevailing instrumental rationality and its accompanying behaviors, phenomena and events are symptoms of Western civilization entering a period of decline; many are of the opinion that we are sinking into an abyss of disaster and self-dissolution. It seems helpful then to survey some views originating from the most recent philosophy, which may contain certain hints and conceptions of a new type of rationality able to replace earlier types and contribute to a revival of the West. Many hints and possibilities can be found in such distinguished contemporary philosophers as: Jaspers, Popper, Habermas, as well as representatives of such significant philosophical directions as dialogical philosophy, present Catholic philosophy, hermeneutics and postmodernism.

Recommendations and opinions of outstanding contemporary philosophers upon the role and manner of the functioning of reason in the life of individuals, social groups and societies, join to form a certain conception which might be termed "dialogical rationality." This seems to be the most proper name, though one might employ here Habermas' term "communicative rationality."

Such a dialogical rationality replies to the challenges of our times. It results from needs of life of present people and societies and from searching for a good remedy for the critical situation of Western civilization. Likewise it provides a proper methodology for rapidly developing dialogue in today's world. Without this new paradigm of rationality, whose essence is dialogue, conversation, reaching out to seek agreement, co-ordination and common solutions to local and global problems, mankind will be threatened with extermination. This will result from increasing natural (e.g. ecological) threats as well as the escalating destructive tendencies of civilizations about which some interpreters of contemporary civilizations have been writing[29].

Pope John Paul II sought agreement through dialogue with different religions as well as with non-believers. This was motivated as well by transformations in philosophy itself regarding the most urgent needs of mankind. He wrote in his Encyclical *Fides et ratio*:

> The current ferment in philosophy demands of believing
> philosophers an attentive and competent commitment, able

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[29] Cf. S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*, *op. cit.*

to discern the expectations, the points of openness and the key issues of this historical moment. Reflecting in the light of reason and in keeping with its rules, and guided always by the deeper understanding given them by the word of God, Christian philosophers can develop a reflection which will be both comprehensible and appealing to those who do not yet grasp the full truth which divine Revelation declares. Such a ground for understanding and dialogue is all the more vital nowadays, since the most pressing issues facing humanity—ecology, peace and the co-existence of different races and cultures, for instance— may possibly find a solution if there is a clear and honest collaboration between Christians and the followers of other religions and all those who, while not sharing a religious belief, have at heart the renewal of humanity.[30]

One can easily see that dialogical rationality constitutes a synthesis of the two former models of rationality, i.e. metaphysical and instrumental. In dialogical rationality all the positive elements of each which enriched our civilization with many achievements are retained, though in the end and for different reasons they had become objects of broad opposition. At the same time dialogical rationality contains many new elements which take into account the manifold complexity of the present-day reality: the wealth and variety of existing cultures and civilizations, the new needs and aspirations of people, as well as the differences in levels of development of countries and regions of the world and in the sorts and degrees of threats in particular regions of the present world.

The paradigm of dialogical rationality is in no case an artificial, utopian or, in Hegel's language, the "reasoned" idea of malcontents adverse to metaphysics or instrumental thinking, and, seeking something completely different. The paradigm of dialogical rationality continues to be born in a natural and spontaneous manner through many efforts of collective and individual thinking by philosophers, theoreticians of society, specialists of different humanistic disciplines, participants of social movements, people concerned about chances of the world and the future of mankind. These look for modes of coexistence of peoples and societies along tracks which provide solid foundations for more harmonious, creative, and successful life of humanity on a global basis.

PATH TO DIALOGICAL RATIONALITY

It seems helpful then to survey some standpoints and views originating from the contemporary philosophy and containing certain conceptions and hints of a new type of rationality to replace the two earlier

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[30] John Paul II, Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, *op. cit.*, par. 104.

types of rationality, and, at the same time contributing to a revival of the West. Attention thus turns to insights found in such most distinguished contemporary philosophers as: Jaspers, Popper, Habermas, as well as representatives of such notable philosophical directions as dialogical philosophy, hermeneutics or postmodernism. From these schools we can collect many important ideas and notions for creating a dialogical rationality building upon the basic idea of dialogue as well as many arguments showing its potential importance and strength.

Buber

One of the first attempts at creating a new paradigm of rationality, free from traditional metaphysical foundations and resting on the idea of dialogue was undertaken in the twentieth century as "dialogical philosophy," also called "philosophy of dialogue" or "dialogical thinking." Best known in this group of philosophers was the Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber (1878-1965) born in Vienna.[31] Philosophy of dialogue [32] strove for a radical change of the rules of philosophizing to transform it from a search for universal truths, final foundations and essences of things into discovering orientation in existence "here and now." This search is never fulfilled, but with it we remain in unceasing dialogue. Advocates of such a philosophy of dialogue oppose conceptions that offer truths without "life" and our participation. They proceeded on the assumption that human experience is in its essence dialogical in character and, hence, that the method of discovery of the secrets of being should be replaced by the method of meeting and dialogue. In one of his works Buber wrote: "In every epoch one had a presentiment that mutual relation between two creatures meant a specific great-grand-chance for being."[33]

A main aim of dialogical thinking is *meeting* and *discourse*. This replaced the metaphysics of foundations by a metaphysics of orientation through dialogue. Dialogue fulfils the role of Cartesian doubt in protecting from errors, while simultaneously leaving hope for truth and values. It does not uncover goodness, foundations or universities, but— what is particularly important for an epoch of crises which in essence is the crisis of values—dialogue is a path on which their continuous discovery takes place.

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[31] M. Buber, *I and Thou* (New York, 1970), First German Edition: *Ich und Du* (1922).

[32] Besides Buber, the other representatives of the philosophy of dialogue were philosophers as: Ferdinand Ebner (1882-1931, *Das Wort und die geistige Realitäten*, 1921), Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, 1921), Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973, *Die angewandte Seelenkunde*, 1924), Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973, *Journal Metaphysique*, 1927), Eberhard Grisebach (1880-1945, *Die Gegenwart*, 1928).

[33] M. Buber, *Zur Geschichte des dialogischen Prinzips*, in *Werke*, Bd. I, *Schriften zur Philosophie* (München, 1962), p. 293.

Dialogue becomes a warning over too rapid generalizations and universalizations. It is a call that "we are still not there," "one ought to seek farther," "one may not stop," "not to be too hasty," or "not to be sure that something final has been found." Every attempt at putting beings and values into any all-embracing system appears premature and perhaps finally unwarranted.

A pre-condition for investigating a dialogical orientation is openness: openness to that what is new, and to what is other. Dialogical philosophy does not agree that the world, and together with it man, has been congealed in any invariable shape. Dialogue is a continuous creation of something new; it reveals reality in its new possibilities as created and disclosed by dialogue. The metaphysics of dialogue by demanding permanent seeking liberates our creative abilities. In dialogue there appear hitherto absent forms of being: God who is always someone more than one thinks, world which is continuously open to new possibilities, and man who never is merely that which he is. This "still something more," "still not this," or "still not now" is essential for dialogical thinking. Dialogue protects from an irresponsible recognition as fundamental and final truths and values which often result from commonplaceness or temporary or accidental circumstances, which are not at all absolute and universal. At the very base of dialogue there lies the postulate of continuous re-interpretations of "truths" which seem to be "absolute," while in fact they reflect conditionings that could be totally accidental.

In dialogical philosophy the reality always appears in the role of the "partner" of dialogue, expressing its own opinion which one must necessarily take into account. Further and very important from the viewpoint of the model of dialogical rationality, dialogue grows out of the acknowledgement of conflicts of variety and differences. The appeal to dialogue is its need to acknowledge that there are "others" with various directions or orientations different or even contradictory to ours—that there is always another world. An indispensable condition of dialogue is the acceptance that there are "other" people and that there is something "other": the world of dialogue is one not of similarities, but of differences for it is differences that make dialogue possible. Dialogue is a call not to fear differences for it sees not similarities but differences as bringing religions, political systems, or simply men, closer to one another.

Dialogue does not need to be joined with hopes or pretensions to a common discovery of a single essence of being, or the same values. It does not give binding answers on questions of truth and values, but is a form of participation in their continuous creation. More important in it is the desire to give and receive, rather than persuasion, conquering or even common discovery. Rosenzweig wrote: "It becomes necessary, that our truth may be manifold, as well as that truth changes into our truth." [34] The experience of

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[34] F. Rosenzweig, "Das neue Denken. Einige nachträgliche Bemerkungen zum 'Stern der Erlösung'," in *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin, 1937), p. 395.

the difference of another is not that of something strange or hostile. "To one who would be opposed, wrote Buber, first of all, if we have to speak with ourselves, and not through ourselves. Please note that I am not demanding; I am neither qualified nor entitled to this. I am only trying to say that something exists, and to sketch, what it looks like; I am informing." [35]

Jaspers

In presenting the paradigm of dialogical or communicative rationality, it is impossible not to note precious arguments and ideas for this project that can be found in the philosophical views of Karl Jaspers (1883-1969). Jaspers was an outstanding German philosopher and an unusually sensitive humanist who, after the Second World War, chose Switzerland and the university of Basel as the place of his residence and work. Generally, one accounts Jaspers among co-originators of the twentieth-century existentialism, but simultaneously Jaspers was also one of the most outstanding philosophers of the 20th century in a broader context than only this concrete philosophical direction. He did not agree to pigeonholing his views to existentialism as was common for many philosophical camps or schools. At most he accepted the qualification of "philosophy of existence" for his views, to which he gave a very distinctive character.

It is important for the theme of this study that, although, objectively Jaspers was really one of the founders of the German existentialism, from about 1950 he preferred to be seen as a "philosopher of reason" rather than a "philosopher of existence," for, as he said, the task of philosophy in our time is to advance the cause of reason as opposed to anti-reason,[36] to any fanaticism as well as any "final" systems of thought. In Jaspers' words: "We know that we are all at the mercy of events outside our control. But within this destiny to which we are bound to submit, man wants to try, nevertheless, in his own power of decision, to live a life of Reason, to experience selfhood and meaning with the aid of Reason." [37]

Similar to many other present philosophers, Jaspers perceived the contemporary crisis and stigmatized Western society and civilization, writing about the present as an "the epoch of unheard breakup." Sometimes he used still stronger qualifications, such as "disaster," "abyss of nihilism" and others. In his 1953 book: *Einführung in die Philosophie* (*Introduction into Philosophy*) Jaspers wrote: "We live nowadays in an epoch of the most terrible disasters; the destruction of the entire heritage of the past is highly

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[35] M. Buber, *Ja i Ty. Wybor pism filozoficznych* (*I and Thou. The Selection of Philosophical Writings*), Polish Edition (Warszawa, 1992), p. 229.

[36] Cf. K. Jaspers, *Reason and Anti-reason in Our Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

[37] A. Koch, *Philosophy For a Time of Crisis* (New York, 1951), p. 320.

possible."[38] Here, Jaspers had in his mind not only the concrete political situation in the fifties connected with the Cold War, the threat of atomic war, etc., but about more general phenomena which determined the essential threat of the very foundations and substance of human existence; these were, e.g., the antinomies of freedom and effective action in industrial society, personality and mass-society, and further, such negative phenomena as an unrestrained increase of the human population, the breakdown of all past ideals of order, nihilism towards all traditional values, decay of all valid norms, downfall of faith, etc.

> Men have appeared, who seem having abandoned of all inwardness, for whom nothing seem to have any value, who stagger through a world of accident from moment to moment, who die with indifference and kill with indifference, but who seem to live in intoxicating quantitative conceptions, in blind interchangeable fanaticism, driven by elemental, irrational, overpowering and yet quickly passing emotions, and ultimately by the instinctual urge for the pleasure of the moment.[39]

These words of Jaspers from a work he published in the USA in 1949, still have lost nothing of their validity. At the same time, Japers, like other critics of the present society, opposed instrumental rationality, stigmatizing it as a monopoly of thinking in "means-end" categories.

However, describing Jasper's critique of contemporary society and instrumental rationality, one cannot, like many other critics of civilization, classify him in the circle of thinkers who undertook a struggle with metaphysics or announced in one or another form its demise. Quite the opposite, Jaspers strongly engaged problems of the existence of the human individual, in considering existential problems in the context of transcendence, that is to say in the context of God, as well as in the context of other metaphysical matters from which the most important was the all-embracing-whole he called the "Encompassing" (*das Umgreifende*).[40] For Jaspers the metaphysical problems had pivotal significance. He always maintained that existentialism rests on awareness that our proper or authentic existence is founded upon something that transcends it, a characteristic human striving beyond itself, and that human reason somehow completes that striving. He also often affirmed that a supporting element for his thinking was his faith in metaphysical origins. In Jaspers

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[38] K. Jaspers, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii* [Introduction to Philosophy], Polish Edition (Wrocław, 2000), p. 71.

[39] K. Jaspers, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, Philosophical Library (New York, 1949), p. 160.

[40] Cf. Jaspers, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

views, it is by the depth of his attachment to transcendence that man gains independence of all that happens in the world.

Jaspers was very strongly committed to the general problem: what has philosophy to do in the present world situation? In his opinion, the sense of philosophizing lies in being occupied with the present day because we have only one reality that is given to us "here and now." Nevermore will there return what we have wasted by our abandonment[41]. Jaspers' general point of view on philosophy was based on the presupposition that, being closely related to the existence of man as an individual, philosophy is a unique kind of practical activity. The particular character of philosophy which differentiates it from ordinary sciences is, first that while scientific cognition concerns specific objects of knowledge which is not indispensable, philosophy depends on knowledge about the whole being that concerns man as such. Philosophical knowledge gives truth which is deeper than all scientific cognition. Second, philosophical thinking is very individual and most important for the authentic existence of every man. Every attempt at objectification of philosophy, e.g., gripping it in the form of any collective activity as a school or sect, or even making it an occupation spells the ruin of philosophy. Man can become a philosopher only as an individual. Philosophy addresses itself to the individual and his existence. More concretely, Jaspers considered the most important task of philosophy to be "*Existenz Clarification.*"

In Jaspers' opinion, the aim of philosophy always has been to achieve the independence of man as individual. Yet, philosophizing grows out of independence that is at the same time related to the world and to transcendence. The alleged independence, being connected with nothing, would have to be transformed into empty or formal thinking without any content, which does not participate in any idea and is not embedded in any existence. Independence is transformed into its opposite when it ascribes to itself an absolute character. In thinking we depend on materials coming from outside, from the existent; thus we rely on other people whose mutual help alone makes our life possible.

Philosophizing grows also of independence that is ruthlessly related to transcendence. In every aspect of his being man is related to something other than himself: as being to its world, as consciousness to objects, as spirit to an idea that constitutes totality, as existence to transcendence. Man always becomes man by devoting himself to those others. Only through his absorption in the world of being, in the immeasurable space of objects, in ideas, in transcendence, does he become real to himself.

Jaspers shared the opinion of former philosophers, that the sources of philosophy lie in astonishment and doubt, but he added two other sources: the experience of borderline situations and the will to authentic communication. The last source he considered the most important; without it the earlier three mentioned are insufficient. The importance of

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[41] Cf. Jaspers, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

communication as the main motive of philosophizing is manifest from the fact that, in Jaspers' opinion, philosophy has from its beginning endeavored to be communicated and wants to be heard by somebody. Its essence is conveyance, which cannot be separated from truth. What is not embedded in communication has no sufficient base. Even, what is not communicated has still not come into being. Truth begins where there is a second person. Therefore philosophy demands that I unceasingly have to look for communication and, without hesitation, undertake its risk.[42]

Communication is the path to the truth in all its forms. Two of the forms of truth are the most important: one can be called *existential*; this manifests itself in the fact that the self-development of the individual is possible only in communication with other individuals. The second form of truth is purely *cognitive* in character; this is manifest in the fact that knowledge attains its full meaning only through bonds that unite men. The intellect finds clarity only in discussion and dialogue.[43]

Popper

The thinker who from a completely different position gave strong support and made a large contribution to the model of dialogical rationality was Karl Popper (1900-1994). Though he was earlier a philosopher of science related to the famous Vienna Circle, later, with the rise of totalitarianism, Popper turned to examine the methods of the social sciences with strong interest in political and ethical philosophy as well as in the history of philosophy. Popper is best known for his three books: the early *Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1934) and two others namely *The Poverty of Historicism* (1944) and *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945). The last study is the most important for dialogical rationality and has become a contemporary classic in political theory.

Popper first called his philosophy *falsificationism* and later *critical rationalism*, with the motto: "I may be wrong and you may be right, and with effort we may get nearer to the truth."[44] For his methodologies of both the natural sciences and social philosophy Popper advanced a theory of truth as an endless quest. His central insight, inspired by Socrates, was that we can never know anything for sure. Popper argued that progress towards an objective truth would require a critical structure within which competing theories can be tested. Instead of attempting futilely to verify or justify our theories, Popper claimed, we should try to falsify them, since we need only a single negative instance to refute a universal theory. Consequently, what matters in rational debate is that different positions be open to criticism.

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[42] Cf. K. Jaspers, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii*, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17 oraz 84-85.

[43] Cf., *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

[44] K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. II (London and Heneley, 1962), p. 237.

This becomes the engine of progress by removing from consideration false theories, leaving only the provisionally best theories behind. The "best" theories could still not be verified or justified, but since they had not been falsified either, they would be preferable to falsified theories. The rationality of holding a particular position would be granted to the extent to which the theory is open to criticism. Popper argued that what made theories scientific was their *falsifiability*, or their possibility of being refuted.

The phrase "critical rationalism" was used by Popper in order to describe an attitude that seeking to solve problems by an appeal to reason means to clear a thought or an experience with many persons who are looking for some kind of agreement on cognitive problems by way of discussion and arguing. In this attitude, with its emphasis upon argument and experience, is inscribed in advance a readiness to listen to the critical arguments of other persons. Even where the demands and interests of these persons clash, it often is possible to reach a compromise which is acceptable to most, if not to all. This point of view is bound up with the idea that everybody is liable to make mistakes, which may be found out by himself, or by others, or by himself with the assistance of the criticism of others. Popper wrote in his main book: "the rationalist attitude, or, as I may perhaps label it, the 'attitude of reasonableness', is very similar to the scientific attitude, to the belief that in the search for truth we need co-operation, and that, with the help of argument, we can in time attain something like objectivity."[45]

It is for Popper of far-reaching importance that his rationalist attitude considers and appreciates the arguments rather than the arguing persons. This point leads him to the view that we must recognize everybody with whom we communicate, whoever he might be, as a potential source of arguments and reasonable information. This could establish what Popper described as the "rational unity of mankind." Critical rationalism also implies the recognition of tolerance and is linked with the appreciation of the necessity of social institutions being qualified to protect freedom of criticism, freedom of thought, and thus the freedom of man.

One of the most interesting points of Popper's critical rationalism is the matter of faith. Popper was of an opinion that the rationalist attitude cannot be based exclusively upon logical arguments and experience. Whoever adopts this attitude does so because besides reasoning he has adopted some decision, or belief, or habit, or behavior, which in turn can be seen as irrational. This can be describeed it as an irrational "faith in reason." This "faith in reason" is not only a faith in our own reason, but also, and even more, in that of others. Thus, critical rationalism contains in itself a minimum concession to irrationalism that deeply affects our whole attitude towards reason, towards other men, and towards problems of social life. It has already been shown that critical rationalism is closely connected with

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[45] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

the belief in a reasonable unity of humankind. Popper acknowledged that there is a logically untenable attitude of radical rationalism which he called "uncritical." Uncritical rationalism is logically inconsistent, and can be defeated by its own chosen weapon. Popper advocated the modest *self-critical rationalism*, which recognizes certain limitations towards reason and experience.

His standpoint towards the place of faith in reason can be regarded as his partial contribution to the much greater and more general problem of the relation between reason and faith in individual and social life. As already mentioned in this chapter, no human rational activity is possible and thereby no human life without a participation of acts of faith.

Habermas

The next philosophical conception that contributes greatly to the model of dialogical rationality is Haberamas' theory of communicative action. Indeed his theory touches intimately and is even an embodiment of the very essence of dialogical rationality.

As the most distinguished extension of the earlier achievements of the Frankfurt school, Habermas in his social philosophy, also called communicative theory, derives much from the achievements of such philosophers as Kant, Hegel, Marx, Freud and Weber. He refers also mostly in a polemic manner, to such more recent philosophical currents as the fundamental ontology of Heidegger, the critical rationalism of Popper, neo-structuralism, hermeneutics and postmodernism.

Habermas agrees with many other contemporary philosophers on the crisis of present society and culture, but looks for his own solution to this situation. Reconstructing critical theory of society out of the shadows of Marx and the classical representatives of the Frankfurt school, especially Horkheimer and Adorno, he rejected the Marxian notions of revolution and the class struggle and does not share the metaphysical pessimism of his predecessors in the Frankfurt School. Rather, his approach to society offers communicative action as a solution. Habermas suggests that implementing his theory of society would be a good cure for the ills created by modern society and a right step toward a better future for humankind. For Habermas, communicative action using all human spheres of thinking, understanding and language structures, now replaces revolution as a mode of change.

In the notion of communicative action Habermas adopted Horkheimer's concept of reason as rationality and, subsequently, combined it with action which consisted in acts of inter-human agreement. This combination allows human beings to come together, to understand and to agree with one another. It enables the recognition and understanding of values, planning for common action, and taking common actions. Communicative action is internally linked to *communicative rationality* which is a central point of Habermas' theory. In his main work he

distinguishes three subthemes which cross and join one another: (1) the notion of communicative rationality as opposed to instrumental rationality which reduces reason to the role of a tool; (2) the two-stage-concept of society which binds the concepts of lifeworld and system; and (3) a theory of modernity which opposes social pathologies by supposing that the spheres of life already have structures compatible with the communicative model of rationality and will conquer those systems still organized in a formalist manner.[46]

Habermas distinguishes between "action oriented to success" and "action oriented to understanding." Action oriented to success is measured by rules of rational choice, that is, in accordance with the instrumental rationality; action oriented to understanding takes place through "communicative action." This is, according to the model of communicative rationality and is very close to the paradigm of dialogical rationality. Communicative action is realized through mutual and co-operative understanding among collective participants. It is linked to reason as embodied in common thinking and understanding, since it consists in searching for intersubjective cognition of validity claims of truth, rightness, goodness etc. Habermas seeks successively to free the potential of reason as contained in communicative action.

The theory of communicative action is based on an analysis of the social use of language as directed to reaching understanding. Habermas defines communicative action as: "that form of social interaction in which plans of action of different actors are co-coordinated through an exchange of communicative acts, that is, through the use of language oriented towards reaching understanding."[47] As is seen in this quotation, in cases of communicative action language is the vehicle of understanding, and interaction which uses language is its most fundamental form. The linguistic context of processes of communication is formed by the so-called *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld). This is introduced by Habermas to link the communicative theory with the rationalization processes, because all social changes occur through the rationalization of the lifeworld. Habermas conceptualizes this universe of everyday existence as a set of forms of life within which the everyday behavior of human individuals co-participate in a never-ending process of communicative activity of which language is an ever necessary intermediary or link. This process of the evolutionary development of society, culture and individual personalities aiming at the rational organization of everyday life is the highest articulation of the lifeworld and correlates with an existing system of language. Hence, the lifeworld forms the linguistic context for the processes of communication.

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[46] Cf. J. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt a. Main), p. 8.

[47] J. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action* (London, 1981), p. 44.

Generally, Habermas continues today the views on society and culture of the founders and original representatives of the Frankfurt school, although his point of view concerning the "dialectics of Enlightenment" is less pessimistic and contains the view that today's society, despite the tide of instrumental stands, should not abandon the "project of rationality"; that is rationality constitutes an "unfinished project" worth continuing.[48] He sees that the *Dialectics of Enlightenment* of Horkheimer and Adorno as having gone too far in its critique of Enlightenment and not providing ways to evade the myth of instrumental rationality. In his eminent book entitled *Der Philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity) Habermas wrote that *Dialectics of Enlightenment* has insufficiently presented the rational contents of modern culture preserved in bourgeois ideals:

"I have in mind a theoretical dynamic which continually orders the sciences—including the self-reflection of science—to transcend the production of technically useful knowledge. Then, I have in mind the universalistic foundations of law and morality that are embodied (albeit in a deformed and imperfect way) in the institutions of constitutional states, in forms where the will is democratically shaped, and in individualistic (forms) where self-identity takes shape. Finally, I have in mind the productivity and explosive power of aesthetic experiences offered to decentralized subjectivity once it frees itself from the imperatives of ends activity and conventions of daily perception. ..."[49] From the position of the will to continue the "project of modernity" based on the idea of enlightenment, formulated during the eighteenth century and being still "inexhaustible" and "incomplete," Habermas conducted from the beginning of the 1980s, his great polemic with postmodernists whom he accused as conservatives wishing to shift the discourse concerning modernity to pre-enlightenment positions.[50] He sees the strengthening of this "project of modernity" as his task—by constructing the theory of communication. Subsequently, the essential of this theory of communicative action is internally linked to communicative rationality that could be identified as a very important contribution to the paradigm of dialogical rationality.

Shortly after the publication of Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action*, a debate on postmodernism emerged in western social sciences. Derrida, Baudrillard and Lyotard instigated the debate on the tradition of modernity and called for breaks within this tradition. Essentially, postmodernism denotes a resignation from the emancipatory and reasonable ideals of modern culture as grounded in metaphysical systems and rational thinking. Referring to Weber, who bemoaned the dissolution of reason, postmodernists programmatically reject any kind of uniformity which is

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[48] Cf. J. Habermas, *Modernizm–niedokonczony projekt*, *op. cit.*

[49] J. Habermas, *Filozoficzny dyskurs nowoczesnosci*, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–135.

[50] Cf. J. Habermas, *Modernizm–niedokonczony projekt*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–46.

generated by reason. Instead, they claim that today there is not a single discourse concerning a particular issue—such a discourse could have been replaced by multiple discourses. In place of a unity of rational argumentation—so postmodernists say—we face a heteromorphy of linguistic games that play different roles in the case of every object, and towards which every consensus is only local and temporary.

The edge of postmodernism is directed against permanent values established by scientific-technical civilization and against a so-called postmodern society that results from the implementation of what Habermas described as the "Enlightenment project." Present-day postmodernism opposes every sort of unification, questions every unity of law, order, sense, truth, goodness, beauty, etc.; it rejects the value of all universally comprehended and metaphysically grounded concepts, principles and rules. It contests all established schemes of thinking and activity; it proclaims the downfall of all authorities and hitherto existing models.

Experienced and fascinated by the plurality and diversity of recognized forms of life, postmodern intellectuals abandon any endeavor to establish universal and final solutions. Philosophy, as they comprehend it, does not aim at one truth, at a unity of meaning or existence; or at a transparency for philosophical opinions. On the contrary, philosophy accepts a plurality of truths, plurality of meanings, opacity, multiplicity, and incommensurability of opinions.

So-called postmodern debate concerns not only the phenomenon of art; but the many fields of culture, philosophy and the social sciences; and it concerns human life itself. In this debate about values which shape the meaning of the world and the human life many discourses take place at the same time. Two kinds of tendencies can be summarized with some simplification: (1) on the one hand, somehow, not in every case, nor any well comprehended foundationalism, and (2) on the other hand, anti-foundationalism that entails some kind of cultural-historical relativism. It can be also said that within the dispute with postmodernism there is a debate between two different types of attitudes on the part of intellectuals. Sigmund Bauman as a postmodern depicts these two attitudes by means of metaphor as: "legislators" and "translators."[51] We may use here also: "priests" and "interpreters," or "constructionists" and "deconstructionists."

My own view is that the phenomenon of postmodernism in contemporary culture and philosophy is very extensive and well embedded within present civilization. It cannot be ignored, even if it gives rise to protest. A sensible opinion about postmodernism was voiced by the German-American critic, Andreas Huyssen, who wrote: "... as a rule, it is much too easy to scorn postmodernism. ... Such total rejection is the reason why we shall not perceive its critical potential which, in my opinion, does exist although it can be difficult to prove. ... Certainly it can no longer be

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[51] Z. Bauman, *"Prawodawcy i tłumacze"* [Legislators and Translators], in *Postmodernizm*, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-298.

either scorned nor worshipped without bounds, but must be protected against its spokesmen and all those who ignore it."[52]

This "critical," i.e. valuable potential of postmodernism, lies in the fact that the postmodern movement supports two principles comprising the very foundations of contemporary Western civilization: *freedom of creation* and *pluralism of opinions*. Both principles belong to the canons of democratic forms of life and to a supreme degree contribute to the realization of the idea of "open society"; this concept, brilliantly accentuated by Popper, is one of the most valuable legacies of twentieth-century philosophy.

Besides, it must not be overlooked that postmodernism contributes greatly to the aesthetics of our daily-life. Many definitions of postmodernism underline its intention, among other things, to remove the differences between high art and the mass-culture. This relies to a large degree on the challenge of postmodernists to the so-called high art, and its desire to deprive art of its immunity—to remove its halo of sainthood and remove it from its place in museums and the academy. One of assumptions of the postmodern-art is that anything in any place can be art—for example, even the waste of mass-culture or a used consumer commodity such as Andy Warhol's tin of tomato-soup. Anti-works have also been regarded an artworks such as happenings and ephemeral performance events which cannot be stored in museums, as well as the human body and all that is alive. Post-modern aesthetics of every-day life is linked to the idea—not new in the decline of XX-th century—of the transformation of life into an artwork. Art ceases to be a separate domain of reality. It penetrates processes of production and reproduction, and thanks to this, even trivial every-day life possesses marks of an art and becomes aesthetic. In the decline of the sixties of the XXth century Marcel Duchamp formulated the new definition of art as what an artist chose. He also gave a new theory of creation; namely, the separation of an object from its usual context and seeing it from an unusual point of view.

However, I would like to underline above all that postmodernism is today in no case any invention of certain groups of creators, artists, theoreticians of aesthetics, sociologists, philosophers etc. Present-day postmodernism is in no case a fashion of short duration, as it was described shortly ago when some critics maintained that postmodernism was a kind of fashion that would quickly pass away as the world soon returned to a less troublesome fundamentalism. Today, one should look at postmodernism as a by-product of present life— that is to say, as a by-product of a so-called postmodern society. It could be said, for example, that surrealism in postmodern art only reflects the fact that today reality itself (political, social, economic, etc.) has become surreal.

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[52] A. Huyssen, *"Nad mapa postmodernizmu"* [Over a Map of Postmodernism], in *Postmodernizm, op. cit.*, pp. 458–459.

I do not agree with the opinion of Leszek Kolakowski, one of my teachers at Warsaw University before 1968,[53] who stated in 1999:

> My sense is such that a postmodernism which wants to annihilate the truth as a separate value will prove to be a temporary fashion (as, the word "fashion" already expresses) and will shrink slowly, like the bombastic mumbling of French neo-pre-paleo-post-modern-thinkers. I predict fortunes that traditional philosophical cares will not be erased, but rather will return with all the greater impetus.[54]

My assessment of postmodernism harmonizes well with what John Paul II writes in the Encyclical *Fides et ratio* about this philosophical current:

> One thing however is certain: the currents of thought which claim to be postmodern merit appropriate attention. According to some of them, the time of certainties is irrevocably past, and the human being must now learn to live in a horizon of total absence of meaning, where everything is provisional and ephemeral. (…) This nihilism has been justified in a sense by the terrible experience of evil which has marked our age. Such a dramatic experience has ensured the collapse of rationalist optimism, which viewed history as the triumphant progress of reason, the source of all happiness and freedom; and now, at the end of this century, one of our greatest threats is the temptation to despair.[55]

Deliberately or not, such French postmodernists as Lyotard, Foucault and Derrida, together with the American neo-pragmatists, for example, Richard Rorty and others, only express the factual devaluation, relative comprehension, and manifold construction and deconstruction of values. All this has been prepared by the modern and post-modern civilization—not by the "wrongly" thinking philosophers or "badly" creating artists. One could question: whether and to what degree are today in use the notions of objective truth, objective good, objective beauty, and others in many such spheres of life as: politics, economy, trade, interrelations among states, and

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[53] In 1968, at a time of communist regime in Poland, Kolakowski was relegated from the Warsaw University and I was rejected as a candidate for a postgraduate study at that University.

[54] L. Kolakowski**Error! Bookmark not defined.**, *Mysli wyszukane* [Sophisticated Thoughts] (Kraków, 2000), pp. 106-107.

[55] John Paul II, Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, *op. cit*., par. 91.

even the usual relations among ordinary people? It seems quite sure that the departure from fundamental values is in fact something born outside culture and philosophy. Truth is only what some creators of culture and some philosophers try to express and utilize in their creations and thinking. Postmodern thinkers may even be contributing through their different concepts to remedying the existing situation, that is to say, they may contribute to mitigating negative consequences of the fact that the world more and more goes situation by situations without objective, that is, metaphysically grounded values. Moreover, postmodernism might *sui generis* be a mirror that reflects the frequently unnoticed and sometimes intentionally bypassed, embarrassing and troublesome "accomplishments" of twentieth-century culture and civilization. Thanks to its existence and wide impact, postmodernism draws attention to the fact that no one seems to know what exactly constitutes a work of art, because today everything can become art. In the same manner, one could say, nobody knows today, what is meant by "human," since the word seems no longer to have any meaning, and this is at a time when millions die at hunger, suffer from malnutrition, are homeless, deprived of all opportunities for a decent life, and in even the richest countries live from birth to death on the refuse dumps of great cities (man as garbage). The same can be said about the proximate future when, inspired by science, we shall soon start breeding artificially and then killing the resulting human beings, conceived exclusively as suppliers of organs. There are well-founded suspicions that already people in some lands are killed for the sake of a profitable trade of their organs (man as supplier of spare parts).

Those drastic examples and associations are by no means products of "untamed" postmodern thought, especially if we recall that Auschwitz really "took place" and certainly was not just a figment of one's imagination. *Nota bene*, the phenomenon of the Holocaust, which by no means belongs only to the past, is a nutrient medium for the flourishing of post-modern thought. The cited examples, including Auschwitz—*das Ereignis Auschwitz*, as some authors used to say[56]—are parts of the legacy of twentieth-century civilization, on a par with, for example, "Microsoft" and a Bill Gates.

It may even be said, that representatives of postmodernism are trying in some manner to remedy the troublesome situation that the world is ever more broadly bereft of objectively and metaphysically established values. This appears in a statement of the Italian post-modern representative, Gianni Vattimo, philosopher and aesthetician, who affirms that

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[56] About the attitude of postmodernism towards the Holocaust cf. A. Milchman, A. Rosenberg, *Confronting the Paradox of Postmodernism and the Holocaust*, in *Dialogue and Universalism*, no. 4–5/2002, and Z. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, 1989).

> Once we already have discovered that all systems of values are only human, hyper-human, and too-human ... products, what will remain for us to do with them? Will we liquidate them as lies and errors? No. We will keep them as still dearer, because they are all we have at our disposal in the world; they are the depth and the wealth of our experience; they are being itself.[57]

Such utterances by postmodernists allow one to hope that post-modern thinking and post-modern creation should not frighten us with spectre of total nihilism and anarchism; nor invite thoughts about the fall of Western culture and civilization. Numerous critics of postmodernism want to stand exclusively upon the foundation of solid metaphysically established values on which our culture and civilization should be grounded. They see in postmodernism only the loss of the classical, the fall of reason, and the triumph of nihilism.

But it is a misunderstanding to attribute to postmodern thinkers the opinion that in their view humankind should get on without any rules and values. In fact, the representatives of postmodernism propose only the view—which also characterizes other currents of contemporary philosophy as well as many outstanding philosophers—that all values have a human, culturally and historically determined character. According to the opinions of Levi-Strauss, Derrida, Ricoeur, and many others, the time of cultural monopoly has come to an end. Humankind now realizes that there exist many cultures instead of the one Euro-American. Lyotard wrote that the postmodern consciousness "makes us sensitive for the existence of differences and extends our tolerance towards otherness."[58] Owens writes that suddenly the fact gains probability that there exist exclusively "others," that we ourselves are also only the "other" among "others," accurately describes the statement of Lyotard.[59]

To conclude this part of the chapter whose aim has been to certify the presence of postmodernism in contemporary culture, let us quote the statement of the late Richard Rorty, one of the most provocative of contemporary philosophers. He proposes to replace the desire for "objectivity" of truth and other values by the idea of "unconstrained agreement." This proclaims that "we should delight in the thought that the

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[57] G. Vattimo, *Postnowoczesnosc i kres historii* [Post-modernity and the End of History], in *Postmodernizm, op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

[58] J.F. Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne*, quot. after: C. Owens, *Dyskurs innych* [The Discource of Others. The Feminists and Postmodernisn], in *Postmodernizm, op. cit.*, p. 421.

[59] Cf. C. Owens, *Dyskurs Innych. Feministki i postmodernizm* [The Discource of Others. The Feminists and Postmodernism], in *Postmodernizm, op. cit.*, p. 422.

sciences as well as the arts will always deliver us spectacles of an obstinate competition of alternative theories, tendencies and schools."[60]

Ultimately, the essence of dialogical rationality is emphatically expressed by the following assertions by four outstanding philosophers: (1) "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort we can get nearer to the truth" (Popper); (2) "What the Others are saying could be right" (Gadamer); (3) "In discourse the unforced force of the better argument prevails" (Habermas); and (4) "The truth is what wins during the free and sincere meeting" (Rorty).

PROBLEMS OF OBJECTIVITY AND METAPHYSICS IN A PLURALISTIC AND DIALOGICAL WORLD

Postmodern philosophy, which decidedly rejects the application of ideas of metaphysical objectivity to truth, goodness and all other values, forces us to regard the problem of objectivity in reference to the pluralistic world of values on a more general level and in connection with other points of view, instead of only one.

There appears here a more general and very important problem, namely, what happens to the idea of objectivity in application to values if one acknowledges plurality itself to be a value, and indeed one of the most important values in the contemporary world of many cultures, religions, civilizations, geographical regions, philosophical standpoints, peoples, etc? It is in the face of this "fact of pluralism" (Rawls) that we speak here about dialogical rationality which paradigm gives all participants in the dialogue equal rights to express their opinions and proposals as to how to understand such or other value, principle, law, notion, etc. This leads to a situation in which one can suspect that everything can be a value, regardless of what is proposed as a value, and who makes any proposal. Or, perhaps, the answer could be that there are no values which would be universally obligatory? Both of these stances: first, relativism, connected with scepticism, subjectivism, sociologism, and second, nihilism, connected with extreme subjectivism and anarchism, cannot be held as the last word because both stances leave people in great confusion and have always awakened vivid opposition. Sometimes, as in the cases of relativism and scepticism, we find attitudes which are logically self-refuting because they contain an inherent and basic self-contradiction.

Among others, as was shown above, the most important reason for the strong opposition to postmodernism has been the opposition by many philosophers to the postmodern attack on metaphysical objectivism regarding values, especially the three that are most fundamental within our civilization: truth, good and beauty. But, in fact, while postmodern thinkers reject metaphysical objectivism their stance does not entail nihilism,

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[60] R. Rorty, *Obiektywnosc, relatywizm i prawda* [Objectivism, Relativism and Truth], Polish Edition (Warsaw, 1999), p. 60.

anarchism or extreme subjectivism towards values but contributes to the contemporary philosophy of culture. It was noted earlier that the postmodern movement supports two very important principles which determine the substantial foundations of the Western civilization: *freedom of creation* and *pluralism of opinion*. The other valuable contribution of postmodernism to present culture is interest in, and respect for, what is small, individual, peripheral, unrepeatable, and thus threatened in its existence and defenseless before different powers. I perceive this aspect of the postmodern thinking as a motive taken up from the *Negative Dialectics* of Adorno,[61] where it was called *micrological sinking* (*mikrologische Versenkung*) of what is non-identical, escaping general schemata, universally acknowledged rules, obligatory standards, and so on. Examples of these are: threatened small nations, vanishing cultures, forgotten languages, rejected individuals, persons deprived of dignity, the underestimated meanings or unperceived possibilities, etc. These examples point to areas of interest of different philosophical currents which are thrown into the common sack under the name "postmodernism," frequently with an intention if situating them on the rubbish heap of the waste materials or aborted creatures of the culture.[62] Postmodern currents deserve no such fate, because they are inscribed deeply into the landscape of the philosophical thought of the 20th century that was created from many philosophical directions.

As regards the problem of the objectivity of values, it can be said that there is only one essential difference between, on the one hand, a supposed or real anti-objectivism of postmodern thinkers and, on the other hand, many philosophers who consider themselves advocates of the objectivity of truth and other values, (e.g., Buber, Popper, Habermas and others). It is that the first openly and frankly proposes the elimination of the notion of objectivity from the language of science and philosophy, replacing this with such notions as: tolerance, solidarity and inter-subjectivity, instead the second keeps the notion of objectivity, while, denying *expressis verbis* anything that might be suspected of relativism. But at the same time the latter identify objectivity with inter-subjectivity attained by virtue of dialogue and agreement. So, in fact, the difference is not large and rather only apparent, because the second no longer rest objectivity upon metaphysics. This would consist in the recognition of the existence of an autonomous, independent sphere of being to which man could in some manner find access or a key in the shape of an adequately constructed system of knowledge. This would require also having a

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[61] Cf. Th.W. Adorno, Negative Dialektik (Frankfurt a. Main, 1966).

[62] Just into such manner I understand the scandalous and compromising its authors letter, written by the circle of philosophers from Cambridge, protesting against coming to Cambridge of the creator of the philosophy of deconstruction, Jacques Derrida, at the ocasion of his awarding in 1992 by the Cambridge University.

superhuman ability to ascertain the adequateness of a system of knowledge of that autonomous sphere of being beyond the human. A good example of this point of view is Habermas, the greatest opponent of post-modernism, who yet accepts the end of metaphysics, regarding the present epoch as post-metaphysical. He ascertains univocally that objectivity is nothing more than inter-subjectivity, fixed as a result of the communication processes among humans who in this way reach agreements regarding the substance and range of acknowledged values.

A position similar to that of Habermas in the matter of metaphysics was occupied by Popper, the only difference being that his position was apparently more inconsistent because, on one hand, he rejected metaphysics, in an historicist manner, but, on the other hand, as author of the *Poverty of Historicism* he spoke about the existence of the objective truth as about something that exists, though it is achieved in the endless process of approaching the established ideal. The same is true of Popper's famous concept of the "third world" existing in the form of a collection of all scientific hypotheses, laws and theories as well as products of other kinds of human activity (works of arts, creatures of technics etc.) which the author of the *Objective Knowledge*[63] likened to the Platonic world of ideas.

Similarly, representatives of the philosophy of dialogue, who shaped the process of dialogical rationality, on one hand, rejected traditional metaphysical foundations, while, on the other hand, willingly used expressions like: metaphysics of orientation, dialogue, or meeting. What is more, still other cases such as Heidegger and Levinas who sometimes express a critical attitude to metaphysics, but mean only one kind of metaphysics, for right afterwards they come back to a metaphysics of another sort.

All these examples, speaking about parting with metaphysics and coming back to it, rejecting metaphysics and finding deficiency in the consequences of doing so only bespeak that metaphysics which consists in seeking certainty and a final objective base of everything that exists, constitutes a constant temptation and need of the human mind. Though there is a distinct tendency, bound with modernity and post-modernity, to resign from metaphysical investigations and to confine thought to so-called empirical truth and human conventions or acts of agreement, we will never escape metaphysical tendencies as these are rooted in human temptation to perceive the world in categories according to a a code, the key to which lies somewhere deep inside one.

Many contemporary philosophers and philosophical currents actually have given up the metaphysical concept of objectivity. One of the reasons of this resignation is the presupposition that by doing this philosophy gets rid of difficult even insoluble endless questions and controversies regarding whether and how it is possible to get in touch with cultures and language independently of the mind. Present-day philosophers increasingly arrive at

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[63] K.R. Popper, *Objective Knowledge* (London, 1972).

the common conclusion that one will not succeed in reaching something like correspondence with the reality such as it is in itself. Additionally, many other cultural, sociological and even political arguments lead to the conclusion that in contemporary conditions there is no purpose or efficacy in persisting in the metaphysical concept of objectivity. For example, it is assumed that to give up disputes on objective truth, understood in a metaphysical way would remove one of the causes generating political fundamentalisms as a source of conflicts, even wars and terroristic activities.

But all this does not mean that people will live, and should live, without any concept of objectivity, that is, without objectively grounded values. Firstly, because there exists a second type of objectivity beyond the metaphysical one. There objectivity is equal to intersubjectivity, achieved on the way of interpersonal, international and intercultural acts of agreement. Secondly, it is difficult to imagine that people will want to live without metaphysically grounded objective values which are acknowledged as the most significant. As was said earlier, metaphysics fulfils some constant need of the human mind, and it is rather impossible to assume, that people, at any time, will cease to qualify their deeds in relation to objective values with metaphysical grounding and confine themselves to values possessing only human agreement. Kant knew this very well when formulating his famous formula quoted above: "I had to suspend knowledge, to make room for faith." This formula of Kant has lost nothing of its topicality and finds application in the present situation as determined by the relation of contemporary philosophy to metaphysics.

This new application is as follows: if the philosophy whose tool is reason for various reasons should cease to satisfy the human need to found human life on metaphysically grounded values, this blank space will be filled in by faith. As we know from very distinguished philosophers, belonging not only to our Christian civilization but also to Islamic' and Hindu civilizations, philosophy is, indeed, very important, but not indispensable. Following Kant, one has always the right to say: "I have to suspend philosophy, to make room for those objective values which are given to me by my faith."

Warsaw, Poland

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THE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH
IN VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE

Today there is urgent need to attend to the nature and dignity of the person, to the quality of human life, to the purpose and goal of the physical transformation of our environment, and to the relation of all this to the development of social and political life. This, in turn, requires philosophic clarification of the base upon which freedom is exercised, that is, of the values which provide stability and guidance to one's decisions.

Such studies must be able to reach deeply into one's culture and that of other parts of the world as mutually reinforcing and enriching in order to uncover the roots of the dignity of persons and of their societies. They must be able to identify the conceptual forms in terms of which modern industrial and technological developments are structured and how these impact upon human self-understanding. Above all, they must be able to bring these elements together in the creative understanding essential for setting our goals and determining our modes of interaction. In the present complex global circumstances this is a condition for growing together with trust and justice, honest dedication and mutual concern.

The Council for Studies in Values and Philosophy (RVP) unites scholars who share these concerns and are interested in the application thereto of existing capabilities in the field of philosophy and other disciplines. Its work is to identify areas in which study is needed, the intellectual resources which can be brought to bear thereupon, and the means for publication and interchange of the work from the various regions of the world. In bringing these together its goal is scientific discovery and publication which contributes to the present promotion of humankind.

In sum, our times present both the need and the opportunity for deeper and ever more progressive understanding of the person and of the foundations of social life. The development of such understanding is the goal of the RVP.

PROJECTS

A set of related research efforts is currently in process:

1. *Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change: Philosophical Foundations for Social Life.* Focused, mutually coordinated research teams in university centers prepare volumes as part of an integrated philosophic search for self-understanding differentiated by culture and civilization. These evolve more adequate understandings of the person in society and look to the cultural heritage of each for the resources to respond to the challenges of its own specific contemporary transformation.

2. *Seminars on Culture and Contemporary Issues*. This series of 10 week crosscultural and interdisciplinary seminars is coordinated by the RVP in Washington.

3. *Joint-Colloquia* with Institutes of Philosophy of the National Academies of Science, university philosophy departments, and societies. Underway since 1976 in Eastern Europe and, since 1987, in China, these concern the person in contemporary society.

4. *Foundations of Moral Education and Character Development.* A study in values and education which unites philosophers, psychologists, social scientists and scholars in education in the elaboration of ways of enriching the moral content of education and character development. This work has been underway since 1980.

The personnel for these projects consists of established scholars willing to contribute their time and research as part of their professional commitment to life in contemporary society. For resources to implement this work the Council, as 501 C3 a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Colombia, looks to various private foundations, public programs and enterprises.

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