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Paolo A. Bolaños, *Gelassenheit*, 2010. Photograph.

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A TRIBUTE TO ROMUALDO ABULAD
The Filipino Kantian

"*Denken* ... und *danken* sind verwandte Wörter;
das Denken hat viel mit Danken zu tun.
Wir danken dem *Leben*, indem wir es bedenken"
—*Thomas Mann*

BR. ROMUALDO ESTACIO ABULAD, SVD, PH.D.
(1947 – 2019)

A Tribute to Romualdo Abulad, the Filipino Kantian

Introduction to the Special Tribute Section: Abulad, Philosophy, and Intellectual Generosity

Paolo A. Bolaños

I n this special section of the December 2019 issue of *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy*, we pay homage to the intellectual legacy of one of the original members of the International Advisory Board of the journal, Romualdo Estacio Abulad (1947-2019). Born 21 September 1947 in Lucban, Quezon, he graduated Salutatorian from Lucban Academy in 1964. After high school, he attended the University of Santo Tomas in Manila and obtained a Bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1969. From 1969 to 1978—while teaching philosophy in the University of Santo Tomas, then in De La Salle University— he studied for his Master's and Doctoral degrees in philosophy at the Ateneo de Manila University and the University of Santo Tomas, respectively. He specialized in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and, for his Doctoral work, he defended a dissertation that compared the thoughts of Kant and Shankara.[1] After being granted a fellowship from the *Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung*, he spent a couple of years (1979-1981) at the University of Hamburg, Germany, to deepen his grasp of the philosophy of Kant, resulting in the work, "Criticism and Eternal Peace: Kant's Critique of Pure Reason as the Method of Scientific Metaphysics."[2] In addition to his graduate research in philosophy, he wrote a thesis for a Master's in Theology degree at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City titled, "Toward a Reconstruction of Christology in the Context of Postmodernity."[3]

Abulad started a career in teaching immediately after finishing college in 1969 at the University of Santo Tomas, where he would teach until 1972. With the help of his mentor, Emerita Quito, he was able to secure a

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[1] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "The Status of Metaphysics in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*" (Master's Thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, 1975) and "Links Between East and West in the Philosophies of Shankara and Kant" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Santo Tomas, 1978).

[2] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Criticism and Eternal Peace: Kant's Critique of Pure Reason as the Method of Scientific Metaphysics" (Postdoctoral Research, University of Hamburg, 1980).

[3] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Toward a Reconstruction of Christology in the Context of Postmodernity" (Master's Thesis, Divine Word Seminary, 2003).

teaching post at De La Salle University and would spend two very productive decades there from 1972 to 1993. Along with Quito, Abulad was instrumental in developing the culture of research at the Department of Philosophy of De La Salle. In a 2016 interview, Abulad relates that, apart from Quito's prodding, he decided to transfer to De La Salle because the intellectual climate there in the 1970s was more conducive to philosophical research than in Santo Tomas, as the former institution was more progressive and "revolutionary" while the latter was, during that time, still conservatively Thomistic in orientation.[4] He would eventually replace Quito as the head of the Department. At the age of 46, Abulad entered the *Societas Verbi Divini* (SVD) and would spend six years of religious formation. From 1999 to 2013, the University of San Carlos in Cebu City became his home for a decade and a half, where he first served as the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then the Chair of the Department of Philosophy (which later on became Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies). During that period, he would occasionally be invited to teach philosophy courses in the University of Santo Tomas. After heading the Department of Philosophy of San Carlos for four years, Abulad returned to Manila in 2013, eventually finding his academic home in his alma mater, the University of Santo Tomas, where he became a member of the Department of Philosophy as a Professorial Lecturer. At the same time, he was a formator and Dean of Studies at the Christ the King Mission Seminary in Quezon City. On 17 December 2019, news of Abulad's sudden death overwhelmed the Filipino philosophical community. He was 72 years old.

Abulad's intellectual productivity spanned five decades (1970-2019). The most productive decades are 1981-1990 and 2001-2010, while the least productive was 1991-2000, the period when he entered the religious vocation. While Abulad did not leave us, strictly speaking, with a *magnum opus*, his contribution to the literature of Filipino philosophy is, I would argue, one of the most impressive and extensive. He belongs to the "first wave" of Filipino academics who brought home new philosophical knowledge from their studies overseas.[5] And, like his mentor Quito, Abulad could be credited for ushering in the local appropriation of continental philosophy, especially in the University of Santo Tomas, De La Salle University, University of San Carlos, and Christ the King Mission Seminary, among many other schools. The absence of a *magnum opus*, however, does not necessarily mean that it would be impossible to reconstruct what Abulad had contributed to the

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[4] Romuald E. Abulad and Emmanuel C. de Leon, "An Interview with Romualdo Abulad, SVD," *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy*, 10:1 (June 2016), 12.

[5] Alfredo P. Co, "In the Beginning … A Petit Personal Historical Narrative of the Beginning of Philosophy in the Philippines," in *Across the Philosophical Silkroad: A Festschrift in Honor of Alfredo P. Co, Vol. VI* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2009), 36.
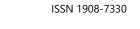
intellectual culture of the Philippines. Gleaned from the numerous essays that he has written in the span of five decades, one notices at least three dominant recurring preoccupations in his writings: German philosophy (in the specific order, Kant studies, phenomenology, and hermeneutics), postmodernism, and Filipino philosophy.

In what follows I will present a periodization of Abulad's productive career as a Filipino philosopher. It is worthwhile to briefly examine each period in order to demonstrate how Abulad's philosophical mind evolved. However, while I try to be accurate, I do not intend the periodization below to be exhaustive. By no means is this the last essay on Abulad, it is now time to assess his philosophical contribution critically, that is, we must *do Filipino philosophy*.

The 1970-1980 period marks the beginning years of Abulad's intellectual legacy. His writings during this period are his first attempts, as a young scholar, to present to the local philosophical community his in-depth studies of Kant—focusing on Kantian metaphysics, epistemology, critique, ethics, science, and comparative studies between Kant and Eastern philosophy.[6] During this period, Abulad also attempted to lay on the table his initial thoughts on the relationship between philosophy and being Filipino.[7]

In 1981, Abulad returned from his studies in Europe and embarked on one of the most philosophically productive decades of his career, 1981-1990. This period is characterized by Abulad's preoccupation with German philosophy and Filipino philosophy. He continued, from the previous decade, his exposition of Kant's philosophy,[8] but this time he contextualized Kant with Filipino readers in mind; more specifically, he did not only expose Kant, but used Kantian ideas to make sense of Filipino philosophy.[9]

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[6] See Abulad's essays in the journal *Sophia*, published by the Department of Philosophy of De La Salle University: "Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: A Science, a Discipline and a Consciousness," 2:1 (September 1972), 29-45; "Projective Morality: An Ethics for a New Society," 2:2 (November 1972), 94-99; "Rousseau and Kant," 2:3 (January 1973), 130-133; "Kant's Metaphysics" 4 (April 1974), "Toward a Philosophy of Science," 3:3 (January 1974); "The Materialist Prospect," 4:3 (February-May 1975), "Can Science Save the World?," 5:3 (February-May 1976). Also see the outcomes of his graduate and post-doctoral researches: "The Status of Metaphysics in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*," "Links Between East and West in the Philosophies of Shankara and Kant," and "Criticism and Eternal Peace: Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as the Method of Scientific Metaphysics."

[7] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Pilipino sa Pilosopiya," *Dialogue*, 12:1 (August 1976), 159-168.

[8] See the following essays in *Sophia*: "Three Problems in Kant's Philosophy," 11:3 (January-April 1982), 158-167; "Shankara and Kant: A Comparison," 14:2 (September-December 1984), 73-97; "Kant's View of Science," 17:1 (August 1987), 8-18; "Kant's Philosophy of Man," 20:1 (May-August 1990), 32-46.

[9] See the following essays in *Sophia*: "Kant and the Filipino Quest for a Philosophy," 11:1 (May-August 1981), 34-49; "Rationale for a Filipino Philosophy," 12:1 (May-August 1982), 1-16; "Kant and the Task of Contemporary Filipino Philosophy," 16:1 (May-August 1986), 45-68; "Kant

Moreover, a more engaged grappling with the question of whether or not there is such a thing as "Filipino philosophy" is more pronounced in this period, as Abulad also went beyond Kant and presented his peculiar schematization—for instance in the 1984 essay "Options for a Filipino Philosophy"—of what he thought was the possibility of indigenous thought and how it interfaced with Western philosophy.[10] At the background of these musings, Abulad underscores the revolutionary character of Filipino thought and culture.[11] This productive decade also features essays on other continental thinkers, namely, Martin Heidegger and Georg Simmel.[12]

The period 1991-2000, while not the most productive decade in terms of publication, marks an important turning point in the academic career of Abulad for two related reasons. First, because it was during this period when he joined religious life as an SVD brother and, somewhat, turned his attention towards theological/religious studies.[13] Second, and more interestingly, because this was the decade when he discovered the up and coming philosophical trend during that time, "postmodernism," of which he became a consistent mouthpiece in the ensuing years.[14] It could be argued that, apart from being recognized as the premier Kantian scholar in the country, on account of his numerous writings on Kant, Abulad earned the reputation as the philosopher of postmodernism after the publication of the essay "What is Postmodernism?" which proved influential among the younger generation of aspiring Filipino philosophers.[15] While he was not the first Filipino author to have spoken or written about postmodernism, he was certainly the most

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for Filipinos," 16:2 (September-December 1986), 37-56. Also see "Si Kant at ang Pilosopiya sa Pilipinas," *Malay*, 1:1 (September 1981), 57-68.

[10] See Abulad's essays in volumes 1, 5, and 7, respectively, of the journal *Karunungan*, the official journal of the Philippine Academy of Philosophical Research (PAPR): "Options for a Filipino Philosophy" (1984), 17-30; "Contemporary Filipino Philosophy" (1988), 1-13; "Filipino Philosophy in Dialogue with Plato" (1990), 1-13.

[11] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Ang Diwa at Kaisipan ng Pilipino sa Kasaysayan ng Himagsikan," *Malay*, 5:5 (June-December 1986), 37-48 and "Revolution Through Values," *Sinag*, 1:1 (October 1989), 25-37. Moreover, a related piece is on the relationship between philosophy and values education: "The Philosophical Bases of Values Education," *The DLSU Graduate Journal*, 12:2 (1987), 145-158.

[12] For instance, Romualdo E. Abulad, "Heidegger and the Pursuit of Being," *Sophia*, 1971-1981: The Best of A Decade (1981), 39-56; "Martin Heidegger: Mula Penomenolohiya Hanggang Eksistensiyalismo Hanggang Hermeneutika," *Malay*, 8:1-2 (1989-1990), 47-64; "Ang Pilosopiya ng Salapi ni Georg Simmel," *Karunungan*, 6 (1989), 1-15.

[13] For instance, see Romualdo E. Abulad, "The Mystical Philosophy of St. John of the Cross," *Karunungan*, 9 (1992), 40-58.

[14] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Origen's Contra Celsum: A Touch of Postmodernism," *Diwa: Studies in Philosophy and Theology*, 22:1 (May 1997), 26-40; "Kant and Postmodernism," *PHAVISMINDA Journal*, 2 (May 1998), 32-51; "Facing the Moral Challenge of the Post-Modern Times," *Karunungan*, 16 (1999), 1-3.

[15] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "What is Postmodernism?," *Karunungan*, 17 (2000), 34-54.

fearless and vocal advocate of his own brand of postmodernism, earning him not only the praise of followers, but also the ire of critics.

The most productive decade of Abulad was the 2001-2010 period, his years at the University of San Carlos. It is perhaps appropriate to refer to this period as the beginning of the philosophically mature Abulad, wherein his writings on postmodernism are the most pronounced. By this time, what he meant by "postmodernism," albeit idiosyncratic, was already clear in his mind. This allowed him to discuss the topic with ease and flexibility. This means that the theme of postmodernism became relevant to whatever topic he was tackling: God, religion, ethics, eastern philosophy, technology, scholasticism, politics, dialogue, Kant, and Filipino philosophy.[16] Abulad, of course, did not abandon his beloved Immanuel Kant—if in the essay of the previous decade, "What is Postmodernism?," he argued that Nietzsche is the father of postmodernism, in 2005, in his essay "Immanuel Kant as a Pioneer of Postmodernity," he started claiming that it was actually Kant who ushered in the postmodern attitude, a claim he would sustain for the rest of his productive years.[17] In 2003 and 2004, respectively, Abulad came full circle with his studies on postmodernism with the completion of "Toward a Reconstruction of Christology in the Context of Postmodernity" and the publication of *Two Filipino Thomasian Philosophers on Postmodernism*, a collaborative work which he co-authored with his long-time friend, the sinologist Alfredo Co.[18] I must also add that during this period, while there is no systematic political philosophy that Abulad developed, his philosophical stance on social and political matters became more articulated.[19]

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[16] See Abulad's articles in *Karunungan*: "God and Postmodernity," 19 (2002), 5-13; "Postmodern Critique and the Ethics of Postmodernism," 19 (2002), 65-80; "The Significance of Kong Zi in the Age of Postmodernism," 20 (2003), 1-21; "Fundamental Assumptions of Postmodernity," 21 (2004), 83-120; "The Role of Philosophy in the Technological Age," 21 (2004), 170-184; "St. Thomas Aquinas and Postmodernism," 22 (2005), 53-61; "Prophetic Dialogue Across Civilizations," 25 (September 2008), 23-26. See also his articles in the *USC Graduate Journal*: "Filipino Philosophy in the Turbulent Period of Postmodern Transition," 22:1 (October 2005), 148-165 and "Paradigm Shifts and Some Postmodern Prospects: Toward a Postmodern Filipino Philosophy," 26:2 (October 2009), 167-176. Moreover, see "The Future of Ethics: A Postmodern View," *Diwa: Studies in Philosophy and Theology*, 27:1 (May 2002), 14-31; "The Meaning of Postmodernism," *Talad*, 4:2 (July 2004), 138-149; "Philosophy and Politics: Do They Mix?," *PHAVISMINDA Journal*, 8 May 2009), 1-18.

[17] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Immanuel Kant as a Pioneer of Postmodernity," *The Thomasian Philosopher*, 26 (2005), 120-128.

[18] See Romualdo E. Abulad and Alfredo P. Co, *Two Filipino Thomasian Philosophers on Postmodernism*, ed. by Romualdo E. Abulad (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2004).

[19] For instance, in the following articles published in Volume 18 (2001) of the *Karunugan*: "A Philosopher's View from EDSA," 11-14 and "Post-Machiavelli," 91-100. See also, "Philosophy, Life, History," *FEU Arts and Sciences Review*, 4 (2001), 20-35.

Unfortunately, 2011-2019 would be his last prolific decade. In this mature period, Abulad seemed to have focused more on ethical considerations involving politics, society, and culture—notwithstanding the fact that these discussions are, still, informed by Kant, postmodernism, and now, perhaps, a more assured notion of Filipino philosophy. In terms of politics, for instance, Abulad published papers that deal with issues, such as, the relationship between governance and glocalization, the relationship between martial law and religion,[20] and, more recently, controversial (and perhaps for some, fallaciously irresponsible)[21] pieces that *appear* to be polemics in support of the Duterte administration.[22] Meanwhile, his most recent essays on society and culture tackle the question of the relevance of philosophy (or sometimes referring to it as critical thinking) in nation building or cultural formation,[23] as well as the questions on the contemporary roles of atheism, freedom, and responsibility.[24]

While not impossible, it is not easy to reconstruct Abulad's intellectual contribution. Unlike his philosophical hero Kant, Abulad was simply not a system builder, despite the scholarly rigor that his essays demonstrate. It is, thus, ill-advised to look for something that does not exist. Abulad offers neither a metaphysics nor an epistemology; neither a moral philosophy nor a philosophical anthropology. Nevertheless, and this is perhaps the genius of his work, in almost every essay he wrote, he narrates a story of metaphysics, epistemology, moral philosophy, and philosophical

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[20] See Romuald E. Abulad, "Ethics and Governance in the Postmodern Glocalized Society," *USC Graduate Journal*, 28:2 (March 2012), 161-183 and "Martial Law and Religion," *Scientia*, 6:2 (December 2017), 45-59, <http://scientia-sanbeda.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/3-abulad.pdf>.

[21] A case in point is the critical essay written by Abulad's confrere, Raymun J. Festin, where the latter criticizes the former for writing a titillating, yet philosophically fallacious, defense of President Rodrigo Duterte. See Raymun J. Festin, "Duterte, Kant, and Philosophy," *PHAVISMINDA Journal*, 16-17 (May 2018), 16-96. Festin is referring to Abulad's essay, "Why President Duterte Could be Correct," in *King's Clarion* (Christ the King Seminary, Quezon City: June 2016-2017).

[22] See, for instance, *ibid*. and Romualdo E. Abulad, "Ethics, Indigenous Ethics, and the Contemporary Challenge: Attempt at a Report on Ethics for the Filipino Today," *Scientia*, 8:1 (March 2019), 1-20, <http://scientia-sanbeda.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/1Abulad.pdf>.

[23] See Romualdo E. Abulad, "Doing Philosophy in the Philippines: Towards a More Responsive Philosophy for the 21st Century," *Suri*, 5:1 (2016), 1-20, <https://suri.pap73.org/issue6/Abulad_SURI_2016.pdf>. Then, a couple of essays published in *Scientia*: "Confucianism and Filipino Culture," 5:2 (December 2016), 1-16, < http://scientia-sanbeda.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/vol-5.2-r-abulad.pdf> and "The Relevance of Critical thinking in Contemporary Philippine Society," 6:1 (June 2017), 34-66, <http://scientia-sanbeda.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2-R-E-Abulad.pdf>.

[24] See the following essays published in *Diwa: Studies in Philosophy and Theology*: "Atheism as a Prophetic Voice in the Era of Paradigm Shift," 38:2 (November 2013), 77-90 and "Freedom and Responsibility: The Millenials' Quest for and Integration of the Good," 43:1 (May 2019), 3-34.

anthropology. But by narrating a story, Abulad was most philosophical, as he demonstrated the dialectical, and hence deeply ethical, movement of thinking. His style of philosophizing is an example of what I would term as an "ethics of thinking"—a kind of thinking that is radical or raw, yet disciplined; committed, yet unprejudicial; critical, yet accommodating. The ethics of thinking, too, is a disposition, even a predisposition (*Veranlagung*), and Abulad personified this not only through his writing, but through the life he had chosen to live and the way he treated people around him.

A famous line from Susan Sontag, commenting on Theodor Adorno's oeuvre, is usually used as blurb for Adorno's books: "A volume of Adorno's essays is equivalent to a whole shelf of books on literature." I wish to borrow this line to describe the work of Abulad, but in a slightly modified form: "An essay of Abulad is equivalent to the whole history of philosophy." Yes, indeed, that is how he wrote his essays. In order to expound on a point, he had to take his listeners and readers with him in a journey back to the history of philosophy of his own peculiar telling, that is, his own philosophical *Denkbild*, often a fusion of horizons between the East and the West, but always Abulad's own constellation of concepts borrowed from the history of thought. One could observe that his narrative of the history of philosophy is idiosyncratic, yet pedagogically effective; selective, yet generous in thought. Kant is, of course, the starting point of Abulad's story, much like the pivot that holds a pendulum. From Kant, he tells a story of philosophy by swinging to the ancient- and medieval philosophers, then back to Kant so that he could continue the story of the modern- and contemporary philosophers. Despite his numerous essays, Abulad is just telling one story—a *Bildungsroman* of philosophy, wherein Kant, postmodernism, and Filipino thought are the main catalysts. Or, perhaps, also quite idiosyncratically, his writings are a *Bildungsroman* of the making of a Filipino philosopher called Abulad.

In this special tribute section, a couple of Abulad's penultimate writings are published here in *Kritike* for the very first time. As penultimate writings, they represent his mature insights on two topics he was famous for discussing: Filipino philosophy and postmodernism. The first essay, "*Pilosopiyang Pinoy: Uso Pa Ba?* (The Relevance of Filipino Philosophy in Social Renewal)," was written in 2010, hence, his last essay during the 2001-2010 period. Meanwhile, in 2017, he wrote "Filipino Postmodernity: Quo Vadis?," which now represents his last decade, 2011-2019. In order to allow Abulad to speak for himself, we preserved the original structures and tenses of the essays; we have tried our best to refrain from intervening too much by way of editorial reformatting. As necessary, however, we have corrected typographical errors and supplied a few missing footnotes. Judging from the titles of these essays, Abulad was tracing, as it were, the progress of the

discourse on Filipino philosophy and, in a related way, postmodernity within a Filipino context.

Unlike many papers that merely chronicle the status of the written works of Filipino intellectuals, Abulad does something quite unprecedented in "*Pilosopiyang Pinoy: Uso Pa Ba? (The Relevance of Filipino Philosophy in Social Renewal)*." At least, it is unprecedented in that he does more than merely presenting a taxonomical description of the individual contributions of writers his contemporary, such as, Leonardo Mercado, Dionisio Miranda, Albert Alejo, Rolando Gripaldo, Florentino Timbreza, and Emerita Quito. Instead, Abulad demonstrates a kind of *intellectual generosity* in that he examined carefully, and generously, the respective takes of these authors on Filipino philosophy, even if he disagrees with them fundamentally. Through his generous reading, he does not only provide competent reconstructions of the respective positions of these authors, culled from their major works on Filipino philosophy and Filipino values,[25] but, more importantly, Abulad points out the deficiencies of each author's claim. The works of Mercado, Miranda, Alejo, Gripaldo, and Timbreza, Abulad notes, are examples of the "anthropological approach"—an approach that mimics, as the name goes, the practice of anthropologists. What these quasi-anthropological studies have in common is the attempt to look for the *inner* Filipino by examining indigenous languages (Mercado and Timbreza) or culture and values (Miranda, Alejo, and Gripaldo). However, because they are merely quasi-anthropological, the achievements of these authors, Abulad argues, fall short of what they promise. For Abulad, some of these authors are riddled with questions about method, such as, Mercado, Miranda, and Timbreza, whose works try too hard to adopt the social science (empirical) approach. For his part, Alejo is searching for the "*Filipino loob*" which Abulad identifies with the Greek notion of *psyche* or the Hegelian notion of *Geist*; therefore, Abulad wonders whether Alejo is simply repeating something that Western philosophers have been doing for a long time. Abulad's rather hasty lumping of *loob*, *psyche*, and *Geist* invites a second opinion and, I think, we must also contend. Meanwhile, while Abulad recognizes the effort of Gripaldo in defining what a Filipino philosopher should be, Abulad is simply not impressed by Gripaldo's apparent self-valorization. In contrast to Gripaldo, it is not surprising that

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[25] See Leonardo N. Mercado, *Explorations in Filipino Philosophy* (Manila: Logos Publications, 2009); Dionisio M. Miranda, *Buting Pinoy: Probe Essays on Value as Filipino* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1992); Albert E. Alejo, *Tao pô! Tuloy! Isang Landas ng Pag-unawa sa Loob ng Tao* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publications, 1990); Rolando M. Gripaldo, *The Making of a Filipino Philosopher and Other Essays* (Mandaluyong City: National Book Store, 2009); Florentino T. Timbreza, *Pilosopiyang Pilipino* (Manila: Rex Book Store, 1982); Florentino T. Timbreza, *Intelektwalisasyon ng Pilosoiyang Filipino* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, Inc., 1999); and Emerita S. Quito, *A Life of Philosophy: Festschrift in honor of Emerita S. Quito* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990).

Abulad accepts Quito's position that philosophy cannot be defined ultimately, that we should have an "open-minded" approach in doing philosophy, as this is the only way that Filipino philosophy can progress. As such, Abulad does not deny the fact that Filipino philosophy exists, but it exists in multifarious ways and not just the anthropological way. But by saying this, Abulad seems to be intimating, especially towards the end of the essay, that, the survival of Filipino philosophy relies on the survival of philosophy itself, as it struggles to find its way between the two cultures that C.P. Snow spoke about.

The essay "Filipino Postmodernity: Quo Vadis?," in classic Abuladian fashion, brings two seemingly unrelated ideas together: "Filipino" and "postmodernity." Abulad makes no qualms, at the beginning, in declaring that, "the Filipino … has already 'crossed the border' and has learned to accept the fact of what Martin Heidegger calls 'the second beginning'—what here we refer to as postmodernity." The second beginning, that Heidegger speaks about, results from a paradigm shift that occurred in the history of thought. Once again, this essay demonstrates Abulad's intellectual generosity by narrating his peculiar story of the history of philosophy or, more precisely, the history of postmodernity. Either way, Abulad seems to be suggesting that this history has a bearing on the development of Filipino philosophy—the *becoming-philosophy*, as it were, of Filipino thinking. The essay seems to offer, at least, three senses of the term "postmodernity." Firstly, "postmodernity" is "*the* paradigm shift," that is, it is the irreversible moment that Heidegger refers to as the "second beginning," whereas the "first beginning" was the invention of "*thoeria*" which occurred in ancient Greece. The second beginning occurred in the time of Descartes and Kant, "a period of merciless critique, aimed paradoxically at certitude, which resulted in the collapse of all Western and Eurocentric thinking." This crucial moment in human history, Abulad notes following Heidegger, is the "crisis of philosophy" that led to the postmodern shift. In this context, Kant completes the project of Descartes, as the former "has left nothing standing …. All knowledge is merely a phenomenon." Secondly, "postmodernity," Abulad declares, is the "end of Western domination," and, hence, paves the way for a new beginning which is "an equalizer of cultures, both East and West." In this context, then, postmodernity is actually the "third beginning": "… we beg the indulgence of the great Martin Heidegger and correct him somehow, giving to the East the honor of the first beginning, to Greece the second beginning and to the postmodern synthesis of both East and West the third beginning." Postmodernity, in this context, is the synthesis of apparent opposites, resulting in inclusivity, interconnectivity, dialogue, borderlessness, linkage, etc. Thirdly, "postmodernity" is always "a new beginning," Abulad claims. If it is always a new beginning, then

postmodernity is not just the shift of no return initiated by Descartes and Kant, but, rather, postmodernity is a global attitude that is confined neither to a nationality nor a geographical location. Abulad's essay is, nevertheless, radically paradoxical in a couple of ways. On the one hand, while he cites "Jean-Francois Lyotard's assessment of postmodernity as a rejection of metanarratives," Abulad's history of philosophy/postmodernity is, essentially, itself a metanarrative. Perhaps, the only way to battle metanarratives is to come up with one's own metanarrative. On the other hand, the expatiation on "Filipino postmodernity" is done against the backdrop of the rise of President Rodrigo Duterte which, for Abulad, marks a crucial point in Philippine history, wherein "the concepts of good and bad might have transvalued themselves and what used to be the moral table of the 'civil society' has already turned stale and outdated. The times, I think, demand that we keep our minds open and dare to rethink and review our revered values." He does not, however, refer to Duterte as the *postmodern President*, but, perhaps, we live in a period that calls for a *postmodern response* that, hopefully, leads to our new beginning. I know that Abulad would not mind if we disagree with him on this point; as a matter of fact, disagreement, is, for him, the essence of the postmodern attitude. Whether he is right or wrong about this rather ticklish subject, we will only find out when our history has matured, as "the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk,"[26] to borrow from Hegel.

One brilliant student of mine perfectly describes what I termed earlier as Abulad's intellectual generosity: "… his ability to drive a point coming from a plethora of perspectives; regardless of how these ideas are tied up in the end … this is something that we hardly see in today's age of academic specialization."[27] Moreover, I especially appreciate my student's personal impression of Abulad's legacy: "… a man of education, *ein gebildeter Mensch* …. Br. Romy's greatest legacy is this, philosophy as a 'general' education in the fullest sense of the term."[28]

In addition to Abulad's new essays we include in this section "Abulad's Postmodern Eyes," an intimate tribute written by Fleurdeliz Altez-Albela. In this short piece, Altez-Albela paints a portrait of Abulad as an educator and icon of academic philosophy in the Philippines. Abulad's take on postmodernity is presented as a critical attitude against the backdrop of the contemporary human situation, as opposed to a historically-specific philosophical system. The following characteristics of Abulad's brand of

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[26] G.W.F. Hegel, Preface to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. by H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23.

[27] Ranier Abengaña, "Two Papers by Br. Romy," in an email message to the Editorial Board of *Kritike* (December 2019).

[28] *Ibid*.

postmodernism are outlined: *via negativa* as a way of thinking, a paradigm shift motivated by the refusal to accept metanarratives, dialogical philosophy, intersubjective—thereby, ethical. Ultimately, this paper underscores Abulad's radical critique of the present—a revaluation, of sorts, of the contemporary role of philosophy. Moreover, it is a testimony to Abulad's pedagogy of postmodernity—that is to say, of how he teaches his students to think with postmodern eyes: an openness to the "otherwise than said" that is a profound gesture of hospitality and, yet, a relentless critique.

I wish to take advantage of the remaining space of this introduction to briefly expressed my gesture of thanks to Br. Romy (as we all called him) by sharing a snippet of memory.

I have merely overheard conversations about who Romualdo Abulad was when I was in college. My professors, who are contemporaries of Abulad (Alfredo Co, Josephine Pasricha, Magdalena Villaba), mentioned his name in passing. "He is among the best that the University of Santo Tomas has ever produced," they said. And so, I was intrigued. By the time I met Abulad, some 20 years ago, he was already in his 50s and I was a naïve twenty-two-year-old graduate student who was struggling to read the works of Friedrich Nietzsche. The first time I heard him speak was in the 1st Thomasian Philosophers Reunion Convention, held at the University of Santo Tomas in 2000, where he delivered his influential "What is Postmodernism?" I listened to Abulad's lecture intently and, immediately, I was impressed by the way he wrote and read his paper, the tempo of which resembled a military cadence which made his delivery even more riveting. In that paper, he argued that Nietzsche is the father of postmodernism, something entirely new to me at that time. Right there and then, I knew whom I was going to pursue as my thesis adviser. The following year, Abulad was invited to teach a course on Kant at the Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas. I enrolled in his class with the intention of asking him to become my thesis adviser; secondarily only, I was curious why Kant was such a big deal. Well, no regrets! If I could competently discuss Kant today, it is because I enrolled, willy-nilly, in that graduate course on Kant that Abulad taught. Asking him to become my thesis adviser did not come as easily as I thought. He actually rejected the first research proposal I submitted to him and told me to get back to him when I was ready with something acceptable. Yes, Abulad was an exacting thesis adviser, especially when he was younger. It took me another year to write a new proposal on Nietzsche's philosophical anthropology. When he finally agreed to take me under his wing, it was the beginning of our long philosophical relationship which eventually naturally evolved into a profound friendship, and then, beyond our professional relationship, he treated me like a son. I am sure that the same affection from him was felt by many.

There was never a dull moment with Br. Romy. Indeed, every conversation we had were philosophical—over books or theses, food, coffee, and, of course, beer! Albeit philosophical, our conversations were neither strained nor anxious. I will remember Abulad as a radical thinker, despite his unassuming demeanor and the vocation he embraced. To me, while he was not an angel, he did remind me of how I imagine the figure of the historical Christ. Yes, more like a postmodern Christ who pays attention to you generously.

Maraming salamat po, Br. Romy. *Ruhe in Frieden*.

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A Tribute to Romualdo Abulad, the Filipino Kantian

Pilosopiyang Pinoy: Uso Pa Ba? (The Relevance of Filipino Philosophy in Social Renewal)[1]

Romualdo E. Abulad†

Abstract: This paper evaluates the titular question and features a summative evaluation and critique of the works and contributions of Leonardo Mercado, Dionisio Miranda, Albert Alejo, Rolando Gripaldo (1947-2017), and Florentino Timbreza to the anthropological and cultural approaches that form a significant part of the discourses on Filipino philosophy. In this piece, Abulad maintains, as in his other writings, that any strict emphasis with regard to methodology restricts the true potential of Filipino philosophy. He buttresses this assertion by invoking postmodernism's 'incredulity towards metanarratives' We should be skeptical about the metanarrative of Filipino identity for it is precisely our rootlessness that defines us. Towards the end, he cites Emerita Quito's openness as a distinct philosophical attitude that had made her, to-date, unsurpassable. This remarkable trait, for Abulad, should inspire us to welcome the new: with the "collapse of borders and the merger of horizons," it would serve us well to continuously rethink the role of philosophy.

Keywords: Filipino philosophy, anthropological approach, cultural approach, postmodernity

When I accepted your invitation for me to speak at your annual Regional Philosophy Gathering, what attracted me mainly was the intriguing theme of your celebration: "*Pilosopiyang Pinoy: Uso pa ba?*" *Uso pa ba ang Pilosopiyang Pinoy?* Actually, my suspicion is what you'd like to ask is really a more general question: *Uso pa ba ang Pilosopiya?* The specific reference to Filipino Philosophy makes the situation even worse.

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[1] Editor's note: An early version of this piece was presented in the 10th Philosophical Conference of the Sancta Maria Mater et Regina Seminarium, Archdiocese of Capiz, Roxas City, 18-20 November 2010. We would like to thank Preciosa de Joya of the Department of Philosophy, Ateneo de Manila University, for graciously supplying us with an early copy of the manuscript.

Its implication is that there is such a thing as "*pilosopiyang Pinoy*," and the question being asked is only whether it is still relevant: *uso pa ba?* But the assumption is itself a question deserving to be asked: *Mayroon bang Pilosopiyang Pinoy? Ano ba ito?* Only after having satisfied this latter question (*Ano ba ang Pilosopiyang Pinoy?*) will it be meaningful to ask about its relevance, if at all. In a philosophical discussion, we might as well not assume anything, or else we might find ourselves deeply in trouble later.

And so, let me begin by asking the assumed question: Is there a Filipino philosophy? And the proof for a positive answer to it can only be found in the actual articulation of it. Without this articulation, it will be difficult even to show that there is such a thing as a Filipino philosophy. Maybe, in the first place, we are talking about nothing. At this point, indeed, it would be better not to assume anything and so we need to ask: Is there a Filipino philosophy?

We need to give credit to whom it is due, and we must yield to Leonardo Mercado the right to claim to have consciously written the first book on Filipino Philosophy. His *Elements of Filipino Philosophy* (1974), though not impeccable, is a landmark work. What he says in the Preface is not inaccurate: "This pioneering work is the first systematic attempt to present the philosophy of the Filipino masses."[2] This doesn't mean that Mercado is the first Filipino philosopher, only that he is the first Filipino philosopher to have tried to present a systematic philosophy which he conceived to be a 'philosophy of the Filipino masses.' There are two things to notice here: first is that Mercado claims to have presented a 'systematic philosophy' and second is that this philosophy is that of the 'Filipino masses' or the 'common *tao*.' He justifies this claim by stating that his method involves "an analysis of Philippine languages" and "a phenomenology of Filipino behavior." He further elucidates this in Chapter I where he describes as 'holistic' his methodology[3] which consists of 'metalinguistic analysis' and 'phenomenology of behavior,' neither of which is, to be frank, indigenously Filipino. In a previous work, I described this method of Mercado as 'anthropological,'[4] and it is no accident that among the prominent authors mentioned here are Claude Levi-Strauss and Emile Durkheim,[5] as well Benjamin Lee Whorf and Edward Sapir.[6] As to phenomenology, the ones

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[2] See Leonardo N. Mercado, Preface to *Elements of Filipino Philosophy* (Tacloban City: Divine Word University Publications, 1993).

[3] *Ibid.*, 8.

[4] In the textbook I prepared for the Philosophy Department of the De La Salle, I mentioned in the Introduction three philosophical options for a Filipino philosophy: expository, anthropological, and progressive. See *Readings in Filipino Philosophy* (Manila: De La Salle University, 1990), 4 *passim*.

[5] Mercado, *Elements of Filipino Philosophy*, 12.

[6] *Ibid.*, 42-43.

featured most are Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty,[7] without excluding the other philosophers of language such as Ludwig Wittgenstein I and II[8] and the analytic philosophers. This makes phenomenology and analysis rather apt descriptions of his method which, however, cannot really qualify as something indigenously Filipino. The anthropological approach, after all, is universally accepted, and my suggestion is that it cannot be this which makes Mercado's philosophy Filipino. It is also a question when an anthropologist, not a philosopher, could have been the more qualified expert to undertake this.

If not the anthropological approach, what makes Mercado a uniquely Filipino philosopher? Perhaps the answer has to do with the object of his studies, namely, Filipino languages and Filipino behavior. A prominent feature of his work is the tables of intellectual, volitional, emotional and ethical themes comparing the Visayan, Tagalog, Ilocano and the English languages in their use of the concept of "*loob/buot/nakem*."[9] This would have been an impressive contribution to both philosophy and anthropology if the scope of this magnitude were given by the author the thorough treatment that it deserves. The chapters not only on *loob/buot/nakem* but also on the verbs, kinship, time, space, causality, private property, law, and religion were too brief to be credibly anthropologically exhaustive. In the end, the reader has to be satisfied with the following conclusion, that, negatively, the Filipino's worldview is "non-dualistic," "non-compartment-alized," and "non-linear."[10] None of these concepts is original, for they describe as well the other Oriental philosophies which go for man's natural harmony and goodness.[11] If this is the philosophy of the 'common *tao*,' then that 'common *tao*' must be Chinese and Indian as well. The picture that emerges at the end of his study is the stereotype of an Oriental and one is left to wonder if this stereotype did not in fact came ahead of his investigation and methodology.

I am not sure I know of a solid disciple of Mercado who actually swears by everything he does methodologically and philosophically. His latest work, *Explorations in Filipino Philosophy*,[12] is a worthy companion but does not exceed the first work, *Elements of Filipino Philosophy*—the latter remains as his most important work. The multi-volume that would have made the opus of Mercado classic and immortal had not materialized, and the actual work is perhaps better done by anthropologists than by

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[7] *Ibid.*, 11, also 18-27.

[8] *Ibid.*, 27-40.

[9] *Ibid.*, 55-64.

[10] *Ibid.*, 191-192.

[11] *Ibid.*, 193 (on the orientality of Filipino philosophy).

[12] Leonardo N. Mercado, *Explorations in Filipino Philosophy* (Manila: Logos Publications, 2009).

philosophers. This does not mean, however, that the anthropological approach has no adherents among Filipino philosophers; indeed, Mercado remains the pioneer in this work for which he will be remembered. Let me now randomly go through some of our philosophers who, consciously or not, are using the method of anthropology.

I would like to give attention to another philosopher who, like Mercado, is a Catholic missionary. They are both my confreres,[13] but that's not the reason why I am here singling them out. The reason is rather that they have both done remarkably well in the field of scholarship which they have chosen to take part in. There is no doubt that, of the two, Dionisio Miranda is the more thorough and exhaustive writer, perhaps also the more articulate and original one. He makes no bones about his engagement with culture which he defines "in its most generic meaning as the conceptualizing of reality and responding to the same which persons learn as members of a social group."[14] Unlike Mercado, Miranda admits his "limited experience"[15] in the area of inculturation, which makes even more for the credibility of his project. "My own proposal for methodical inculturation in the area of philosophical and theological inculturation," he declares, "consists basically of a two-pronged approach to the culture issue. Those prongs are indigenization and contextualization."[16]

This makes Miranda's approach concrete and, despite his academic eloquence, never merely an armchair and ivory-tower intellectual exercise. He stays consistently on the level of his own understanding of inculturation, that it "cannot prescind from a discussion of concrete society that must ultimately undertake it. Inculturation is ultimately a discourse about society itself."[17] Interestingly, he considers it "imperative for inculturation to be self-conscious and critical of itself and its own projects."[18] And, in the case of the Philippines, he contends that "authentic inculturation cannot ignore the majority poor as its chief responsibility and resource."[19] Thus, Miranda wisely avers that inculturation "is not an abstract idea; it is a practical process that occurs in the concrete."[20] He situates his interest unambiguously in Filipino

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[13] Editor's note: Abulad, Mercado, and Miranda are members of the *Societas Verbi Divini* (SVD).

[14] Dionisio M. Miranda, *Buting Pinoy: Probe Essays on Value as Filipino* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1992), 6. However, the biographical note on the back cover of the book says that he has been on the council of the SVD Philippine Central Province since 1987. The book must have been written, then, after that year, more than a decade after Mercado's *Elements* was first printed.

[15] *Ibid.*, 10.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*, 15.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*, 16.

[20] *Ibid.*, 19.

culture with a particular professional focus on "the specific cultural processes and interactions … that bear on the field of ethics in both the philosophical and theological variants."[21] Still, he defines his area of engagement within "fundamental and/or general moral theology" and argues that there will always be a need too for theoreticians with long-term commitment "who will appear to have little immediate relevance."[22]

Where Miranda comes close, albeit unconsciously, to Mercado can be gleaned from the spirit of the following text:

> Culture, especially the indigenous, is as intimate as skin; it is not like a vestment that can be casually disrobed … But there is a change that is possible and desirable: it is to recover the original self and reshape it in more authentic ways. That is radicality in its true sense: to return to the roots of being and existence, to recover the originality of culture and the creativity of history.[23]

One can sense the same missionary zeal in the preoccupation of both philosophers of the Filipino culture, but Miranda is the one more clearly aware of the radicality of even a proposed Filipino theory which "is not to be merely one more conception whose only value lies in its local color or folkloristic aspects."[24]

In this small essay I cannot even attempt to cover the whole intent of Miranda's ambitious project. Enough to say that his inquiry attempts to cover socio-cultural data as the source of his notion of value. For him the philosophical question is: "what is implied in the notion of value culled from the social-cultural data?"[25] Interestingly, again sounding altogether like Mercado, he describes the first step of his approach to the philosophy of culture as "that of phenomenological description" whose task is "to delineate the basic constituent elements of Filipino morality."[26] This "phenomenological analysis" is then followed by "constructive analysis" on the ethos level and the "critical analysis" on the ethics level.[27] Somewhat like Mercado, he goes linguistic in what he calls the "search for a Tagalog name" for the English 'value,' thus describing his approach as "terminological-

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[21] *Ibid*.
[22] *Ibid*., 20.
[23] *Ibid*., 22.
[24] *Ibid*., 23.
[25] *Ibid*., 36.
[26] *Ibid*., 37.
[27] *Ibid*., 37-39.

conceptual" and "conceptual-terminological" to be completed in a more "dialectical approach" that eventually arrives at "*buting Pinoy*."[28]

Loob is a favorite concept of investigation among those who use the anthropological approach, granting of course its variants.[29] One book exclusively written on it is Albert E. Alejo's *Tao pô! Tulóy!*, subtitled *Isang Landas ng Pag-unawa sa Loob ng Tao*.[30] Written wholly in Tagalog, one of its revealing features is the chapter where he presents various writers on *loob*, which includes philosophers like Leonardo Mercado and Roque Ferriols, but mostly historians like Emmanuel Lacaba, Zeus Salazar, Reynaldo Ileto, and Vicente Rafael.[31] Alejo explains his title: "*Ang unang bahagi ay tinaguriang 'TAO PO!' dahil para tayong naghahanap ng landas patungo sa loob … Sa ikalawang bahagi, tila pinapayagan tayong makapasok sa loob kaya nga ang salubong sa atin ay 'TULOY!'*"[32] My surmise is he initially hopes to be able to complete the description of the *Filipino loob*, inside and out, and thus coming up finally with a definitive account of the Filipino identity. In the end, Alejo knows he succeeds in doing something less than that. "*Wala akong nalikhang depinisyon.*"[33] He adds, "*Hindi ito, kung sa bagay, ang aking intensyon.*" There seems to be a sense of frustration here, buoyed up only by his promise to himself that there are more works to come. "*Kaya't sa aking pananaw, ang paglitaw ng sanaysay na ito ay isa lamang pasinaya sa marami pang darating.*"[34] It doesn't seem like this promise has been fulfilled, nor is this fact something we should deplore. I would rather take this seeming failure of Alejo's enterprise as precisely an essential part of his main contribution to Filipino philosophy, so that it becomes something which no one needs to undertake again. Perhaps without his being conscious of it, he is actually only repeating, albeit in an indigenous way, what even in the West spells a dead-end.

The *loob* is not really a Filipino discovery. It is equivalent to the Socratic self, as in "Know thyself!"[35] It is the Greek psyche, Aristotle's *anima* or soul which is the inner essence or form, the counterpart

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[28] *Ibid.*, 48-59.

[29] For Mercado's discussion of "loob," see *Elements of Filipino Philosophy*, 53-71; also, *The Filipino Mind: Philippine Philosophical Studies II* (Manila: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy and Divine Word Publications, 1994), 19-37. For Miranda, see *Buting Pinoy*, 124-130.

[30] Albert E. Alejo, *Tao pô! Tuloy! Isang Landas ng Pag-unawa sa Loob ng Tao* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publications, 1990).

[31] See *ibid.*, Chapter 2.

[32] *Ibid.*, ix.

[33] *Ibid.*, 117.

[34] *Ibid.*, 116.

[35] Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. by R. Hackforth, in *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), 230a.

of the external body or matter.[36] This is also the *Geist* of German Idealism culminating in the Absolute Spirit after its long and laborious journey which Hegel calls its phenomenology.[37] One might say that Hegel is more successful than Alejo in that at least the former was able to construct what could be described as the greatest system ever conceived by the Mind. However, we all know that this Absolute of Hegel is precisely the model for the metanarrative which later philosophers would love to explode and deconstruct.[38] Moreover, the fact that Alejo discovers in the end the emptiness of the *loob* he wants to explore is most likely indicative of his captivity, perhaps unconscious, in the dualism normally attributed to Western philosophy between external and internal, object and subject, contents and thoughts. We're here back to the Cartesian tension between mind and body, of course with a flavor that is Alejo's own.

One should not take this critique of Alejo as pejorative. That I compare his achievement to such greats as Socrates, Descartes and Hegel is enough to prove that I don't mean to hurt anyone's philosophical project. Philosophy, like any other academic discipline, thrives on the criticisms of those within the circle of our profession. We challenge each other until we are able to see the light of day for the work we wish to leave behind.

Another Filipino philosopher whom I would count, along with Mercado, Miranda and even Alejo, as mainly anthropological is Rolando Gripaldo. This is not to mean that they are doing exactly the same work. Gripaldo will revolt against any insinuation to that effect; he would cringe at the thought of being placed side by side with, say, Mercado and Timbreza. He admits that a "cultural rethinking of Filipino philosophy is important, but it should be a philosophical reflection of our existing culture as a whole or of our individual cultural traits."[39] This is the sense in which we take him to fall under our anthropological label; I don't mean much more. He would rather take the meaning of Filipino philosophy, with his own presumably as an example, as something profound and substantial. "The important thing in philosophizing," he says, "is not simply tangential philosophical reflections

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[36] Aristotle's theory of hylemorphism is found in *De Anima*, trans. J.A. Smith, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 412b10-13.

[37] Hegel describes the phenomenology of mind or the 'gradual development of knowing' as a "long and laborious journey (that) must be undertaken." See G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. by J.B. Baillie (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 88.

[38] See Jean-Françoiş Lyotard's postmodern critique of metanarratives in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. by Beoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). See also Jacques Derrida's famous theory of deconstructionism, for instance in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Blass (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982).

[39] Rolando M. Gripaldo, *The Making of a Filipino Philosopher and Other Essays* (Mandaluyong City: National Book Store, 2009), 70.

but substantial philosophical innovativeness that could have ramifications in the philosophical world."[40] "What we need are philosophical innovations that are distinctively the product of profound philosophical minds, something that will separate one's thoughts from the thoughts of others before him or her," Gripaldo continues, "and I think this is one of the great challenges of a would-be Filipino philosopher."[41] He thinks that we need already "to graduate from (the) kind of piecemeal analysis" which our country's thinkers are wont to indulge in.

Gripaldo justifies his own philosophical training. "My background in Western philosophy and my studies in Oriental philosophy were enough training and material to know what to look for in the writings of Filipino thinkers," is how he judges himself. "Moreover," he says, "a good working background on Western and Eastern thought is also generally important in becoming a world-class philosopher."[42] "Do I have a philosophy of my own?," he asks. "The answer is affirmative," and he dares to answer his own question, admitting simultaneously however that "I have not yet written it in one book." He continues to promise, "in due time, I intend to write a volume or two about my own comprehensive systematic philosophy. After all, our task is to make ourselves philosophers, not just teachers or scholars of philosophy."[43] When I read this, I could not help being reminded of another great teacher, Confucius, who said something opposite to what has just been said by Gripaldo: "I transmit but do not create. I believe in and love the ancients."[44] "A man who reviews the old so as to find out the new is qualified to teach others."[45]

Gripaldo dreams "to situate Filipino philosophy in world history"[46] and sadly takes note that our making a dint in world philosophy circles "is virtually zero."[47] "In the World Congress on Mulla Sadra held in Tehran in 1999, I was the only Filipino there who read a paper on the theory of speech acts," Gripaldo laments, "I was the only Filipino who presented a paper in the American Philosophical Association Conference held in December 2006 in Washington, D.C."[48] One wonders whether it was his trip beyond Greece which made Plato such a great philosopher.

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[40] *Ibid.*, 60.

[41] *Ibid.*, 70.

[42] *Ibid.*, 73.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. by Wing-tsit Chan, in *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 7:1.

[45] *Ibid.*, 2:11.

[46] Gripaldo, *The Making of a Filipino Philosopher and Other Essays*, 73.

[47] *Ibid.*, 74.

[48] *Ibid.*

Perhaps still the best work of Gripaldo is his early work, *Circumstantialism* (1977).[49] But this little work has for its thesis clearly articulated already on its first page, and the rest of the booklet says nothing much more.

> What will be demonstrated in this essay is the thesis that the alleged free choice is not free at all in that there are always some subtle influencing factors or reasons which determine, in the sense of giving direction or tendency to, the choice … of the individual such that this choice stands out as the only alternative fitting or appropriate in that situation.[50]

This variant of the philosophy of determinism is what Gripaldo calls "situational determinism" or, as the title of his booklet calls it, "circumstantialism." It is "something like a hybrid between the ethical and the psychological types of determinism."[51] "It is by virtue of the complex reasons for the choosing act that the best in the situation relative to the agent's values or purposes is laid bare."[52] There is certainly nothing yet here which can pass the requirements Gripaldo lays down for a great Filipino philosophy. Although we have here something more than a 'piecemeal analysis,' it does seem that we will have to wait for more uncertain years before we will see the promised great work on paper. It is probably this circumstantialism of Gripaldo that allows for his contextualization of Filipino philosophy. He is conscious of his coming from the signposts of his contemporaries, but also from those of the great Filipino personalities illustrated on the cover of his 2009 collection of essays, *The Making of a Filipino Philosopher and Other Essays*. His message is well-taken, but it remains anybody's guess whether the great work will or can be written after all.[53]

Florentino Timbreza is another Filipino philosopher who is trying hard to deserve the title while sourcing materials from all sorts of influences, Eastern and Western. Many of his works are also articulated in Tagalog, the main local language. He has this to say:

> *Hindi lamang ang mga dayuhan – ang mga Griyego, Amerikano, Intsik o Kastila ang may karanasan. Ang lahing*

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[49] Rolando M. Gripaldo, *Circumstantialism* (Dumaguete City: Silliman University Press, 1977).

[50] *Ibid.*, 11.

[51] *Ibid.*, 112.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Editor's note: Gripaldo died in 2017.

*Kayumanggi ay may natatanging karanasan din na
singyaman at singdakila nga karanasan ng ibang mga lahi.
Isa pa, kung ang pilosopiya ay nababatay sa mga
pandaigdigang pananaw na angat sa tunay na karanasan sa
buhay, pinatutunayan nito na mayroong pilosopiyang
Pilipino, sapagkat mayroon din namang natatangi't
katutubong pag-iisip at mga pandaigdigang pananaw ng mga
Pilipino na batay sa likas nilang karanasan sa buhay.*[54]

It is this attempt to draw a universal philosophy from the particular and specific experiences of the Filipinos which makes Timbreza a philosopher using the anthropological approach. To Gripaldo, this might be 'piecemeal' and, like in Mercado's case, the voluminous and thorough treatment of the subject has yet to see the light of day. What, in fact, Timbreza would like to do is as follows:

*… sinikap na pinagsama-sama, pinag-ugnay-ugnay at
pinagtugma-tugma ang mga salawikain at mga kasabihan ng
mga mamamayang naninirahan sa mga pangunahing pook ng
kapuluan: Tagalog, Ilokano, Ivatan, Pampanggao, Bisaya,
Tiruray, Tausug, Maranao, Maguindanao, Aklano,
Bukidnon, Subuanon, Zambaleno, Romblomanon, Kinaray-a,
Waray, Kalinga-Banao.*[55]

Each chapter is supposed to do that on a particular area supposedly an element of the Filipino consciousness, the "diwang Pilipino." That's a tall order, and a short 148-page work cannot be expected to satisfy the ambitious goal, perhaps more appropriately for an anthropologist than for a philosopher.

Perhaps an even better work of Timbreza is the one produced by De La Salle University in 1999 before his retirement as a teacher there, appropriately titled *Intelektwalisasyon ng Pilosopiyang Filipino*. He minces no words about his expectation of ourselves as Filipino philosophers:

*Dapat tayong mag-isip ng sarili nating pag-iisip at hindi ang
pag-iisip ng iba. Tayo ay mamilosopiya ng sarili nating
pilosopiya at hindi ang pilosopiya ng ibang lahi. Sinumang
namimilosopiya sa pamamagitan ng pilosopiya ng ibang tao
ay walang sariling pilosopiya. Sinumang nasisiyahan na mag-*

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[54] Florentino T. Timbreza, *Pilosopiyang Pilipino* (Manila: Rex Book Store, 1982), 2.
[55] *Ibid*., 8.

> *isip sa pamamagitan ng pag-iisip ng iba ay salat sa sariling pag-iisip.*[56]

This is what he calls his "challenge" (*hamon*) to his fellow philosophers.

> *Hanggang kailan tayo mananatiling bilanggo ng pag-iisip ng iba? Bakit hindi natin gamitin an gating sariling pag-iisip? Bakit pa tayo paaalipin sa pilosopiya ng ibang tao samantalang kaya naman nating mamilosopiya sa ating sarili mismo? Ito ang pangalawang hamon ng librong ito sa bawat Filipino na mayroong wagas na pagmamahal sa kanyang tunay na pagkatao.*[57]

It is in response to this challenge that he proposes the "intellectualization of Filipino philosophy." This intellectualization process of Filipino philosophy goes through five phases: "(1) pagsasalin, (2) konseptwalisasyon, (3) interpretasyon o pagpapakahulugan, (4) paghahambing, at (5) repleksyon o pagmumuni."[58] For a philosopher who seems to be aiming at something purely indigenous, Timbreza is unabashedly coming from a translation and a re-conceptualization of the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu. He ends up comparing Lao Tzu's wise sayings with those of the Ilokano, Tagalog, Ilonggo, Cebuano, Tausug, Tiruray, Pampanggo, Boholano, Ivatan, Maguindanao and Maranao.[59] For this purpose, his 230 pages cannot be said to be sufficiently long enough; it remains, in Gripaldo's vocabulary, 'piecemeal.'

The setback of the anthropological approach for a philosopher is the fact that it might as well have been undertaken by professional anthropologists themselves, not by philosophers. Claude Levi-Strauss is a case in point of a trained anthropologist who is so good at his craft that he inevitably finds his way back to its philosophical source.[60] It is philosophy

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[56] Florentino T. Timbreza, *Intelektwalisasyon ng Pilosoiyang Filipino* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, Inc., 1999), xi.

[57] *Ibid.*, xii.

[58] *Ibid.*, 3.

[59] *Ibid.*, e.g. 31-33, 46-48, and so on. Each chapter follows this methodology, which is really no different from the methodology used in *Pilosopiyang Pilipino.* The same criticism may be therefore be labeled on this new work.

[60] Claude Levi-Strauss's rigorous anthropological writings are saturated through and through with philosophic discipline, he writes: "But what confers upon kinship its socio-cultural character is not what it retains from nature, but, rather, the essential way in which it diverges from nature. A kinship system does not consist in the objective ties of descent or consanguinity between individuals. *It exists only in human consciousness; it is an arbitrary system of representations, not the spontaneous development of a real situation." Structural Anthropology*, trans. by Claire

that gives depth to his anthropology, but a philosophy which is not conscious of itself, conscious only of the fact that it is trying to break as profoundly as possible through the surface of kinship and other social relationships. This requires meticulous description of the phenomena under study, which is why Levi-Strauss' works can at times be technical and laborious, if not voluminous.

Perhaps the anthropological approach, called by Gripaldo the cultural approach,[61] should better left to trained anthropologists. What a number of our Filipino philosophers are trying to do shows somewhat frustrated efforts to hurry into profound conclusions on the basis of random and rambling empirical data. The upside of it is that it becomes clear thereby that anthropology, like all the other sciences, hide philosophical underpinnings, without which a scientific or cultural insight rings hollow, if not shallow. Anthropology needs philosophy if it is to show any amount of rigorous discipline and insight. But all this should not be construed as meaning that philosophers can dabble in anthropology as well as anthropologists themselves. Yet, the combination is profound, but its masterpiece is yet to be written by a Filipino philosopher.

Perhaps the fate of some brilliant colleagues of ours in San Beda can teach us a lesson or two about the appropriate place of cultural and anthropological scholarship in the academic scheme of things. It might well be reasonable, after all, that such bright proponents as F.P.A. Demeterio and his group had to see the closure of their department and their eventual relocation in the area of Philippine Studies of the De La Salle University.

What seems to be the present state of affairs is not necessarily tantamount to the demise of the anthropological or cultural approach, whose first great work in philosophy we might not yet have seen. But, after all that has so far been said and done, it can certainly safely be said already that this is not the only way, perhaps not even the best way, of doing Filipino philosophy. Perhaps, I dare to say, it might not even be a wrong strategy to consciously do Filipino philosophy, but only as a way of reviewing what so far our Filipino philosophers have done and assessing whether there has been anything substantial that has already come out of their effort. Even this might not be too wise to undertake yet, since we are still too close to our writers to

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Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), 48-49, emphasis mine.

[61] Gripaldo, *Making of a Filipino Philosopher*, 1-8, also 41-42. At one point, Gripaldo minces no words and asserts that "When I speak of *Filipino philosophy*, I do not mean the approach used by Leonardo Mercado and Florentino Timbreza, which I call the 'cultural approach' or 'Filipino ethnophilosophy' in that they attempted to extract, as it were, the philosophical underpinnings or presuppositions of a people's culture as culled from their languages, folksongs, folk literature, folk sayings, and so on." *The Making of a Filipino Philosopher*, 63.

be in a position to make an objective and accurate judgment of ourselves. I suggest that the best strategy is still not to indulge in any strategy at all, but simply to philosophize as one is inspired to do, without the thought that how one does it is the only way of doing Filipino philosophy. For, after all, as Quito would often say during her time, philosophy knows neither gender nor nationality, neither chronology nor religion. Her open-mindedness is legendary. Let me quote her here lengthily, for it seems to me that this philosopher, who was brightest light of her generation, can still be arguably considered as unsurpassed in many ways. In her "Homage to Jean-Paul Sartre," she has this to say:

> My guideline in the study of philosophy has always been to render to every philosopher the widest possible benevolence of interpretation … I have made open-mindedness a sine qua non of philosophical research, and I contend, as a matter of creed, that there is no philosophical system that is completely wrong, hence to be summarily condemned, nor is there one that is completely right and therefore to be totally accepted.[62]

In "A New Concept of Philosophy," she is unambiguous: "Philosophy should have no color, no religious affiliation … Philosophy should be a free science that seeks its own paths."[63] In writing "Three Women Philosophers," she aims "to prove that the mind has no sex or gender, and that sound thinking can originate from anyone, male or female."[64]

Perhaps the best articulation of Quito's concept of philosophy is the one she gave as her inaugural address in the University of Sto. Tomas for the academic year 1967-68, part of which reads:

> If I were to be asked to define philosophy, I must answer that I cannot. Philosophy is undefinable, i.e., it knows no limits just as the human mind knows no boundaries in its search for the rational explanation of reality and of man himself. No formula can ever exhaust the meaning of philosophy: all speculations about it have their own

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[62] Emerita S. Quito, *A Life of Philosophy: Festschrift in honor of Emerita S. Quito* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 622. This festschrift contains all the works of Quito and remains as the most monumental philosophical volume in the country. See also page 8, where she contends that "there is no philosophical system that is completely wrong, hence to be summarily condemned, nor is there one that is completely right and therefore to be totally accepted."

[63] *Ibid.*, 10.

[64] *Ibid.*, 651.

value and truth. We can only delve into philosophy by actually experiencing it. The best we can manage, therefore, by way of an answer to the question of what is philosophy is to give a philosophizing one: Philosophy is a discipline where the questions are more important than the answers and every answer becomes a new question.[65]

This attitude of Quito is what explains her open-minded approach to philosophy. For her, philosophy "is necessarily a never ending quest" as well as "a private, personal one."[66] Thus, "answers cannot be formulated in articles of faith" and are "never meant to be dogmatic or catechetical," for they always "leave a margin for dissension and interpretation."[67] "Philosophy is not a closed science where questions have been answered for all time," Quito says, "It should not stop the work of successive generations but should rather encourage it by orienting itself towards the future."[68] She is of the opinion that "until we learn to assume an open attitude in regard to new philosophical doctrines, we have not yet arrived at philosophical maturity."[69]

The fecundity of such a philosophical stance is shown by Quito's intellectual flexibility. In the "Introduction" to her *Festschrift* I took note of something which may be said to be in favor of her open and historically based approach. "It is, in a word, Filipino. Whereas Indians naturally show preference for Indian thought and Frenchmen for French thought, Filipinos are prone to adjust easily to varied, even contradictory, schools of philosophy."[70] I traced this historically to the fact that, culturally speaking, unlike India or China (for example), we are a nation without solid tradition. "Is this a state of affairs that one should deplore? Sure enough, we might consider this predicament a weakness, but second thoughts could reveal it as a blessing and a strength. Of all peoples, we are in the best position to start anew from scratch, and in philosophy this could prove to be a fortune rather than a curse,"[71] I said.

Socrates is the philosopher's philosopher mainly because he knows that he does not know. This learned ignorance was applied to all classical thought about two millennia later by René Descartes who smartly responded to the skeptical climate of his time with his unrelenting methodic universal

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[65] *Ibid.*, 7.

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *Ibid.*, 8.

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] See Romualdo E. Abulad, Introduction to Quito, *A Life of Philosophy: Festschrift in honor of Emerita S. Quito*.

[71] *Ibid.*

doubt. This was consciously repeated two thousand years thereafter by Edmund Husserl who consciously preceded his phenomenology with the universal *epoche*, all in an attempt to establish that crucial beginning which would destine all succeeding knowledge as indubitably certain. Even that philosophy, certain though it might be, continues to bear traces of that presence which makes contemporary deconstruction possible. Postmodernism has at last found the key that would completely secure the foundationless and groundless knowledge whose unpredictable insights are boundless and limitless.

By his very nature, the Filipino is without roots. The anthropological effort, which provides one major task of contemporary philosophy in our country, must be pursued, but it remains true that, until now, the archaeological findings have been somewhat ridiculously magnified, revealing fossils that do not have[72] too much substance yet. The worse about the anthropological approach is that it tends to arrogate unto itself the truth about the Filipino mind, thus excluding or at least debasing other so-called merely expository, descriptive, or non-anthropological philosophies. And these others are, so to speak, legion. Ateneo's legendary preoccupation with phenomenology and existentialism must have now produced a library that includes such bright academics as Roque Ferriols, Ramon Reyes, Leo Garcia, Manuel Dy, Tomas Rosario, Ranier Ibana, and Albert Alejo. The University of Sto. Tomas and De La Salle University have seen an overlap of prestige in the likes of Emerita S. Quito, Claro Ceniza, Alfredo Co, Paolo Bolaños, and Florentino Timbreza. And let's not demean our very own Cebuano institution, the University of San Carlos, which has been the home of the SVDs Leonardo Estioko, Quintin Terrenal, Florencio Lagura and Raymun Festin, as well as contemporary non-SVDs like Amosa Velez, Rosario Espina and Ryan Urbano. This list is far from complete and exhaustive, but only because I am not cognizant of what's going on everywhere, not even in the other academic institutions, such as UP and Silliman. However, the likes of the ones I've randomly mentioned would have to be excluded if the anthropological approach would be declared as the sole legitimate method for the creation of a Filipino philosophy. I would not go for such a proposition; I'd prefer Quito's prescription of open-mindedness.

It is with much ease that we understand the spirit of postmodernity precisely because of our lack of rootedness, or perhaps more accurately the meagerness of our roots. There is nothing to be ashamed of in the historical fact that we do not have a tradition as immensely rich as, say, China and India. We are not China or India, nor Greece or Rome, nor Germany or France,

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[72] Editor's note: In the original manuscript, the author wrote, "with not" which we have replaced here with "do not have" for clarity.

nor England or Australia. We are not Africa, nor are we Spain or America. This is the Philippines and all the facts about the Philippines belong to me, even the fact of my own lack—the lack of a long history and a glorious cultural heritage. The mistake is to dwell on this lack and do nothing about it; that would make us either plain stupid or lazy, which we are not supposed to be. The cue comes from the existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre, when he says: "Existence precedes essence," he means that, "man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world – and defines himself afterwards."[73] The moment's task assigned to a Filipino philosopher is one of existential definition. If you don't believe that there is such a thing as a Filipino philosophy, then one thing I may ask you to do is gather all the writings of the authors I have just named above, see for yourself how much work has already been done, quantitatively, and then assess the intellectual worth of its entirety, qualitatively.

You are asking, "*Uso pa ba ang Pilosopiyang Pinoy?*" I say, with all my due respect to you, that the question is missing the point. Philosophy is not at all about fads and fashions. In recent years, philosophy majors have dramatically decreased in number. Just in June of this year, we saw our undergraduates decline from about a hundred to just about seventy, which is due to the closure or transfer of some of the formation houses in Cebu. One or two congregations ceased sending their boys to us and instead have sent them to the Rogationist Seminary, which we don't consider a bad thing at all. Not a few of the formators in that seminary have been formed by us in the University of San Carlos, and it's not a bad idea if they start using their learned expertise to expand the possibilities for seminaries in the region. The implication of this phenomenon for us in the University is simply that we now have to re-design our concept of philosophy in a way that will cater primarily to non-seminarians. Again, not a bad idea. Philosophy is not meant only to prepare students for either the priesthood or the legal profession. More and more, the relevance of philosophy is being recognized as foundational for all disciplines, sacred or profane. The first department to connect with us this academic year is the Biology Department, seeking to evolve together with a course in Bioethics, both for their graduate and undergraduate majors. Just a month ago, before the start of the current semester, the Physics Department sent me an email asking us to meet with their teachers in an effort to understand some rudiments of Philosophy of Science. In January next the second batch of Chinese students from the Mainland will arrive in our school to pursue a Ph.D. in Business Management, and the College of Business and Entrepreneurship (which is

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[73] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, trans. by Philip Mairet (London: Methuen, 1948), 28.

how they would like to call themselves in the future) has asked the Philosophy Department to offer the first two modular classes, specifically instructing us to do Philosophy of Man and Philosophy of Culture. Trends like this are bound to set the trend for the re-designing of philosophy courses in our time.

I shall tell you something more which, at first, will be hard for many people to understand. We have decided in the University of San Carlos to fuse the two Departments of Philosophy and Religious Education; now we have just one Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. The idea of the merger is not new; it has been floating for many years, but habits, as they say, die hard. We continue to be the premier university in these parts in so far as philosophy is concerned, since we remain to be the only school here which has a complete program of philosophy from the undergraduate to the Ph.D. and we have enough of our share of doctors in the faculty. Why, then, fuse with another department?

More than half of a century ago, in May 1959, an academic named Charles P. Snow delivered an otherwise insignificant lecture in the halls of Cambridge. Snow described what happened next in a 'second look' of it he made in 1963:

> According to precedent, the lecture was published, as a paper-covered pamphlet, the day after it was delivered. It received some editorial attention but, in the first month, not many reviews. There was not, and could not be, any advertising. Encounter published long extracts, and these drew some comment. I had a number of interesting private letters. That, I thought, was the end of it.[74]

It did not turn out to be that way at all. "By the end of the first year I began to feel uncontrollably like the sorcerer's apprentice. Articles, references, letters, blame, praise, were floating in—often from countries where I was otherwise unknown … The literature has gone on accumulating at an accelerating pace."[75] Today, who has not heard of C.P. Snow's critique of the 'two cultures'? "I intend something serious," he said,

> I believe the intellectual life of the whole of western society is increasingly being split into two polar groups … Literary intellectuals at one pole – at the other

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[74] C.P. Snow, "The Two Cultures: A Second Look (1963)," in *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 53.

[75] *Ibid.*, 54.

scientists, and as the most representative, the physical scientists. Between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension—sometimes (particularly among the young) hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding.[76]

What follows is, as they say, history. The attempts to bridge cultures through inter- and multi-disciplinarity is well known. Borders have cracked and walls have crumbled, and the new time begins to call for the fusion of horizons. Hegel once said of an idea whose time has come, that one cannot arrest it no matter what obstacles stand in the way.

> For the rest it is not difficult to see that our epoch is a birth-time, and a period of transition. The spirit of man has broken with the old order of things hitherto prevailing, and with the old ways of thinking, and is in the mind to let them all sink into the depths of the past and to set about its own transformation.[77]

While the collapse of borders and the merger of horizons are taking place, the two cultures proceed in a direction where the scientific edge seems to be reducing the humanistic disciplines to an endangered species. Everybody is seeking to quantify itself, measuring its capacity to be a science in terms of mathematics and calculation. Formulas and statistics are taking the place of purely descriptive studies, so that even what belongs to the human side of things is now being forced to follow the mold of quantification. Psychology now belongs to the social sciences, which continue to ape the methods of mathematics and physics. The mechanization of knowledge gives rise to an amazing world of science and technology, a blessing no doubt that owes itself to the genius of man, but a curse too that is putting the humanities or liberal arts, what the Germans call *Geisteswissenchaften*, on the sidelines.

Even philosophy, as well as to some extent theology, has important proponents which are seriously pondering on aligning the spiritual disciplines to science and measurement. Allow me to say that much of what I have referred to as the anthropological approach to philosophy tends to lean on this direction. This causes a deep divide between the two disciplines, the naturalistic and the humanistic disciplines (*Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*). Much of the latter has moved over to the empirical and scientific side of the academe, so that what we now call the social sciences are

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[76] Snow, "The Rede Lecture (1959)," in *The Two Cultures*, 3.

[77] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 75.

no longer really within the sphere of the liberal or spiritual disciplines. In the University of San Carlos, in particular, only philosophy and religion remain as the bulwark of the humanities. Literature belongs to the Department of Languages and Literature which is currently slight in literature and large in linguistics, whereas linguistics is either grammar or a social science, thus more akin to science than to the arts. The arts, on the other hand, are in the hands not of the College of Arts and Sciences but of the College of Architecture and Fine Arts, a competent and highly entrenched department which is unwilling to get itself subjugated together with philosophy and religion under the Humanities cluster. That leaves philosophy and religion the only remaining stronghold of the spiritual sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), which is the rationale for their having to work together and join hands especially in the widespread mission of Ethics and Catholicity. This, Ethics and Catholicity, is being strongly brought forward by the current leadership of my University, and philosophy is certainly a major partner in this mission or what we SVDs call prophetic dialogue.

Moreover, the government's Philippine Main Education Highway (PMEH) is now on the verge of implementation on account of global moves to discredit nations with less than twelve years of basic education. There seems to be no more doubt that two more years will be added before one can go to college, after which a young candidate has the option to proceed either to the academic university or to the vocational technical school. This move will professionalize the college offerings and, in all likelihood, the current practice of two years of general liberal education in college will go down to the level of senior high school. There will be a lot of rethinking in higher education and my suspicion is that our radical decision to collapse philosophy and religious studies into one department will prove to be a felicitous move that will facilitate the road for the other disciplines.

What all this amounts to is the futility of an exercise that fears for the life of philosophy as a professional discipline in the future. One thing that we should perhaps always keep in mind is that the death of philosophy is most ably undertaken by no less than the ablest philosophers themselves, think only of Socrates, Thomas Aquinas, Francis Bacon, René Descartes, the empiricists John Locke, George Berkeley and David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein and the deconstructionists like Jacques Derrida and Jean Baudrilliard. No other discipline faces its own fragility and possible mortality more frontally than philosophy itself. There is no need to fear that we shall not be relevant. If we ever become irrelevant, it's no thanks to ourselves who might not have been willing to do as expected of philosophers: lead the pack to new spiritual frontiers coming from the uncertainties and challenges of the present times.

Philosophy continues to be the handmaid of religion, but not in so far as it is being asked to assist in a formulaic and mechanical imitation of, say, the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas. If it were only this, then religion would have need not so much for philosophy as for an intellect keen enough to literally commit to memory scholastic manuals for exact delivery at baccalaureate exams. The importance of philosophy as a tool or organon is, in fact, not limited to theological subjects but extends to all thinking in general, which means to all disciplines. This is why all academic courses will be impoverished, both formally and substantially, when not steeped in the discipline of philosophy. In other words, all areas of knowledge and behavior need philosophy as a fundamental discipline, without which they will lack in either rigor or depth and will eventually wilt and collapse. Beyond all this dirty work philosophy is asked to do on behalf of the existing sciences, it also stands as a pure discipline on its own footing. What Kant, Heidegger and Wittgenstein have accomplished could not have been done outside of pure philosophy, whose speculative and practical results have brought about the culture of postmodernity.

Filipino philosophy can extricate itself from global philosophy only at its own expense. The Philippine Main Education Highway has been conceived precisely in response to global requirements, thanks to international accords like APEC, Washington and Bologna. Any isolationist move on the part of Filipino philosophers will be destructive for its own mission in an age and time which calls for linkages and encompassing solutions. It is philosophy, one might say, which has brought the world to its postmodern situation, and it is philosophy's continuing task to guide humanity in the direction where the spirit leads it. In all this, there is a partnership between philosophy and religion which we should not try to frustrate. The secular Spirit is basically only the other side of the mystical Spirit, in the same way that Spinoza's *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* are identical.

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A Tribute to Romualdo Abulad, the Filipino Kantian

Filipino Postmodernity: *Quo Vadis*?[1]

Romualdo E. Abulad†

Abstract: In this paper, Romualdo Abulad initially presents variations of postmodernity as distinct historical breaks which feature paradigmatic shifts that lead us to a new beginning. Postmodernity, as Abulad shows, is characterized by a radical openness; this leads him to argue that postmodernity as an event occurred in different moments in the history of thought, from ancient to contemporary. In what seems to be a dialectical description of history, he maintains that an opportunity for a break occurs when the inherent limitations and deficiencies of the prevailing status quo emerge, and as a result, ignite the tensions between the preservation of the old and the welcoming of the new. Applying the same idea to understand the trajectory of the sociopolitical history of the Philippines, Abulad advises us to "keep in mind the wealth of possibilities that lie in the future but at the same time not lose our patience and rush precipitately the fulfillment of things." For this very reason, Abulad maintains that postmodernity, as opposed to a distinct and isolated moment, is an ever-ongoing project that urges us to question the present state of affairs, challenging us to go *beyond* the *modern*—look *beyond* into the *present*, and usher in a *new beginning*.

Keywords: postmodernity, postmodern man, paradigm shift, the second beginning

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he first part of the title suggests that the Filipino, like most of the world today, has already "crossed the border" and has learned to accept the fact of what Martin Heidegger calls "the second beginning"[2]—what here we refer to as postmodernity. The second part, however, by asking "*quo vadis?*", indicates a certain state of uncertainty and crisis wondering where all this, namely postmodernity, is leading to. Maybe just to start us off on a note

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[1] Editor's note: An early version of this piece was presented in the 1st Philosophy, Culture, and Communication Congress held in St. Paul Seminary, Silang, Cavite, 10-11 November 2017.

[2] See Preview of Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

of optimism we may mention right at the start the name of the philosopher of science, Thomas Kuhn, who, in his famous work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, makes crises even necessary for what has now become a household word: paradigm shift.[3]

Actually, postmodernity is itself a paradigm shift; nay, it is, if we are to take Heidegger seriously, *the* paradigm shift. We have already irreversibly moved into "the second beginning," he says, bringing us back, by way of *anamnesis* or remembrance, to the first beginning which took place in Greece, the birthplace of philosophy as *philosophia*, love of wisdom.[4] We now refer to it as the ancient age, the age of the so-called Greek miracle which started us theorizing. *Theoria*, one might say, is a Greek invention, by which men began to think and speculate, an activity which makes us presumably like unto the image of God, *theos*. It was as if it freshly dawned on man what potentials there were in him as a being capable of thought, and he ventured to ask: τι το ov, what is it?—a question which eventually translates into "what is being?" *It* is water, Thales said.[5] Reputed to be the first philosopher, he might as well be the first of our kind to look intently at the things around us, ultimately declaring them to be other than what they seem. Things, Thales seemed to say, are not exactly as they appear to us; in fact, they are all water! That bold declaration, instead of putting the sense of awe and wonder to rest, triggered it even more. There followed a flood of other theories, with Anaximander refusing to identify *it* with anything definite, thus calling it *apeiron*, the Indefinite.[6] In contrast, Anaximenes equated *it*, the *ov*, with air[7] even as Empedocles was wrestling with the four elements: earth, water, air, and fire.[8]

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[3] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[4] "We have uttered the word 'philosophy' often enough. If, however, we use the word 'philosophy' no longer like a worn out title, if, instead, we hear the word 'philosophy' coming from its source, then it sound thus: *philosophia*. Now the word 'philosophy' is speaking Greek. The word, as a Greek word, is a path … The word *philosophia* tells us that philosophy is something which, first of all, determines the existence of the Greek world. Not only that—*philosophia* also determines the innermost basic feature of our Western-European history." Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. by Jean T. Wilde and William Kluback (New Haven, Conn.: College & University Press, 1956), 29.

[5] "Most of the first philosophers thought that principles in the form of matter were the only principles of all things; for the original source of all existing things, that from which a thing first comes-into-being and into which it is finally destroyed, the substance persisting but changing in its qualities, this they declare is the element and first principle of existing things … Thales, the founder of this type of philosophy, says that it is water …." G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 89.

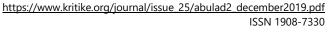[6] *Ibid.,* 105-108.

[7] *Ibid.,* 144-148.

[8] *Ibid.,* 286; 299.

A crucial moment in this theoretical preoccupation over the stuff (*Urstoff*) or element of the universe occurred when Democritus coined the word *atomos*,[9] the very same word the moderns, a millennium later, would use to designate what they, mistakenly it turned out, thought to be the minutest component of things. That the modern-day atoms proved susceptible to fusion, fission, and even explosion is proof supreme that they, the atoms, have parts, thus in no way the long sought-for ultimate stuff of the universe. Leibniz came to the rescue, it is true, by giving the name monads to the true atoms of nature,[10] but his purely rational proof for them could be easily rejected by any empirically inclined investigator. What all this proves, we repeat, is only that the line of inquiry started by the Greeks was picked up effectively about a millennium later by the moderns. The intervening millennium called the Medieval Age was, at first blush, a detour from the way of the ancients who dared to use sheer reason in the acquisition of knowledge, the same reason which sets men apart from the animals. Indeed, it is the ancients who defined man as a rational animal, with emphasis on *that rational part which enables us to know the truth and seek the good, signifying the two functions of* reason as intellect and will. One can see how this view of man inevitably makes knowledge and science a natural objective of the mind, which explains the primacy hitherto given to education or enlightenment. Although this culminates in the scientific advances of modernity and the technological efficiency we experience even in postmodernity, the fact is that the spirit of the Middle Ages was a product of the metaphysics of the ancients which, according to Aristotle, is the quest for the ultimate causes, reasons and principles of all things in the light of reason alone.[11]

Again, here, Heidegger is not far from right in pronouncing classical metaphysics as an *onto-theo-logy*.[12] The search for the *rerum natura* finds its highest achievement in the First Cause who is Uncaused, the First Mover who is Unmoved, to which, as observed correctly by St. Thomas Aquinas, we give the name God.[13] That God is not an original medieval concoction, though; one finds that already among the Greeks, most notably in Aristotle.[14] Thus, the

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[9] *Ibid.,* 406-408.

[10] "… these monads are the true atoms of nature, and, in a word, the elements of all things." Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, *Monadology*, in *Leibniz Selections*, ed. by Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), § 3.

[11] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* trans. by W.D. Ross in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 980a22-988b23.

[12] See Martin Heidegger, "The Onto-theo-logical Nature of Metaphysics," in *Essays in Metaphysics: Identity and Difference*, trans. by Kurt F. Leidecker (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1960), 33-67.

[13] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* Vol. 1, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1981), Ia.2.3.

[14] "… if there *is* no first there is no cause at all." Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 994a18. "… the first mover is itself unmoved." *Metaphysics,* 1012b30. "We say therefore that God is a living being,

medieval experiment which lasted for a thousand years and extended even beyond that time until today is part of that progression which started among the ancients and which suffered relentless criticism only during the modern age, a critique which resulted in the destruction of the whole metaphysical edifice of what Heidegger calls "the first beginning."[15]

The beginning of the end officially started with René Descartes's universal doubt.[16] That was a sweeping move intended to wipe completely clean our mental slate, retaining only what even Husserl some two centuries later would pronounce as an inevitable residue, the pure consciousness or *cogito*.[17] It is this *cogito* which, one might say, constitutes the basic assumption of all modernity, which is why we describe this age as anthropocentric.[18] Husserl, in fact, dubbed his own philosophy as a neo-Cartesianism.[19] Why, then, did he have to *repeat* Descartes? Because between Descartes and Husserl there stood, first of all, the formidable German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, who, once and for all, tried to solve the dilemma left by the conflicting theories of the rationalists and the empiricists. The rationalism of Leibniz, a true heir of Cartesian idealism, was coming, as it were, from the pure consciousness or *cogito*, guided only by clear and distinct perceptions, not to mention the logical principle of non-contradiction; this led, however, all the way to the philosophy of Christian von Wolff whom Kant declared, positively

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eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this *is* God." *Metaphysics*, 1072b28-29.

[15] See Preview to Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*.

[16] "In order to examine into the truth, it is necessary at least once in one's life to doubt of all things, so far as this is possible." René Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*, in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 219.

[17] "Consciousness in itself has a being of its own which in its absolute uniqueness of nature remains unaffected by the phenomenological disconnexion. It therefore remains over as a 'phenomenological residuum,' as a region of Being which is in principle unique, and can become in fact the field of a new science—the science of Phenomenology." Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. by W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 102.

[18] I heard this first said in her classes by Emerita Quito, e.g., "Descartes led Modern Man with his theory of Universal Doubt. Everything must be suspended in doubt so that the mind can begin with a clean slate. It was, however, impossible to cleanse the mind completely of all truths for there was one truth that was undeniable, and that was that 'while I doubt, I think, and because I cannot think without existing, therefore, I exist.' *I think, therefore, I exist* became the starting point of all philosophy." *Lectures on Comparative Philosophy*, in *A Life of Philosophy: Festschrift in honor of Emerita S. Quito* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 508.

[19] "… phenomenology might almost be called a new, a twentieth century, Cartesianism." Edmund Husserl, *The Paris* Lectures, trans. by Peter Koestenbaum (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 3. "Accordingly one might almost call transcendental phenomenology a neo-Cartesianism …." *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. by Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 1.

if not approvingly, as the greatest dogmatist of his time.[20] On the opposite camp was the triumvirate of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, the young nomads[21] who delivered, blow by blow, the final strokes in the progressive methodic doubt initiated, albeit unwaringly left unfinished, by Descartes. It took Locke to demolish the innate ideas[22] whose most illustrious proponent was Plato, and it took Berkeley[23] and Hume[24] to explode the concepts of substance and causality, respectively, which were entrenched by Aristotle. No wonder Kant himself, despite the education he received from the Leibniz-Wolffian school, declared himself radically awakened from his dogmatic slumber by Hume.[25]

Thus, the final blow to classical philosophy was delivered by Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the very title of which is reminiscent of Descartes's universal doubt, which can now finally be pronounced to have reached completion. This completion of the Cartesian doubt by way of Kant's critique of pure reason proved to be also the end of philosophy, leaving none of the architectonic of Greek philosophy standing. This is the true culmination of "the first beginning." From Descartes to Kant is a period of merciless critique, aimed paradoxically at certitude, which resulted in the collapse of all Western and Eurocentric thinking, the end of "the first beginning" and the dawn of "the second beginning." This is the crisis of philosophy, nay the crisis of all human history, which accounts for *the* paradigm shift. How shall one proceed from here? Kant, the all-destroyer, we say, has left nothing standing.[26] All knowledge is merely a phenomenon, according to him, the appearance of things and not the things themselves.[27] This is the true ground zero as

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[20] "… in a future system of metaphysics, we shall have to follow in the strict method of the celebrated Wolff, the greatest of all dogmatic philosophers …." Immanuel Kant, Preface to the Second Edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by F. Max Müller (New York: Doubleday & Company Anchor Books, 1966), Bxxxvi-xxxvii, xlii.

[21] "… the sceptics, a kind of nomads, despising all settled culture of the land, broke up from time to time all civil society." Kant, Preface to the First Edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, xxiii.

[22] See John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), Book I.

[23] See the first dialogue of George Berkeley in *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, The Library of Liberal Arts, 1977).

[24] See Sections IV (Skeptical Doubts Concerning the Operations of the Understanding) and V (Skeptical Solution of These Doubts) of David Hume in *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Liberal of Liberal Arts, 1965).

[25] "I openly confess that my remembering David Hume was the very thing which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a quite new direction." Immanuel Kant, Preface to *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. by Paul Carus and rev. by James W. Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1977), 5.

[26] It was Moses Mendelssohn who spoke of "the all-crushing Kant." See Allan Arkush, *Moses Mendelssohn and the Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 69.

[27] "Even if we could see to the very bottom of a phenomenon, it would remain for ever altogether different from the knowledge of the thing by itself." Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*,

envisioned by Descartes. If all beings are substances, as classical metaphysics would have us believe, then Berkeley has adequately pointed out to us that such substances are pure mental concoctions, sheer bundles of impressions, and thus evanescent. Today's scientists have taken that lesson seriously, a stance which has miraculously produced the quantum theory of physics which in turn makes of indeterminacy and relativity gospel truths, if any such truth can ever be called gospel and if such a gospel can ever be considered true. Parallel to this, and even more amazing, is the philosophy of Buddhism whose principle of *anatta* is an expression of the unreality of substances as well as the unreality of the ego substance itself, the self or the *cogito*.[28] By the time Kant ends his *critique of pure reason*, all the revered concepts of metaphysics—God, freedom, and immortality—have not only suffered a severe blow, they are done and over with. In the language of today's mightiest deconstructivist, Jacques Derrida, there is left not a trace, not even the trace of a trace.[29]

The German idealists, of whom the greatest is G.W.F. Hegel, boldly undertook the reconstruction of philosophy on the ashes of "the first beginning." However, the transition to the new paradigm could not be the work of only one man, no matter how profoundly great. With the closure of his system, and with him the system of German idealism, the new philosophers—the likes of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Schleiermacher and Marx—found all the more reason to endlessly disagree, even ridicule Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*.[30] It took Husserl, with his own brand of pure phenomenology, to somewhat resurrect what could possibly be reconstructed out of Hegel's phenomenology, without bringing the devil of a closure to the system. Up to his very last published work, Husserl remains "a beginning philosopher."[31] Phenomenology thus established itself as the

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A44=B61, 37. "Its principles are principles for the exhibition of phenomena only; and the proud name of Ontology, which presumes to supply in a systematic form different kinds of synthetical knowledge a priori of things by themselves (for instance the principle of causality), must be replaced by the more modest name of a mere Analytic of the pure understanding." *Ibid*., A247=B303, 193.

[28] "The doctrine of Dependent Origination is the central teaching of the Buddha…. To say that a thing arises depending on its cause is to admit that it is momentary …. The theory of No-ego, the theory that the individual ego is ultimately false, is also based on this doctrine. When everything is momentary, the ego is also momentary and therefore relative and false." Chandradhar Sharma, *Indian Philosophy: A Critical Survey* (U.S.A.: Barnes & Noble, 1962), 62-63.

[29] "… the play of the trace, or the *différance,* which has no meaning and is not …. Always differing and deferring, the trace is never as it is in the presentation of itself. It erases itself in presenting itself …." Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 22-23.

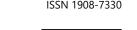[30] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. by J.B. Baillie (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967).

[31] Considered his "great last work," Husserl's *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* is still only "an introduction to phenomenological philosophy."

method appropriate for the new way of thinking, not however the phenomenology of Hegel alone nor the phenomenology of Husserl alone, but the phenomenology of both together. It is this phenomenology which Heidegger used in order to cross the borders of the "first beginning" into the "new beginning," mistakenly taken by Husserl to be a betrayal of his method. With Heidegger the paradigm shift is done, and there is no more turning back.

It is this paradigm shift, this new beginning, which we mean by postmodernity. What does this entail? First, it presupposes a transformed human. Heidegger's *Dasein* is not the same as Aristotle's *animal rationale*,[32] in the same way that the Great Man, the man of *jen*, of Confucius should not be confused with the Petty Man.[33] The very mark of Dasein is authenticity, the

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Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. by David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1978). Another major work of his late years, *Cartesian Meditations*, is similarly subtitled as "an introduction to phenomenology."

[32] "This amounts to an essential transformation of the human from 'rational animal' (*animal* rationale) to Da-sein." Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, 3.

[33] Confucius, *The Sayings of Confucius,* trans. by James R. Ware (New York: The New American Library Mentor Book, 1955). Sample sayings: "To remain unconcerned though others do not know of us—that is to be Great Man!" (I.1); "Great Man applies himself to the fundamentals, for once the fundamentals are there System comes into being. It is filial duty and fraternal duty that are fundamental to Manhood-at-its-best." (I.2); "Great Man is no robot." (II. 12); "Great Man, being universal in his outlook, is impartial; Petty Man, being partial, is not universal in outlook." (II.14); "There is nothing which Great Man will contest with others. Since it is obligatory, however, he will engage in the archery tournaments. After greeting and deferring to the others, he mounts to the range. After he has finished he comes back and plays his proper role in the drinking [the loser must drink; for the winner there is no compulsion]. In such a contest he is still Great Man." (III.7); "Great Man's attitude toward the world is such that he shows no preferences; but he is prejudiced in favor of justice." (IV.10); "Great Man cherishes excellence; Petty Man, his own comfort. Great Man cherishes the rules and regulations; Petty Man, special favors." (IV.11); "Great Man is conscious only of justice; Petty Man, only of self-interest." (IV.16); "When substance overbalances refinement, crudeness results. When refinement overbalances substance, there is superficiality. When refinement and substance are balanced one has Great Man." (VI.18); "Great Man is completely at ease; Petty Man is always on edge." (VII.37); "He can be entrusted with the education of a young child; he can be entrusted with the rule of a state; in a moment of crisis he remains unshaken: is such a man Great Man? He is." (VIII.6); "If Great Man is faultlessly respectful; if he is humble within the rites to his fellow men, then in the whole, wide world, all are his brothers. How can Great Man complain that he has no brothers?" (XII.5); "Great Man develops the virtues in others, not their vices. Petty Man does just the opposite." (XII.16); "Great Man is accommodating, but he is not one of the crowd. Petty Man is one of the crowd, but he is also a source of discord." (XIII.23); "Great Man is easy to serve but hard to please. Petty Man is hard to serve but easy to please." (XIII.25); "Great Man is dignified but not proud. Petty Man is proud but not dignified." (XIII.26); "A man like is Great Man, for he esteems Excellence." (XIV.5); "Great Man reaches complete understanding of the main issues; Petty Man reaches complete understanding of the minute details." (XIV.23); "He whose very substance is justice, whose actions are governed by the rites, whose participation in affairs is compliant, and whose crowning perfection is reliability — that man is Great Man."

opposite of which is duplicity which we may equate, in biblical language, with what Jesus denounces as hypocrisy or, in Jaime Bulatao's happy turn of phrase, a split level religiosity. This is why Heidegger describes the *das Man* as *ambiguity* (*Zweideutigkeit*):[34] he is a fake. As such he does not exhibit the good will which, according to Kant, is "the only thing in the world or outside of it which can be considered good without qualification."[35] In this Kant is no doubt under the influence of Rousseau whose general will never errs; the general will is thus always good.[36] This is the source of Emmanuel Levinas's emphasis on ethics. Coming as he is from Heidegger's "destruction of the history of ontology,"[37] Levinas would like to think of ethics, not metaphysics, as the first philosophy.[38] For his part, and seemingly in opposition to Levinas, Heidegger spent all his long, productive years in the quest for Being, declaring all metaphysics hitherto to be still no more than physics. The being

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(XV.18); "Great Man's concern is that he may die without a good name." (XV.20); "Great Man demands it of himself; Petty Man, of others." (XV.21); "Great Man, out of a sense of pride, does not engage in strife; out of consideration for the group as a whole he does not join cliques." (XV.22); "Great Man avoids three things: sexual intercourse while still too young and before his pulse has settled down; fighting, once he has grown up and his pulse has become strong; further acquisition, once he has grown old and his pulse has weakened." (XVI.7); "There are three facets to Great Man. Looked at from a distance he seems stern; at close range he is pleasant; as we listen to his words they are clear-cut." (XIX.9); "He who is solely Manhood-at-its-best will know which men to like and which ones to hate." (IV.3); "He who concentrates upon the task and forgets about reward may be called Man-at-his-best." (VI.22); "The achieving of Manhood-at-its-best must come from you yourself; one does not acquire it from others!" (XII.1); "Remain sincere in purpose while studying widely, continue to think while posing frank and open questions. Therein lies Manhood-at-its-best." (XIX.6); "Asked about Manhood-at-its-best, he replied: 'When away from home act as respectfully as you would toward an important guest; handle the people as respectfully as you would the grand sacrifice. Do not do to others what you would not desire yourself.'" (XII.2)

[34] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Thought, 2008), 217-219. The thematic analysis of the difference between Dasein and das Man is taken up in Chapter V, where Dasein is shown as *Geworfenheit, Verstehen* and *Rede,* while das Man is in contrast described as *Zweideutigkeit, Neugier* and *Gerede.*

[35] "It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a *good will.*" Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. by H.J. Paton, in *The Moral Law* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1966), 61.

[36] "… the general will is always right and always tends to the public advantage; but it does not follow that the resolution of the people have always the same rectitude." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. by Henry J. Tozer, ed. by Lester G. Crocker (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc., 1967), 30.

[37] "The Task of Destroying the History of Ontology." Heidegger, Introduction to *Being and Time*, § 6, p. 41 ff.

[38] "The ethical, beyond vision and certitude, delineates the structure of exteriority as such. Morality is not a branch of philosophy, but first philosophy." Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. by Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), 304.
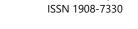
of Aristotle is still only an entity, *das Seiende*, still only a substance or a thing. However, the being of genuine metaphysics is neither an entity, nor a substance, nor a thing: *Das Sein des Seienden ist nicht selbst ein Seiendes*.[39] With Heidegger, finally, we have arrived at the true metaphysics, the *ov* of the Greek *τι το ov*, the etymological root of the word 'ontology' which is usually taken to be identical with 'metaphysics,' which was still alive (says Heidegger) in Heraclitus and Parmenides but which started to dim and suffer forgetting in Plato and Aristotle; thereafter the road to the metaphysical oblivion, the forgetfulness of being, became decisive for all of human history which became dominated by the West.[40] On the positive side, this led to the multiplication of disciplines and the growth of the sciences which have brought about the theoretical and technological advances we are now witnessing globally, changes never yet known in history. The metaphysics of the first beginning, which Heidegger boldly denounced to be still a physics, has borne incredible fruit in terms of science and technology, creating endless possibilities not excluding unfortunately the march of humanity toward its own self-annihilation. To avoid this, there arises the need to go beyond the first beginning; that paradigm shift is a crucial moment, without which one gets stuck at best in modernity, at worse in a medieval consciousness steeped in that rationalism whose best shape is a type of intellectual erudition which does not necessarily equate with moral righteousness. Proof: one can be so smart and yet so corrupt. This cannot be the case with the truly postmodern human after it has gone through the explosion of all the categories and habits of thought, barriers which prevent one's coming face to face with the Other as an authentic ontological experience.

Postmodernity is the true goal of the ancients who have been deflected from their purpose by the ineluctable emphasis on reason which occupied humanity for at least the next two millennia. Having reached the limits of that preoccupation, we are finally able now to connect with the original thinking exemplified by Heraclitus and Parmenides and recover from the ensuing forgetfulness of being. Postmodernity is metaphysical and ontological in this original sense; we are now laying the foundation of the new beginning whose mark is authenticity, that is, fidelity to that which Kant rather formally refers to as the 'groundwork,' equivalent to Heidegger's thinking *vom Ereignis*.[41] It took more than two thousand years of earnest and ceaseless reflection before we arrived at this new beginning we now call postmodernity. The Catholic Church formally joined it when Pope John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council in 1962, and the Philippines followed

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[39] "The Being of entities 'is' not itself an entity." Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 26.

[40] "This question (of Being) has today been forgotten." *Ibid.*, 21.

[41] Appropriately chosen are the titles of the books of Kant and Heidegger, namely: *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* and *Contributions to Philosophy (vom Ereignis)*.

suit in 1986 with the struggle and eventual victory of the People Power during the EDSA Revolution. In both instances, the work could not have been a purely rational work. No one could have conjectured that an aged, rather conservative pontiff would be God's instrument of a radical movement in the Church, nor could anyone have guessed that the outcome of the political turmoil over a raging 'social volcano' such as what observers were predicting for the Philippines would be a bloodless four-day uprising of the people spontaneously gathered along a major thoroughfare of Manila. Those were irreversible events, our entry into postmodernity, a step which we can no longer unmake, a point of no return.

And now you ask me—*Quo vadis?* Where are we going? The question smacks of anxious concern; it smells of uncertainty. Is postmodernity a mistake? Could history be wrong? Hegel speaks of the cunning of reason;[42] what reason is he talking about? He cannot have meant the reason of any one rational animal, does he? Surely there are historical individuals, but even they have to be sacrificed in the slaughter-bench of history;[43] they cannot possibly have lasted for ever. The cunning of reason survives them. Perhaps Pierre Teilhard de Chardin could somehow help us here. He speaks of a center in each individual thing, the "within" whose destiny is to reveal itself ever more clearly in the process of evolution.[44] It has taken eons to reach this far and we might say that we have already a glimmer of that center whose fullness, however, has not yet come. Could it be that Hegel's cunning of reason belongs to that center of which Teilhard speaks? It is tempting to do as Teilhard, the Jesuit priest, actually did—identify that center as the Christ in all of us, so that in the end we might all be gone but only to give way to the emergence of the Cosmic Christ.[45] Not everyone, however, will be ready to take that easy leap. To the Taoists, for instance, it could be the Uncarved Block, the nameless one.[46] Perhaps, after all, it is not all a shameful thing that, as Pope John Paul II said, the Buddhists are atheists; they have no God. We

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[42] "Reason governs the world, and has consequently governed its history." G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, trans. by J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), 25.

[43] "History (is) the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of States, and the virtue of individuals have been victimized …." *Ibid.*, 21.

[44] "… *co-extensive with their Without, there is a Within to things.*" Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, trans. by Bernard Wall (New York: Harper & Row Perennial Library, 1975), 56.
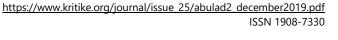
[45] "Only one reality seems to survive and be capable of succeeding and spanning the infinitesimal and the immense: energy—that floating, universal entity from which all emerges and into which all falls back as into an ocean; energy, the new spirit; the new god. So, at the world's Omega, as at its Alpha, lies the Impersonal." *Ibid.*, 258.

[46] "The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao; The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and earth …." Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, in *a Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, trans. by Wing-Tsit Chan (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), 1, p. 139.

are all familiar with how Nietzsche declared that God is dead, and that we have in fact killed him; we are his murderers.[47] It is good to recall that those who constitute the so-called God-is-Dead Movement are mostly theologians,[48] not atheists at all but men and women at a season that has come of age and who are able to take the step beyond—beyond the God of our childhood and, in moral terms, beyond our tables of good and evil.[49]

With the postmodern shift of paradigm comes the end of Western domination. The new beginning is an equalizer of cultures, both East and West. The rediscovery of the East has made everyone conscious of the great civilizations much more ancient than Greece, especially (in philosophy) India and China. Now we beg the indulgence of the great Martin Heidegger and correct him somehow, giving to the East the honor of the first beginning, to Greece the second beginning and to the postmodern synthesis of both East and West the third beginning. Today's catchwords include terms like global, integral, inclusive, interconnectivity, dialogue, borderless, linkage, and similar others. Concepts that used to stand opposed to each other melt in a synthesis for which oftentimes we find no ready tags available. It still amazes us how, for example, Heidegger could tell us that, if we listen attentively, Parmenides who says that "All is Being" and Heraclitus who says that "All is Becoming" are actually saying the same thing.[50] The *docta ignorantia* or learned ignorance of Nicholas of Cusa, reputedly the first modern thinker,[51]

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[47] "God is dead!" is found in at least two works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Prologue to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (England: Penguin Books, 1961), 41; and "The Madman," in *Joyful Wisdom*, trans. by Thomas Common (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1960), 167-169.

[48] Some notable ones here picked at random are the following: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, trans. by Reginald Fuller and rev. by Frank Clarke and others (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967); Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (England: Penguin Books, 1968); Leslie Dewart, *The Future of Belief: Theism in A World Come of Age* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968); John A.T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press, 1969); and Gabriel Vahanian, *The Death of God: The Culture of Our Post-Christian Era* (New York: George Braziller, 1967).

[49] See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House Vintage Books, 1966).

[50] "The first primordial thinker was named Anaximander. The two others, the only others besides Anaximander, were Parmenides and Heraclitus … Subsequent generations become more and more alienated from the early the early thinking." Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans. by André Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 2. "Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus are the only primordial thinkers … They are primordial thinkers because they think the beginning. The beginning is what is thought in their thinking … Plato and Aristotle and subsequent thinkers have thought far 'more,' have traversed more regions and strata of thinking, and have questioned out of a richer knowledge of things and man. And yet all these thinkers think 'less' than the primordial thinkers." *Ibid*., 7-8.

[51] "Cusanus the first modern thinker. His first step consists in asking not about God, but about the possibility of knowledge about God." Ernst Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, trans. by Mario Domandi (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), 10.

is a contradiction in terms and would not have made sense if we did not recall that, in fact, Socrates was dubbed by the oracle of Delphi as the wisest of men precisely because, of all men, it was only he who knew that he did not know.[52] The *Tao Te Ching* tells us that he who knows does not know, and he who thinks he does not know knows.[53] This is the Hindu *neti, neti* (not this, not that),[54] which receives a Western garb when Kant concludes his critique with the declaration that all our knowledge is only of phenomena or appearances, never of the noumenon or the thing in itself.[55]

The same Kant has exploded the myth of the separation of subject and object; there is, in fact, no objectivity without subjectivity and no subjectivity without objectivity, an epistemological condition which was sealed by Husserl's adoption of the scholastic theory of intentionality according to which consciousness is always a consciousness of something (*Bewusstsein von Etwas*).[56] "No matter how deeply we look into things," says Kant, "we can never intuit the thing in itself, only the thing as it appears to us."[57] That spells out the so-called Copernican revolution that makes all knowledge subject to the *a priori* forms. No matter how hard we try, there is no way we can know the thing in itself; the proud name of ontology, declares the magisterial Kant, has to go. Descartes's first principle is still correct: "In order to examine into the truth, it is necessary once in one's life to doubt of all things so far as possible."[58] Husserl himself confesses to being a child of

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[52] "I shall call as witness to my wisdom, such as it is, the god at Delphi." Plato, *Socrates' Defense (Apology)*, trans. by Hugh Tredenick, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), 20e. The oracle of Delphi is reputed to have said, "The wisest of you men is he who has realized, like Socrates, that in respect of wisdom he is really worthless" (*ibid.*, 23b).

[53] "To know that you do not know is the best." Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 71, p. 172.

[54] "The empirical and negative description of the Absolute by means of *neti, neti* (not this, not this) or 'the neither-nor' necessarily presupposes the affirmation of the Absolute as all-Comprehensive and culminates in the transcendental Absolute which goes beyond both negation and affirmation. The *neti, neti* negates all descriptions about the Brahman, but not the Brahman itself." Sharma, *Indian Philosophy*, 17. Rather, the most preferred interpretation should be the most radical negation possible, possibly the one of Shankara. See also my "Links Between East and West in the Philosophies of Shankara and Kant" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, 1978).

[55] "Even if we could see to the very bottom of a phenomenon, it would remain for ever altogether different from the knowledge of the thing by itself." Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A44=B61. "Its principles are principles for the exhibition of phenomena only; and the proud name of Ontology, which presumes to supply in a systematic form different kinds of synthetical knowledge a priori of things by themselves (for instance the principle of causality), must be replaced by the more modest name of a mere Analytic of the pure understanding." *Ibid.*, A247=B303.

[56] "It belongs as a general feature to the essence of every actual *cogito* to be a consciousness *of* something." Husserl, *Ideas*, § 36.
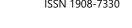
[57] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A44=B61.

[58] Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*, 219.

Cartesianism, setting aside all prejudices in order to attain the presuppositionless cogito of Descartes.[59] On the surface, this would look like an intellectual stance ably contradicted by Heidegger who professes to be incapable of such presuppositionlessness; the *Verstehen*, he says, cannot possibly be presuppositionless, for no matter how hard we try we cannot completely cleanse our consciousness with its *Vorhabe, Vorgriff*, and *Vorsicht*.[60] This was then taken up by Hans-Georg Gadamer who confirmed Heidegger's stance against the myth of presuppositionlessness, saying instead that all is a matter not of doing away with presuppositions but of acquiring the right or correct prejudices[61] through *Bildung, sensus communis, judicium*, and taste, which he labeled as the four guiding concepts of humanism.[62] When you reach this far in our understanding of the nature of knowledge, the amazing thing is that Husserl's goal for advocating presuppositionlessness through the *epoche* is actually more realistically attained through hard, persistent study or *Bildung*, so that in effect what seems like a contradiction between Husserl and Heidegger, upon attentive listening, is actually one and the same. Similar identities of seeming opposites are found in the famous *yin* and *yang* of Taoism and the equally well-known Vedanta statement that Atman and Brahman are one. While the principle of contradiction remains the highest principle of analytic or tautological statements, this can no longer be the principle that governs truth-statements or synthetic propositions. Heidegger makes a lot of Kant's suggestion that, although there are two stems of knowledge, sensibility and understanding, there is possibly a common, unknown root which, says Heidegger, Kant himself identifies as the imagination.[63] Creativity becomes an even more powerful source of knowledge than logic, or perhaps something like what Gilles Deleuze refers to as the logic of sense,[64] the center and source of truth in us which Heidegger variously calls *poiesis, aletheia, Ereignis*.

Presupposed is a transformed human reality—Heidegger's *Dasein*, Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, Confucius' man of *jen*, the evolved humanity which

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[59] "… phenomenology might almost be called a new, a twentieth century, Cartesianism." Husserl, *The Paris* Lectures, 3. "Accordingly one might almost call transcendental phenomenology a neo-Cartesianism …." *Cartesian Meditations*, 1.

[60] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 191.

[61] "If we want to do justice to man's finite, historical mode of being, it is necessary to fundamentally rehabilitate the concept of prejudice and acknowledge the fact that there are legitimate prejudices." Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1998), 277.

[62] On the Guiding Concepts of Humanism, see *ibid.*, 9-42.

[63] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. by James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 41. Heidegger cites Kant in A15=B29 and A835=B863.

[64] See Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. by Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

is more than just a rational animal, Plato's human type who has transcended the culture of the cave and explored the upperworld until he or she has seen the Sun which is the Good. Thus, he or she is a species of an ethical humanity, not patterned after Machiavelli's prince who is both a lion and a fox but one molded after Rousseau's general will, Kant's good will and Levinas's subjectivity that is in touch with Infinity rather than Totality, which is *otherwise than being.* This is the man or woman of postmodernity, beyond good and evil because gripped at all times by that source of authenticity in us which makes us truly free and creative like a genius, hero, or saint. Compassion is the heart of a postmodern man or woman, coming as he or she is from what Confucius calls the Great Learning after a long and tedious work of formation similar to that phenomenology traversed by Hegel's *Geist* or Plato's educated human, a mind so profoundly vast that it is an embodiment of what Pope Francis calls integral ecology.[65] Such a human type cannot be a source of terror, corruption or any form of violence, oppression and injustice, who does not only know the theory of good but also lives it. This is the solution to all our earthly woes, but for now it is still only an ideal type, a humanity already there but still in the making, like God's Kingdom which is already there but not yet.

Why can't we yet experience the Kingdom of God? Because we have not yet been completely transformed. "Repent! The Kingdom of God is at hand!," goes the message of Jesus and John the Baptist.[66] The Kingdom is at hand, it is here amidst us, but if we have yet failed to experience it the reason is not far to seek—we have not yet repented, that is, we have not yet transfigured ourselves, our conversion has not taken place yet, we have not yet creatively evolved into that consummated species of the *élan vital* as intimated by Henri Bergson.[67] This ideal in the making is a concrete ideal, not an intellectual abstract; it requires a paradigm shift.

Postmodernity is that paradigm shift, that *metanoia* required before we are able to see the Kingdom; it is, as Nietzsche puts it, the meaning of the earth.[68] But postmodernity is not a ready-made product for the asking; rather, it continues to be a task, both the offshoot of hard work and, once undertaken, remains to be an ongoing task, always—like Husserl's phenomenology—a new beginning. What's wrong with it? Nothing, except that while it requires individual effort, the output is meant to be collective—social, cultural,

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[65] See Francis, *Laudato si'* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2015).

[66] "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!" (Mt. 3:2). "The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel!" (Mk. 1:15).

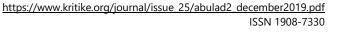[67] Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. by Arthur Mitchell (New York: The Modern Library, 1944).

[68] "The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman *shall be* the meaning of the earth!" Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 42.

historical. Postmodernity is global and is thus not confined to any nationality. Postmodernism is, as we've stressed in an earlier work, not an *ism* in the sense that empiricism, rationalism, communism, legalism, nationalism, Thomism and others are *isms*. Jean-Franҫois Lyotard's assessment of postmodernity as a rejection of metanarratives is a faithful description of our time.[69] Dionisio Miranda's glocalization, which takes local and global simultaneously, fits the bill. The era is one of dialogical inclusiveness, making the playing field open to all, big and small alike, albeit the qualifications are tough, and standards are high. Excellence is a badge to wear and mastery of the craft is presupposed. What are the chances that Filipinos will play well? No doubt they can and should. It helps if one is coming from a society one can justifiably be proud of, something I could not claim for myself when I first went to Europe about forty years ago. When I confessed publicly that "As a Filipino, I had nothing to be proud of," I was then jeered, only to be vindicated when most everybody started saying the same thing in increasingly growing voices during the Martial Law years. Our spirit got its boost when, as a man, Filipinos flooded EDSA on those fateful four days of February in 1986 when, standing tall as a civilized nation, we drove the tyrant bloodlessly away after we had been cheated at what otherwise would have been our last chance at a peaceful change of government through a democratic election.[70] The dictator did not know the meaning of fair play and shamelessly abused its authority. Worse, human rights violations were committed with impunity, with plunder to boot that left our coffers dry. No wonder that even until today we continue to be wary of any threat of Martial Law, even as its appropriate use is unequivocally enshrined in the Philippine Constitution. The success, so far, of its implementation in the case of Marawi will hopefully alter somehow our misappreciation of this executive privilege, while we keep ourselves vigilant against its possible abuse. What is clearly working in all this is the invisible hand of People Power, which I would like to equate with God's power since *vox populi*, *vox Dei*, the voice of the people is the voice of God. The victory at EDSA is the people's victory, which is simultaneously God's victory. No less than Hegel describes the history of the world as "the true *Theodicæa*, the justification of God in History. Only *this* insight can reconcile Spirit with the History of the World—viz., that what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God,' but is essentially His Work."[71]

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[69] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* trans. by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

[70] See Monina Allarey Mercado, ed., *People Power: The Greatest Democracy Ever Told, An Eyewitness History* (Manila: The James B. Reuter, S.J., Foundation, 1986). See also *Bayan Ko! Images of the Philippine Revolt* (Hong Kong: Project 28 Days, Ltd., 1986).

[71] "Our mode of treating the subject (of history) is a Theodicæa—a justification of the ways of God …." Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, 15. "… the History of the World … is the true

And what about the current president, Rodrigo Duterte? Chances are that the killings his enemies attribute to him might actually be morally justifiable. Almost overnight the concepts of good and bad might have transvalued themselves and what used to be the moral table of the "civil society" has already turned stale and outdated. The times, I think, demand that we keep our minds open and dare to rethink and review our revered values. Even though I myself did not vote for this president, there is something instructive in the fact that our people has unequivocally, perhaps even unerringly, given him an overwhelming mandate. I have been listening to him since his victory at the polls and I see no reason why I should join the chorus of those against him; in fact, the probability is high that he is precisely the man we need for our time, the one who could turn the tide of corruption, criminality and drug addiction in our country. He does seem to me to be honestly imbued with love of country and regard for the common good, especially the youth of the land and the next generation of Filipinos. I could, of course, be wrong, but I'm praying to God that my political perception is accurate so that there can be reason for optimism in the future of our country. Certainly it would be unfair to lay at his door all the blame for the predicament of our country today, including the prevalence of poverty, corruption, and criminality which has built up through administration after administration of corrupt and incompetent politicians whose *raison d'etre* seems to be more sophistry than philosophic, typical of big business rather than public service.

No wonder Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte, armed only with the people's support, is finding it an arduous task maneuvering over loads and loads of the social, political and economic problems we have inherited from our relatively short past, not to mention the damaged values left by centuries of colonization and misrule. Our only consolation, *consuelo de bobo* as it is called, is the fact that ours is a young country, given that the First Filipino is one represented by Dr. Jose Rizal (1861-1896).[72] That makes us just over a century old, born at a time when Europe was already way past modernity and giving way to the spirit of postmodernity through the likes of Marx and the young socialists. Before Rizal, during much of the colonial period, there were no Filipinos, only isolated inhabitants of scattered islands having little to do with each other. Indeed, the very name Filipino and the country this person occupied, now called the Philippines, smack of colonial influence, a heritage from the days of King Philip II of Spain. As Europe was then already reaping the fruit of the Enlightenment, our colonizers were making sure that these islands under their rule were going through the feudalism characteristic of

Theodicæa—the justification of God in History—viz., that what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God,' but is essentially His Work." *Ibid.*, 457.

[72] Leon Ma. Guerrero, *The First Filipino* (Manila: Guerrero Publishing, 2010).

the Medieval, so-called Dark Ages. The bright note, if at all there was such a bright note, consisted in these otherwise disconnected islands having been united by common *conquistadores* which accounted for the unity that was much needed in the struggle against a common enemy. That unity is the source of the emergence of our nation, the Filipino nation, which was not even a dream before Magellan landed on our shore presumably in 1521. When, after more than three centuries of colonial rule, the Spaniards left us, we were already a nation; we already called ourselves Filipinos when the Americans occupied us at the turn of the 20th century. When, finally, we gained our political independence from all foreign domination, we were nonetheless certified "little Brown Americans," albeit denied of legitimate American citizenship.

"Better to be run like hell by Filipinos than to be run like heaven by the Americans," President Quezon is reputed to have once said of our country. One might now wonder whether that was not meant to be a prophecy, for indeed what could be said of the long years of local leadership that tied us more and more tightly to the U.S. while creating a damaged culture that culminated in the plunder of the Marcos years, entrenching the mafia of elitism and corruption from which we are still struggling to liberate ourselves today? Poverty is endemic for which a semblance of wealth and urban culture provides the proverbial icing on the cake. The supposedly welcome gospel of economic progress achieved by President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino's administration failed to trickle down to the masses who remained mercilessly poor, in fact the brunt of the drug industry as it has turned out today. We continue to tirelessly complain of the worsening traffic situation in our cities, another concern that seems only a miracle could solve. No wonder you ask, "Filipino postmodernity: *Quo vadis*?"

In fact, postmodernity has come by way of a historical remedy to our otherwise hopeless global condition. We need a paradigm shift, a new beginning, after we have reached and seen the limits of the first beginning which took place in Greece. Presuming man to be a rational animal, its goal has been the perfection of reason, which became translated into knowledge and science as the ground for technological innovation. The whole two millennia of this classical paradigm that resulted in science and technology has assuredly changed the face of the earth, a product of intellectual thinking. Kant's critique of pure reason sums up the relentless reflection that has produced, on the one hand, the theology of the Church and, on the other hand, the conceptual foundations of all the disciplines, scientific as well as humanistic. We came to recognize their limits when, speculatively, we found ourselves inevitably embroiled in what Kant describes as "the arena of

endless controversies."[73] This crisis in our theoretical paradigm is most possibly the source too of many of the problems we are facing in our daily life. As observed by Santiago Sia, "a certain mindset has indeed influenced the outlook of those who have been responsible for the dire global situation."[74] The growing evidence of low ethical standards and values, he says, have had devastating consequences.[75] Heidegger read this human predicament as a long history of the forgetfulness of being, the original object of the intellectual quest, a forgetfulness which has produced a series of metaphysical ideas, all of which needs to be destroyed. This end of metaphysics is, so far as Heidegger is concerned, in the service of the recovery of the real metaphysics, a new ontological groundwork that should underlie all our future thought, that thinking which he describes as coming not so much from reason as *vom Ereignis*. Levinas, coming from the same source, explodes all metaphysics and replaces it with ethics as the first philosophy. These two, metaphysics and ethics, used to be two separate disciplines in the classical paradigm, itself the cause of the split between being and doing, between knowledge and life, between theory and practice. Such artifice has seen its limits, for example, in the Machiavellian formula of "the end justifies the means."

> For there is such a difference between the way men live and the way they ought to live, that anybody who abandons what is for what ought to be will learn something will ruin rather than preserve him, because anyone who determines to act in all circumstances the part of a good man must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence, if a prince wishes to maintain himself, he must learn how to be not good, and to use that ability or not as is required.[76]

Such duplicity is characteristic, biblically, of hypocrisy and, existentially, of inauthenticity, possible in the length and breadth of the first beginning but no longer applicable in postmodernity. The new paradigm, which Heidegger describes as thinking *vom Ereignis*, defies the traditional split between thought and action, between the intellect and the will, and in effect fuses them, metaphysics and ethics, such that what one knows and how one lives

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[73] Kant, Preface to the First Edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, Aviii.

[74] Santiago Sia, *Society in its Challenges: Philosophical Considerations of Living in Society* (UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2015), 194.

[75] *Ibid.,* 191.

[76] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. by Allan H. Gilbert (U.S.A.: Hendricks House Inc., 1964), Chapter 15, p. 141.

are able to be a perfect mirror of each other and there emerges a complete conjunction of body and mind, of *yin* and *yang*.

We have just crossed the border, emerged from the transition age, and entered postmodernity. It is good at this point to listen to Hegel:

> … our epoch is a birth-time, and a period of transition. The spirit of man has broken with the old order of things hitherto prevailing, and with the old ways of thinking, and is in the mind to let them all sink into the depths of the past and to set about its own transformation. It is indeed never at rest, but carried along the stream of progress ever onward. But it is here as in the case of the birth of a child; after a long period of nutrition in silence, the continuity of the gradual growth in size, of quantitative change, is suddenly cut short by the first breath drawn—there is a break in the process, a qualitative change—and the child is born.[77]

But, Hegel continues, it is important to bear in mind that the birth of the child is just the beginning of the person's life story. "A building is not finished when its foundation is laid," he says, "When we want to see an oak with all its vigour of trunk, its spreading branches, and mass of foliage, we are not satisfied to be shown an acorn instead."[78] In other words, having just taken the leap into postmodernity, we should keep in mind the wealth of possibilities that lie in the future but at the same time not lose our patience and rush precipitately the fulfillment of things.

The story of the man from Sung in *Mencius* carries a relevant message for us in this regard. Let us listen to this story by way of conclusion:

> There was a man from Sung who pulled at his rice plants because he was worried about their failure to grow. Having done so, he went on his way home, not realizing what he had done. "I am worn out today," said he to his family, "I have been helping the rice plants to grow." His son rushed out to take a look and there the plants were, all shriveled up.[79]

Hence, the advice of Mencius: "You must not be like the man from Sung."

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[77] Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, 75.

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] Mencius, *The Book of Mencius*, trans. by D.C. Lau (England: Penguin Books, 1970), Book II, Part A, 78.

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A Tribute to Romualdo Abulad, the Filipino Kantian

Abulad's Postmodern Eyes[1]

Fleurdeliz R. Altez-Albela

Abstract: This short piece is a tribute to Romualdo E. Abulad as an educator and icon of academic philosophy in the Philippines. Abulad's take on postmodernity is presented a critical attitude against the backdrop of the contemporary human situation, as opposed to a historically-specific philosophical system. The following characteristics of Abulad's brand of postmodernism are outlined: *via negativa* as a way of thinking, a paradigm shift motivated by the refusal to accept metanarratives, dialogical philosophy, intersubjective—thereby, ethical. Ultimately, this paper underscores Abulad's radical critique of the present—a revaluation, of sorts, of the contemporary role of philosophy. Moreover, it is a testimony to Abulad's pedagogy of postmodernity—that is to say, of how he teaches his students to think with postmodern eyes: an openness to the "otherwise than said" that is a profound gesture of hospitality and, yet, a relentless critique.

Keywords: Abulad, Filipino philosophy, postmodernism, postmodernity

If there is something that I would like to remember about Romualdo E. Abulad, that would be his inquisitive pair of eyes. I have always managed to grab golden chances during my college days whenever we had oral examinations. It was during those revalidas where Abulad (or Brother Romy, as we fondly called him) made me realize the true meaning of a "phenomenological" look. To me, his eyes looked probing, as though I (the examinee) was a book he was carefully and patiently reading. While I grope (and hope) for the (right) answers, I remember how his eyes, while half-closed, have generously given me their full attention, as they open wide as I

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[1] Editor's note: An early version of this piece was delivered as a tribute to Romualdo E. Abulad at the Legacy Lectures of the Philosophical Association of the Philippines, De La Salle University, Manila, October 2012. It appears here, in revised form, to pay homage to Abulad on the occasion of his death on 17 December 2019.
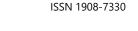
recited and start hitting the right answers. The recitation ends with his reassuring smile.

Yet, despite Abulad's overwhelming phenomenological stare, I would still love to look at his eyes, even if his probing stare could be spine-chilling at times, as they encouraged me to put up a good fight. These eyes never failed to challenge as they always seem to speak, "yes, you're getting there … of course, you'll make it. You have to make it." These are the same words that his eyes spoke beyond oral examinations, and that was after college, whenever we meet and tell him about our adventures and mishaps, victories and heartbreaks. Still, these eyes won't give any answer, but would instead give a consoling sense of hospitality and appreciation about the paths we have chosen and lives that we have made. Through his gaze, I have experienced how this mentor welcomed not just the right answer but "my response," not just "the path" but "my path" and not just "a" or "the" work, but "my work," "my story," "my narrative," "my life."

To me, Abulad's eyes most importantly reflected how they concretely represented the spirit of "postmodernism." Members of the Filipino philosophical community recognize Abulad's contribution to this discourse, as he spoke about postmodernism with "eyes wide opened." At the core of his discussion of postmodernism, Abulad highlights the role of human reason (in the truest Kantian sense), a profound sense of respect for intellectual history, and a full openness to interdisciplinary dialogue.

For Abulad, postmodernism is not simply a school of thought, as he considers it a consciousness which includes the unconscious. It is a way of thinking, a perspective or better yet, a mode of life and thought that reveals the contemporary situation. While "contemporary" is a safe term that may apply to any historical period as long as it speaks of the present, he understands the postmodern against the backdrop of Modernity, a philosophically anthropocentric age that is directly identified with the Cartesian cogito. The postmodern spirit dialectically results from paradigm shifts spurred by a certain collective intellectual clamor situated in a particular time. Abulad makes us realize that such situation involves a cleansing of the Cartesian ego, rendering postmodernity as the period of the "post-man" that is, nevertheless, still about humanity. In his essay, "What is Postmodernism?," he says: "Two things, actually, are taking place. The first is the thorough cleansing of the ego; the second is the emergence of the ego itself as the pure residue after the cleansing."[2] The ego must be subjected to that total postmodern overhaul because it is only through such irreverent and

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[2] Romualdo E. Abulad, "What is Postmodernism?" *Karunungan: A Journal of Philosophy*, 17 (2000), 23.

revolutionary change where the present humanity can "find new trails of human consciousness" and "alter the global culture."[3]

Abulad understands this overhaul *via negativa*, which, as he puts it, a *conditio sine qua non* to any historical shift, as it is obviously most applicable to this philosophical period. Postmodernism emerged because the egoism of anthropocentricity simply just had to die. Abulad finds this particularly obvious in Nietzsche with his relentless yet necessary declaration of the worst sacrilege that the human ego has committed—the Death (nay, murder) of God. For Abulad, Nietzsche is the initiator of the negativistic consciousness, that most of us are scared of, but can (ironically) easily get away with. As, "the first thing to remember about post-modernity, that its initial essential component is negative or, if you wish, destructive, or more benignly, deconstructive. The invitation is, before anything else, to abolish everything," which is probably summarized by Abulad's first daunting command: "to let go—let everything go!" Echoing Nietzsche, Abulad finds premium in the *via negativa* for being the sole path to the *via positive*—which is the task of cleansing and rebuilding—to be a child again. True enough, nothing will be new and everything will just occur in vicious and stagnant routines if we will all think and act like stern, proud and stubborn adults.

The *via positiva* rises after desecration and demythologizing where there is enough space to make adjustments and create new spaces on account of changing times. This second phase of the dialectic, I believe, is postmodernism's redeeming grace or, if I may call, the saving parachute from useless rhetorical returns. Without a *via positiva*, no genesis of a new philosophical age is possible. I modestly proclaim this personal position in the spirit of Abulad's openness as he would certainly allow me to assume that this *via positiva* is intended to effectuate fresh starts without compromising any of these two equally important things. First is that every man remains sane, human and humane. Second, Abulad invokes the Kantian idea of Pure Reason, which is capable of being a critique of its own. It might be true that postmodernism had become incredulous to modern anthropocentricism, but it would never-ever lose its faith in knowledge, and more so in humanity. Echoing Abulad in "Postmodern Critique and the Ethics of Postmodernism": "… it is this very appreciation of the ultimate rootlessness of knowledge, that, in an instant, produces in the new consciousness its feeling of apodicticity, not only the feeling of apodicticity but also its sense of limitless creativity, the air that liberates the soul and accounts for the free spirits."[4]

On the above note, it is clear that the *via positiva* is a reconstruction that aims not to disregard but to broaden the classical conception of

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[3] *Ibid.*, 27.

[4] Romualdo E. Abulad, "Postmodern Critique and the Ethics of Postmodernism," *Karunungan: A Journal of Philosophy*, 19 (2002), 87.
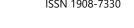
knowledge from being a science towards an insightful quest and take of an authentic life. In the postmodern times, one is authentically wise (enlightened), when s/he in the face of truth, can accept his/her profound—learned ignorance that "debunks all obstacles … for limitless creativity and productivity."

Thus, the postmodern project is a recreation of this profound sense of freedom and creativity that makes man neither wobbly in perception of facts nor deceitful for having gone through all thinkable adversities. The postmodern attitude, for Abulad, is grounded in "truths" that respect the outcomes of all beginnings: be it from the East or West, ancient or new, right or left, good or evil—as we have already moved on from the above dichotomies. In a certain sense, postmodernism reprises Pure Reason which shifts from being a purely inductive system to one that is dialogical. This is a result of Pure Reason's self-criticism. This dialogical shift, then, further results in a consciousness that is integral, holistic, global, dynamic, and evolutionary. Human reason becomes interpretative, ever understanding and accepting. It is also in this context that postmodernism refuses to define what is human yet fostering the humane.

I believe that, for Abulad, postmodernism has a radical pedagogical purpose, as it guides us young (sometimes errant) lovers of wisdom understand where we stand in the midst of our tasks. Abulad, the sober soul, helps us make sense of what we are doing. Armed with his knowledge of Eastern and Western thoughts, as well as ancient and contemporary philosophies, Abulad poured everything into his scholarship, even to the point of transgressing well-guarded philosophical tenets, in order to show the essence of dialogue and find truth even in little things.

The postmodern attitude, however, is not antithetical to discipline and rigor. This Abulad has demonstrated not only through his scholarship and teaching, but also through the religious life he has chosen. As a religious formator, Abulad's postmodern disposition blended well with the value formation within the religious community, as his seminarians and confreres could attest. Abulad's postmodern eyes are critical eyes; when he calls you out for erring in class or in writing, you are assured that he means well, as his eyes could attest.

For me, his eyes would always be postmodern, because his gaze is a glimpse of his soul that is remarkably open, "inclusive rather than exclusive, welcoming rather than rejecting, compassionate rather than egoistic."[5] I must say that his postmodern eyes have always seen me as a human being, more than a "budding scholar." Probably, that must be so because beyond just giving a estimative stare, he watched me, and each of us, grow. And as he

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[5] Abulad, "What is Postmodernity?," 33.

lovingly gazed at how we make and break our lives, these eyes have silently spurred us to go to places, find our respective joys and our own spaces under the sun be it philosophical or otherwise.

In the most personal part of this essay, allow me to thank Brother, Ninong Romy, for the grace of freedom, for that open-space and appreciation, because they have led me to places, to my narrative, to my happiness. *Danke*. Maraming Salamat po!

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Article

Appropriating Moral Sense: A Rereading of Kant's Ethics[1]

Dennis A. De Vera

Abstract: My main concern in this paper is to develop some ideas within the Kantian ethical tradition. More precisely, my aim is to develop an ethical perspective that is grounded upon the Kantian ideas of *autonomy* and *ideal of the person* (Kant's notion of *humanity*) as fundamental starting points for a coherent account of Kant's ethics in contrast to the deontological duty-based interpretation of his moral philosophy, then sketch, subsequently, some suggestions to show why this reading has more philosophical import than what a deontological reading may provide. I take no issue for the time being, however, as to whether or not the perspective I have in mind leads to either a Kantian orthodoxy or a revisionist direction in Kant scholarships.

Keywords: Kant, Rawls, moral obligation, practical reason

Introduction

In the preface to Barbara Herman's *The Practice of Moral Judgment*, Herman assails what we have come to know as a purely *deontological reading* of Kant's Ethics. She notes that while a deontological reading of Kant's ethics does have a connection to what the latter says, she nonetheless comments that this way of framing Kant is in some respects inadequate, because of the weight it attaches to the idea of duty rather than the good.[2] Since said reading puts too much emphasis on the role of duty and takes it as the central defining

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[1] This paper is a revised version of the draft of my supposedly MA thesis in Philosophy at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. It started as a graduate seminar paper I submitted for my Philo 271 class under Dr. Zosimo E. Lee. I owe so much of what I understand about Immanuel Kant and John Rawls from him. I am thankful as well to the anonymous referees for their charitable reading and generous comments about the paper.

[2] See Barbara Herman, Preface to *The Practice of Moral Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), vii.

characteristic of Kant's moral philosophy, it becomes oblivious to other concepts that are in fact similarly important to the latter's moral writings.

My main concern then in this paper is to develop some ideas within the Kantian ethical tradition. More precisely, my aim is to develop an ethical perspective that is grounded upon the Kantian ideas of *autonomy* and *ideal of the person* (Kant's notion of *humanity*) as fundamental starting points for a coherent account of Kant's ethics in contrast to the deontological duty-based interpretation of his moral philosophy, then sketch, subsequently, some suggestions to show why this reading has more philosophical import than what a deontological reading may provide. I take no issue for the time being, however, as to whether or not the perspective I have in mind leads to either a Kantian orthodoxy or a revisionist direction in Kant scholarships.

My argument nonetheless is not meant to be conclusive, but rather suggestive, for doing the former requires a very rich philosophical acumen and a significant number of thorough readings of Kant's works in moral philosophy. This coheres, I think, with Arnulf Zweig's caveat that Kant's moral writings remain an "inexhaustible subject for scholarly debate and analysis" owing to its wider range and complexity, notwithstanding its seeming connections to his entire critical philosophy.[3] Nevertheless, I hold firm to the idea that there is much more to be said about Kant's moral philosophy than one finds in any deontological reading of Kant's ethical theory.

The perspective I develop, if I may suggest, is nonetheless situated within the fundamental question: *To whom do we owe our obligation to be moral?* Or put in another way: *To whom do we owe our moral sense?* The underlying hypothesis here is based on the idea that since the ultimate concern of Kant's moral philosophy is to establish the supreme principle of morality, it logically follows that whatever underlies this supreme principle of morality *must* be the basis for reading Kant's ethics.

Thus, in responding to this question I take the view that the underlying principle of Kant's moral philosophy and thus the fundamental starting point for a possible interpretation of his ethics rests on two essential concepts: those of *autonomy* and the *Kantian ideal of the person.* More specifically, I take the view that the basis of our *moral sense* or the root of our *obligation to be moral* is grounded upon these concepts. Briefly stated, what underlies Kant's pursuit of the supreme principle of morality is a *moral sense* that is essentially characterized by both *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person*.

In putting forward the concepts of *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person* as fundamental bases of our *moral sense* or *our obligation to be moral*, the
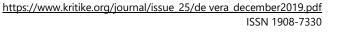
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[3] See Arnulf Zweig, "Reflections on Kant's Ethics" in *The Blackwell Guide to Kant's Ethics*, ed. by Thomas E. Hill, Jr. (United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2009), 257.

perspective I develop seeks to lay down a much broader moral landscape within which Kant's moral philosophy may be properly situated and understood. Two considerations are worth noting here, though. The first consideration is anchored on the condition that the realization of the *moral law* is the articulation of *autonomy* itself. It is through *autonomy* or *autonomous moral deliberation* that an individual realizes the need to act from the *motive of duty*. Whereas, the second consideration is propelled by the belief that this capacity for *autonomy* or *autonomous moral deliberation* is only meaningfully possible if taken within the context of Kant's *ideal of the person* (Kant's humanity), whose primary motivation rests upon the goal of restoring *the purity of the moral law* through the moral cultivation of the natural predisposition to *personality*, the main aim of which is to realize Kant's *kingdom of ends.*

Throughout, I think of our *moral sense*, in so far as it is characterized by both *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person*, as our fundamental capacity to discern whether or not a given act is *morally worthy* or *morally right*.[4] We appeal to our *moral sense* when there exists, for example, conditions that offend our sense of morality or our deeply held beliefs about the morally good life—say, inhumane treatment of laborers, deliberate infliction of pain and suffering, or even unjust killings of persons. Our *moral sense*, in this respect, operates within those conditions. The Kantian perspective I have in mind is set out to show how our *moral sense* arises from the directives that we give to ourselves when faced for instance with the like conditions. Similarly, it seeks to illustrate, why our capacity for a *moral sense* is the fundamental basis for a satisfactory account of Kantian morality on one hand and of moral responsibility on the other hand.

My discussions nevertheless are motivated largely by John Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics.[5] Rawls's appropriation of the latter's ethics, as

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[4] I take "moral sense" here in the same way I understand how we are able to judge the moral worthiness of an act through a prior determination of the moral law by our practical reason. Thus, I take Kant's meaning of "moral sense" somewhat loosely, as a capacity for moral perception. For an account of Kant's moral sense, see Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals* in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 6:400. This is in contrast to the notion of 'moral sense' found among moral sense theories in the tradition of Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, and Adam Smith, whose key idea is premised on the assumption that our moral approbation or moral disapprobation is determined by 'passion' or 'sentiment' without the prior determination of reason. See for example the following works for this supposed difference: Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue in Two Treatises* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004); Alasdair MacIntyre, *Hume's Ethical Writings: Selections from David Hume* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965); and Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[5] See John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 143–325.

I take it, lays down a much broader moral landscape for any decent reading of Kant's moral philosophy. Guided by this belief, the Kantian perspective I suggest here though is not meant as a comprehensive reading of Kant's ethics. Instead, I take it as a kind of *moral reflection* or an example of *ethical theorizing* on the most fundamental principles embedded in Kant's moral writings and how these principles may be *framed* to fit together a more coherent understanding of Kant's moral philosophy.

Granting, then, the context I have sketched, the Kantian perspective I intend to develop runs as follows. My main concern is to outline the features of an ethical theorizing on Kant's *ethics of autonomy* that is derived from Kant's account of moral psychology, namely, the concepts of *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person*, specifically, his account of the natural predisposition to *personality*. As a form of ethical theorizing, these concepts, combined with other Kantian concepts, are synthesized in such a way that they serve as grounds that underlie Kant's search for the supreme principle of morality. That, while it recognizes the importance of duty, akin to a deontological reading of Kant, it takes *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person* as *prior* concepts that stand at the base of understanding Kant's ethics.

More precisely, in the first section, I sketch an outline of the analytic to a Kantian ethics of autonomy, bearing in mind the necessary features, fundamental assumptions and reasons pertinent to a rereading of Kant's ethics. Then, in the second section, I lay down two considerations that may show, hopefully, how the concepts of *autonomy* and the *ideal of the person,* may be developed in order to account for *moral sense.* In doing so, it indirectly suggests why the idea of *moral worthiness* is much more central to Kant's ethics. In the final section, I outline two suggestions, through a close reading of some of Kant's important works in moral philosophy, to show why the notion of *moral sense* is to be taken as central to a rereading of Kant's ethics.

Analytic to a Kantian Ethics of Autonomy

Before I set out the reading, however, let me situate the analytic of the question "To whom do we owe our obligation to be moral?" within the narrower context of ethical theorizing.[6] I think a greater part of the problem in responding to this question is the identification of the relevant concepts that may be associated with moral sense, notwithstanding the issue as to how these concepts must be situated, let alone arranged. These concepts, in a

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[6] The style and manner of writing section II is an influence of John Rawls. Rawls's presentation has given me the needed direction to situate the question within the narrower context of ethical theorizing. For an account of Rawls's presentation, see John Rawls, "The Sense of Justice" in *Collected Papers*, ed. by Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 97–98.

fundamental way, must be able to provide a satisfactory basis for an account of the moral sense itself as well as a justifiable ground that may explain moral responsibility. I take this to mean that said concepts are recognized and acknowledged as such concepts that (a) inhere in a person (being a bearer of moral sense), (b) provide sufficient authority that defines the terms of any moral deliberation (sort of a defining condition), and (c) offer grounds that support an account of moral responsibility itself. By this, I mean that these concepts are characteristics of the bearer of moral sense and basis of moral responsibility, that is, they are such concepts that give rise to and recognition of moral obligation, if not respect for the moral law. In this regard, these concepts are viewed as *conditio sine qua non* of moral practice. This is to say that when faced with a moral dilemma or any concern that demands moral assessment, these concepts are capable of imposing constraints, if not reasonable terms, to moral deliberation on one hand or to moral judgment on the other hand. This is to say further that given any difficulty in arriving at such moral judgment, these concepts provide the necessary moral background for discerning why a given act is morally worthy or why a given moral law is worth respecting or worth doing. Thus, questions of the moral worthiness of an act or the appropriateness of the moral judgement arise only when these concepts are acknowledged as fundamental to and intrinsic in the constitution of the bearer of moral sense. The acknowledgment that is given, in turn, illustrates how its role as a moral requisite is made to be essentially prior to any recognition of moral obligation or acknowledgement of duty. Its role, in this sense, defines the concepts' respective fits in the development of a satisfactory account of moral obligation and of moral responsibility.

That said, the concepts that may be associated with moral sense, when moral sense is applied to human actions or when moral sense is appealed to, given a moral dilemma, are as follows: (a) the concept of practical reason and (b) the concept of freedom or autonomy. The idea of practical reason here is understood as that which determines human actions[7] or the capacity, under the direction of reason, to discern what actions are morally worthy or otherwise.[8] Whereas, the idea of freedom or autonomy, is understood as reason's "ability to be of itself practical," that is, what Kant himself refers to as "positive freedom,"[9] or the capacity to act in conformity with its own laws (*Wille*) and not from the determinations of impulses or

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[7] See Christine M. Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 111.

[8] See Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. by Allen Wood and George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6:28.

[9] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 6:214.

inclinations made by choice (*Willkür*).[10] Autonomy or freedom, in this sense, is taken to mean as serving as the supreme principle of morality.[11] While Kant is explicit that we cannot prove that there is freedom, he nevertheless admits that "we can only act under the idea of freedom."[12] Similarly, although he acknowledges that freedom is a mere idea, "to act in conformity with this idea is to be free in the practical sense."[13] These concepts, consequently, form the core ideas of Kant's ethics of autonomy.

One may ask, in what sense are these concepts crucial to Kant's ethics of autonomy? One way of responding to this question is to try to situate it within the larger context of Kant's concept of the ideal of the person. Although said ideal finds its clearest formulation in John Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics, as we shall see in later sections, its initial undertakings are laid out as early as Kant's works on anthropology and education. Allen Wood however remarks that even with these beginnings, Kant has to contend with the poverty of anthropology in his time. Wood gives two reasons why this is the case. On the one hand, there is an inherent difficulty to discuss the question primarily because of our limited capacities to "acquire knowledge of human nature."[14] This is Kant's primary reason for being reluctant to discuss the problem itself.[15] On the other hand, there are

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[10] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:213. See also Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4:443.

[11] See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 5:33. See also Helmut Holzhey and Vilem Mudroch, *Historical Dictionary of Kant and Kantianism* (Landham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005), 59.

[12] See Immanuel Kant, "Notes on Moral Philosophy," in *Notes and Fragments*, ed. by Paul Guyer and trans. by Curtis Bowman, Paul Guyer, and Frederick Rauscher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 15:458.

[13] Kant adds: "Freedom is thus practically necessary—thus a human being must act according to an idea of freedom, and he cannot otherwise." See Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Metaphysics,* trans. and ed. by Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29:898.

[14] See Allen Wood, "Kant and the Problem of Human Nature," in *Essays in Kant's Anthropology*, ed. by Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 39.

[15] See, for example, Immanuel Kant, "Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens or, Essay on the Constitution and the Mechanical Origin of the Whole Universe according to Newtonian Principles," trans. by Olaf Reinhardt, in *Natural Science*, ed. by Eric Watkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1:366. I have touched upon this while reading Allen Wood's *Kant's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Kant expresses this worry as follows: "We are not even properly familiar with what a human being actually is, even though consciousness and our senses should inform us about it; how much less will we be able to imagine what he will become in the future! Nonetheless *the human soul's desire for knowledge grasps greedily for this object so distant from it and strives to shed some light in such obscure cognition*." Emphasis added.

limited possibilities owing to the "poor state of anthropology at present."[16] Part of the reason here perhaps is the apparent prevalence of physiological approach in understanding human nature—inquiries that link bodily organs to thought.[17] In a letter to Marcus Herz toward the end of 1773 for instance, Kant repudiates this idea [physiological approach] and seeks instead a study of human nature from a pragmatic point of view—a preliminary study that "disclose[s] the sources of all the [practical] sciences, the science of morality, of skill, of human intercourse, of the way to educate and govern human beings, and thus of everything that pertains to the practical" —that can be called "knowledge of the world."[18]

At the risk of appearing simplistic, let alone reductionist, one may say that Kant's repudiation of the physiological approach in understanding human nature is fueled by his deep-seated conviction on freedom and agency.[19] Whereas Kant is categorical that human nature may be possibly understood from a pragmatic point of view, the extent to which "this" may be given points only to the empirical part of understanding human nature.[20] The rational part, in Kant's view, is reserved to that science which is properly called morals.[21] He however issues a caveat that it [moral anthropology] *must* not precede "the metaphysics of morals or be mixed with it."[22] Kant aptly explains why this is so:

> […] for one would then *run the risk of bringing forth false or at least indulgent moral laws,* which would misrepresent as unattainable what has only not been attained just because the law has not been seen and presented in its purity (in which its strength consists) or *because spurious or impure incentives were used for what is itself in conformity*

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[16] Wood, "Kant and the Problem of Human Nature," 39.

[17] *Ibid.*, 40.

[18] See Immanuel Kant, "To Marcus Herz, late 1773," in *Correspondence*, trans. and ed. by Arnulf Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 10:146. Although the idea of "pragmatic" here means a number of things. For the nuances in meaning see Wood, "Kant and the Problem of Human Nature," 40–42. See also Holly Wilson, *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology: Its Origin, Meaning and Critical Significance* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 28–35.

[19] Kant's idea for instance of the autonomy of the will as a key faculty to determine an act is an instance of this agency. See Kant, *Groundwork*, 4:446–448. Christine Korsgaard briefly explains Kant's "agency" in the introduction of her book. See Christine Korsgaard, *The Constitution of Agency: Essays on Practical Reason and Moral Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10–13. Henry Allison similarly has an interesting discussion on agency. See Henry Allison, *Essays on Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 137–161, especially essay nine.

[20] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:388.

[21] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:388

[22] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:217.

> *with duty and good.* This would leave no certain moral principles, either to guide judgment or to discipline the mind in observance of duty, the precepts of which must be given a priori by pure reason alone.[23]

Kant's underlying reason for issuing this caveat stems, in an essential sense, from the idea that since a proper study of morals is concerned with the *a priori* laws of freedom and, hence, metaphysics of morals, such laws cannot be empirically conditioned or cannot be derived from empirical principles. Otherwise, said laws themselves lose their moral grip and yield instead only conditional necessity.[24] It is precisely for this reason that *moral anthropology* is viewed as distinct from the *metaphysics of morals*. In the *Lectures on Ethics* Kant writes:

> […] the second part [of practical philosophy] is *philosophia moralis applicata,* moral anthropology, to which the empirical principles belong. Moral anthropology is morality applied to men. *Moralia pura* is based upon necessary laws, and hence it cannot be founded upon the particular constitution of a rational being, such as man. The particular constitution of man, and the laws based upon it, come to the fore in moral anthropology under the name of ethics.[25]

Allen Wood nevertheless suggests that Kant's proposed *metaphysics of morals*, originally conceived to discern *a priori* laws of freedom, since it must contain "principles of application" can no longer dispense with moral anthropology—it now "includes some empirical anthropology."[26] Kant's *metaphysics of morals* thus, for Wood, becomes "a system of duties that results when the pure moral principle is applied to the empirical nature of human beings in general."[27]

Wood's contention has an intuitive moral appeal. On one hand, it acknowledges the role that human nature plays in Kant's system of morals, without denying the *metaphysics of morals* its primordial goal—that of discerning the *a priori* laws of freedom. Instead, Wood's contention extends

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[23] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 6:217. Emphasis mine.
[24] See Immanuel Kant, "Morality according to Prof. Kant: Lectures on Baumgarten's Practical Philosophy," in *Lectures on Ethics*, ed. by Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind and trans. by Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29:599.
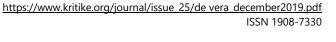[25] Kant, "Morality according to Prof. Kant," 29:599.
[26] See Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought*, 195.
[27] Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought,* 196.

Kant's moral theorizing to include a system of duties that may be abstracted once human nature is understood, at least, in some respects. On the other hand, it recognizes the role of pure [practical] reason, indirectly at least, in the ordering of *ends* derived from the empirical character of moral anthropology, the source of duties, without losing its firm grip upon the *a priori* form of the moral law. Consequently, Kant's *metaphysics of morals* becomes not only a system of duties (ethics) but also a system of principles (morals) that articulates the purity of the moral law fitting for a human being regarded as free and autonomous.

Within the larger context of Kant's moral theorizing, this is consistent, in a fundamental way, with the primary aims of both the *Groundwork* and *The Metaphysics of Morals.* Initially, our understanding of human nature through moral anthropology leads us to our understanding of our duties (at least from our popular knowledge of ethics) derived from our common human experiences. We may refer to these duties as *ends* (not as moral ends though).[28] These ends, however, since they are derived from empirical grounds, must be appropriately dealt with within the canons of the moral law itself.[29] In other words, for these ends to be called "duties," they must be checked through the categorical imperative. This is essentially crucial since the very idea of "duty" in Kant's sense, cannot be determined by *a prior external determination* such as inclination, impulses or goods of prudence or what Kant himself calls "self-seeking ends."[30] Thus, the need for a transition from common rational cognition of morality to the more philosophic moral cognition. Secondly, our recognition of the role of moral anthropology in understanding Kant's ethics, articulates in effect, the universality of his moral philosophy. If the idea that a moral law holds for all human beings is true, then, its possibility stands or falls on whether or not it entails as well a universal concept of what a human being is—which is supplied, from common rational cognition, by moral anthropology.[31] While it may be true for example that the origin of our moral concepts rests in reason and have their roots "completely *a priori* in reason," they require an object through which they can be applied, or in Kant's words, "it [metaphysics of morals] has to take as [its] object the particular *nature* of human beings."[32] Finally, our

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[28] For nuances in meaning see Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:381.

[29] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 6:381.

[30] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:383. Although in *The Metaphysics of Morals,* especially in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant admits that there are *indirect duties* that we have to cultivate. For an interesting account of problematizing indirect duties, especially our indirect duty to cultivate sympathetic feeling, see Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 229–235.

[31] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:412.

[32] Kant raises this point in both the *Groundwork* and *The Metaphysics of Morals.* See *Groundwork,* 4:412; *Metaphysics,* 6:217.

recognition of the role that moral anthropology plays in understanding the fundamental principles of morality does not simply point to the necessity of establishing the *a priori* character of moral laws themselves through an understanding of human nature. More than that, it points us to the more basic fact of our constitution as human beings: that we are free and autonomous, without which it becomes impossible for us to even recognize, let alone acknowledge, the need to be moral. In other words, we cannot act otherwise except through freedom.[33] Thus, the need for a transition from the metaphysics of morals to the critique of practical reason.

We may ask: Why is such transition necessary? One modest response here is this: the transition to the critique of practical reason articulates the core features of Kant's ethics of autonomy. We can give two reasons why this is the case. On one hand, our humanity takes autonomy as the basis for legislating the moral law, the will being a "will giving universal law,"[34] by means of which we are *necessitated* to act, instead of being merely conditioned to. This, in effect, articulates the dignity that is due a rational being—how s/he makes use of freedom.[35] On the other hand, it takes autonomy as well as a basis for an account of moral responsibility, being the *sovereign* author of the moral law itself.[36] This is to say that as the sovereign author of the moral law: (a) we acknowledge the worth of humanity itself as an *end* and (b) we acknowledge that the basis of our actions are the rules we made for ourselves.[37] In other words, our moral sense arises from our being able to legislate a law for ourselves and from our being conscious as its author. Interestingly, what this stresses is the priority of right over the more conventional concepts of both duty and good.

In the succeeding section, I lay down some considerations that may show how these two concepts may be developed so as to account for our moral sense. Indirectly, it also sketches some considerations why the idea of right (moral worthiness) is much more central to Kant's ethics than what a deontological reading tries to suggest. We may regard this account however as essentially methodological. The account though is based on John Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics.

Autonomy and the Ideal of the Person

How may the two concepts alluded to earlier account for our moral sense and thus lead to an understanding of the basis of our obligation to be

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[33] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:448.

[34] *Ibid.,* 4:432

[35] Kant, "Notes on Moral Philosophy," 19:181.

[36] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:434.

[37] Kant, "Notes on Moral Philosophy," 15:521.

moral? There are two possible suggestions here. The first is to try to begin with John Rawls's account of the Kantian ideal of the person. The second is to associate such ideal of the person to Kant's account of moral psychology. In my view, although Rawls's account is partly, strictly speaking, not Kant's, there are parallelisms evident in them, which makes it essentially Kantian. The term "reasonable" for example is not necessarily Kant's. John Rawls, however, takes this *analogically* as articulating the unity of pure practical reason—a unity that is based on the priority of right over the good.[38] Or we may look at this as articulating what constitutes a morally worthy act instead of what may be a morally good act. Let me explain this further by going over Rawls's ideal of the person.

Central to John Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics is his Kantian reconstruction of the ideal of the person. He draws this ideal however from Kant's account of *humanity.* Here, the term *humanity* means "the powers that characterize human beings as reasonable and rational."[39] Rawls suggests that only these ideas articulate "a full-bodied conception" of Kant's *vernünftig* (reasonable).[40] He calls these powers the power of pure practical reason on one hand and the power of moral sensibility (which Kant calls moral feeling as it relates to feelings of pleasure and displeasure) on the other hand.[41] Both powers, in Rawls's view, form the core features of a human being's *moral personality,* including, in addition, the power to set *ends* for oneself and for another as duties owed because of how a human being is constituted.[42] The notion of *moral personality* here however, as Rawls suggests, points to a human being's freedom under the guidance of moral laws—that as a bearer of such moral personality, a human being is "subject to no other laws than

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[38] John Rawls conjectures for instance that the term "reasonable" is drawn from Kant's distinction between the categorical and hypothetical imperatives as expressed in the *Groundwork.* They are "handy markers" to distinguish the two forms of practical reason: the pure and the empirical. I take the liberty of viewing it as central as well from the perspective of moral theorizing. See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 48–49 (see note); John Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed. by Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 319; John Rawls, "Themes in Kant's Moral Philosophy," in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed. by Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 503–505.

[39] Rawls, "Themes in Kant's Moral Philosophy," 505.

[40] *Ibid*., 503.

[41] *Moral feeling* is also understood as susceptibility to feel pleasure or displeasure. Kant considers "feeling" here to be either *pathological* or *moral.* See Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:399. In another important work, Kant views *moral feeling* as "receptivity" when one finds oneself subject to the *unconditional necessitation* of the [moral] law. See Immanuel Kant, "On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is no use in practice," in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8:284.

[42] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:392–6:394.

those he gives to himself."[43] Let me unpack each of these moral powers of the moral personality, though briefly, one after another.

A first fundamental idea in Rawls's characterization of the *moral personality* is the power of pure practical reason. Rawls looks at pure practical reason as essentially articulated by the concepts of the "reasonable" and the "rational."[44] In Rawls's original formulation, the idea of the reasonable means, on one hand, "the willingness to propose fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them willingly" and, on the other hand, "the willingness to recognize the burdens of judgments and accept their consequences."[45] The idea of the rational, however, is the opposite—although they are willing to engage in cooperative schemes, they are unwilling to honor the fair terms of cooperation. What the idea of the rational lacks here, in other words, is the *objectivity* of the reasonable or the underlying principle that compels persons to engage in a system of fair cooperation in terms that all can readily accept. One way perhaps to understand the distinction is to try to associate them, as Rawls does, with the categorical and hypothetical imperatives or with both autonomy and heteronomy of reason.[46] As earlier mentioned, Rawls suggests that the idea of the reasonable is expressed by pure practical reason, while the

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[43] *Ibid.*, 6:224.

[44] Rawls's use of the ideas of the reasonable and the rational are purposely conceived, in a narrower sense, to fit the context of his political conception of justice. In *Political Liberalism,* Rawls uses these ideas narrowly to describe the powers of "citizens" in a democratic society, instead of the broader term persons. See Rawls, *Political Liberalism,* 48–54.
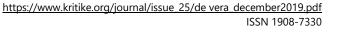
[45] Rawls, *Political Liberalism,* 49f.

[46] In Kant's view, the autonomy of reason, if reason were to be *self-determining* or *autonomous*, must conform to the categorical imperative. It may be recalled for example that the categorical imperative is the only command of morality which reason must consent to *unconditionally*, owing to what it represents—the *objectivity* of the moral law and the *autonomy* of the will. Roughly construed, the idea here is this: since the will is viewed as a *will-giving universal law*, it *must* be capable of imposing constraints universally—that it must hold for all. Or we may think of this conformity as articulating our obedience to the *form* of a law independent of its *matter*. We may think of this conformity to the categorical imperative as expressing the causal independence of reason from inclinations or interests.

The underlying context here is this: as rational beings, we are part of nature that works according to laws, yet, as rational beings, we also have the capacity to act in accordance with laws or principles – that we have a will. Our will however can be *necessitated* to act either categorically or hypothetically. If the act stems from a good will, the *necessitation* is categorical. At one point, an act that stems from a good will is, undoubtedly, good without qualification. At another point, an act that stems from a good will is good in itself. If the act stems not from good will, then, it is hypothetical. It is precisely for this reason that hypothetical imperatives (imperative of skills and counsels of prudence), although they arise from practical reason, while good, do not possess the *objectivity* and the *unconditional necessity* of the categorical imperative. They are determined by prior *pathological* conditions, which make them only conditionally good and thus are *heteronomous*. We may think of hypothetical imperatives as expressing our dependence on external causes – that although good, they are simply means to achieve some desired ends. See Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:413.

rational is expressed by empirical practical reason. At the risk of appearing simplistic, we may put forward three ways to see how this is the case.

Firstly, we may ask: what is it that the reasonable seeks to articulate to represent pure practical reason? We may answer in the following manner: the reasonable articulates a form of *objectivity* that may be shared by all.[47] It seeks to establish a frame of thought (echoing Rawls) that may provide the basis for universal agreement (echoing Kant), i.e., a framework of thought that may specify, in a fundamental way, the kinds of reasons, judgments, decisions, and modes of deliberation, that all may possibly agree to. Similarly, it seeks to specify as well the reasons why we *must* consent to them or how we are better able to give them *due* considerations as the sort of reasons worthy of our assent. A case in point here for instance is the fundamental principle of the "right to life." Not only does it specify a frame of thought that all may possibly agree to, it also specifies the kinds of reasons why we *must* regard it as essentially fundamental. As a frame of thought, the "right to life" holds true for all. It does not discriminate anyone. It holds even to those who disregard its fundamental import as a morally binding principle fitting to all persons. That, even if it were perpetually under-fulfilled, if not violated, its formulation remains true and holds true for all persons. In other words, akin to pure practical reason, the reasonable is not only *unconditional* but also *objectively necessary.* In contrast, although the rational is also a frame of thought, it lacks the *objectivity* of the reasonable. On one hand, it is not broadly shareable. The kinds of reasons it specifies, perhaps, are fundamentally *subjective* and do not hold true for all. On the other hand, it lacks "moral sensibility" (to use Rawls).[48] What it seeks to establish may perhaps be limited only to some particularistic benefits or ends derived from self-interests. Or we may, by way of analogy, think of the rational as seeking to establish a frame of thought determined by some pre-conceived object of desire or good (perhaps material determining ground), which, while beneficial, does not hold true for all (echoing heteronomy of reason).[49]

A second way of looking at the distinction is by way of asking: to what sort of end is the reasonable responding to such that it articulates the interest of pure practical reason? A brief answer is this: the reasonable seeks to achieve a kind of ideal similar to a Kantian *realm of ends* by desiring a common social world for its own sake.[50] The underlying motivation here is

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[47] I have been influenced to look at *objectivity* in this manner owing to Rawls's three conceptions of objectivity. See Rawls, *Political Liberalism,* 110–112.

[48] Rawls, *Political Liberalism,* 51.

[49] Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:441; see also *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:40–5:41.

[50] I took the liberty of combining two ideas here. Rawls's *social world* and Kant's *realm of ends*. See Rawls, *Political Liberalism,* 50, Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*, 164–166; Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:433.

expressed by the frames of thought that the reasonable seeks to establish in order to build a social world governed by laws that all can agree to and share with. What drives this desire perhaps is the belief in the dignity that is due a human being as free and autonomous. Since, in Kant's view, a human being is regarded either as a member or as a sovereign, as s/he is able to claim authorship to any frame of thought, it is but [morally] fitting to suppose that s/he serves as the ultimate limiting condition from which all frames of thought must defer. Kant for example aptly writes:

> a human being alone, and with him every rational creature, is an *end in itself:* by virtue of the autonomy of his freedom he is the subject of the moral law, […]. Just because of this every will, *even every person's own will directed to himself, is restricted to the condition of agreement with the autonomy of the rational being*, […] hence this subject is to be used never merely as a means but as at the same time an end. We rightly attribute this condition […], inasmuch as it rests on their *personality*, by which alone they are ends in themselves.[51]

This reechoes for example Kant's formula of humanity where a rational agent is viewed as an *end-in-itself*—that there is no other *end* more valuable than humanity itself. Precisely because humanity is viewed as the supreme limiting condition of all possible practical laws, its primary purpose then is no other than the advancement of humanity for its own sake. Again, the fundamental principle of the "right to life" may serve as an illustrative example pertinent to this point. Its merit, as a fundamental principle, is not determined by any other arbitrary end than the dignity that is due a human being, that it is desired for humanity's own sake. In contrast, the rational lacks the *dignifying condition* of the reasonable, in that it is primarily motivated by ends which are in themselves arbitrary and which may in fact be used against humanity itself as a means to advance some desired ends. That said, what underlies the rational is a frame of thought grounded upon a set of self-seeking ends.

Finally, we may, based on the desire to achieve a common social world, look at the distinction as a way of establishing a *coherent system of practical laws* founded on our belief in the possibility of Kant's *realm of ends.* The reasonable, in this regard, seeks to bring, a la Kant, the diverse frames of thought that divide human beings, *nearer to intuition* (or shall we say our

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[51] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:87. Emphasis mine. The same thought for instance is expressed in the *Groundwork:* "… the end must here be thought […] as an *independently existing end,* […], that which must never be acted against […]" Kant, *Groundwork,* 4:438.

common rational cognition of our social world). A key idea here may be that of moral deliberation where various frames of thoughts, including its reasons, judgments, and decisions, are carefully examined and rigorously scrutinized under a coherent frame of moral appraisal—the purpose of which is to arrive at some shareable frame of thought that may be made the basis for adopting a [practical] law for all human beings, if not facilitate, its possibility. Or it may even begin, in fact, from what Kant considers *sensus communis* because of its capacity *to feel* (sense) what is universally communicable and shareable.[52] As a sense common to all for example, it may facilitate the determination, if not juxtaposition, of various inclinations, interests, or temptations that hinder the process of a reasoned moral consensus, in order to arrive at some consistent maxims, precepts, or principles *preparatory* for a common human understanding.[53] Such that, on the basis of this determination through the *sensus communis¸* prejudiced thinking (heteronomy of reason) may be avoided to give way to the more enlightened form of thinking (autonomy of reason) that may be shared by all. A closest example here for instance may be the *system of moral human rights* we now have: an artifice of reason at that, *par excellence.*

A second fundamental characterization of our *moral personality* is the power of moral sensibility (what Kant himself refers to as [*moral*] *feeling*). In Rawls's view, the power of moral sensibility are moral endowments that are intrinsic to the constitution of a person owing to his/her moral personality— they are natural predispositions (to use Kant) that allow us to be aware of or even affected by concepts of duty or even by concepts of obligation. In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant notes that they are "*subjective* conditions of receptiveness to the concept of duty" and thus stand at the base of morality.[54] This is to say that our appreciation, let alone recognition, of the notions of moral goodness and its opposite, or those notions of good manners and right conduct, that are either in conformity with or in violation of [ethical/moral] laws, are made possible through moral sensibility. It is important to note nevertheless, that although moral sensibility makes us aware of, or even susceptible to, these so called "duties," it is by no means a *prior* determining ground of such awareness, but rather an *effect* of the determination of the will.[55] In other words, the dialectic of moral sensibility remains dependent

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[52] See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. by Paul Guyer and trans. by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5:293–5:295. See also Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste,* 148–149.

[53] A corollary idea here (*sensus communis*) developed by Kant are the maxims for common human understanding, the purpose of which is in fact to arrive at some form of consistent way of thinking on the basis of some criteria that are shareable and communicable— an *enlightened thinking*. Kant, *Critique of Judgment,* 5:294.

[54] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:399.

[55] Kant, "On the common saying," 8:283.

upon, if not subject to, the determination of the will as an objective determining ground of any imperative of morality. That, while it is possible that moral sensibility makes us aware of the [practical] necessity of doing an action, let alone be moved by it, owing to what it elicits in us (a certain moral feeling of either praise or blame perhaps), how we determine our choices of actions, or how we respond to it, remains subject to the autonomy of the will itself. For instance, while lying elicits in us a certain feeling of reprobation, what determines its moral worthiness or unworthiness as an act, in an essential way, is not the [moral] feeling that it elicits (which may be good) but rather its *conformity with the law* that forbids or prohibits lying (moral worthiness).[56] Again, while it may be true that moral sensibility makes us aware of certain moral feelings, whether of approbation or reprobation, its primary purpose *is* directed at the autonomy of the will so that we may be disposed to act in conformity with what pure practical reason directs us to do and bind ourselves with it—our obedience to the moral law.[57]

Rawls nevertheless, remarks that these moral powers "make a good will and moral character possible," that is, that "we have a duty to cultivate them [our natural capacities] in order to make ourselves worthy of our humanity."[58] The underlying reason here is given by the idea that they may come useful to reason later on. Let me quote Kant at length:

> A human being has a duty to himself to cultivate (*cultura*) his natural powers […] as means to all sorts of possible ends. - He owes it to himself (as a rational being) not to leave idle and, as it were, rusting away the natural predispositions and capacities that his reason can someday use. […] Hence, the basis on which he should develop his capacities (for all sorts of ends) is not regard for the advantages that their cultivation can provide; […] *Instead, it is a command of morally practical reason and a duty of a human being to himself to cultivate his capacities.*[59]

The duty of cultivation nonetheless of the moral powers that we have, including the duty to cultivate our natural moral endowments, constitutes, in

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[56] In "Notes on Moral Philosophy" Kant writes however: "The doctrine of moral feeling is more a hypothesis to explain the *phaenomenon* of approbation that we give to certain actions than anything that should firmly establish maxims and first principles that are objectively valid concerning how one should approve or reject something, act or refrain from acting." See Kant, "Notes on Moral Philosophy," 19:116–117.

[57] Here I take note of some of Henry Allison's account of moral feeling as he contrasts it with the feeling of the sublime. See Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste,* 324–326.

[58] Rawls, "Themes in Kant's Moral Philosophy," 505.

[59] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:445. Emphasis mine.

a general way, our commitment towards moral perfection. While it may be true for example, as Kant argues, that such level of cultivation remains in a state of perpetual "striving," in so far as human life is unfathomable, it remains a duty owed to ourselves that we have to cultivate nevertheless, that [pure practical] reason consents to, so that we may become, eventually, "*useful members of the world*" whose *dignity must never be degraded.*[60] In the same way, this striving for moral perfection is pursued so that we may, in an essential sense, remain firmly grounded on our commitment to secure, if not sustain, the moral ends that we set for ourselves against the pathologies of our sensuous nature. This is to say that it is our duty to "bring all [our] capacities and inclinations under [our reason's] control and so rule over ourselves" in order that "our feelings and inclinations will not play master over ourselves."[61] More than this though, it is our positive duty we *must* pursue as sovereign authors of [practical] principles, if not laws, so that we may, in the best way possible, "restore the *purity* of the moral law" in us, in so far as it is the supreme ground of all our moral maxims, as the sole self-sufficient incentive of the autonomy of our will.[62]

The idea of restoring the *purity* of the moral law as well as the *striving* for moral perfection on the contrary, may perhaps be understood better if situated within the context of our human nature or within the context of what Rawls calls Kant's *Augustinian moral psychology*.[63] Let me briefly describe though why there *is* a necessity to develop our moral powers within this context.

In *Religion within the Boundaries of mere Reason*, Kant enumerates three natural predispositions that our *human nature* has.[64] These predispositions are in themselves *original* in us, i.e., they are innate characteristics of a human being. Firstly, there is the natural predisposition to *animality* as a living being. In Kant's view, this natural predisposition is directed at (a) self-preservation, (b) preservation and propagation of the human species, and (c) social communion. Secondly, there is the natural predisposition to *humanity* as a rational human being. This is primarily characterized by *self-love*, the origin of our inclination to gain either *equal worth* or *superiority* over others. Finally, there is the predisposition to *personality* as an accountable and responsible human being or as Henry Allison puts it, a "being whom reason is practical of itself."[65] In Rawls's view, our predisposition to personality has two

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[60] *Ibid*., 6:446. Emphasis mine.
[61] *Ibid*., 6:408.
[62] Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason*, 6:46.
[63] Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*, 291.
[64] Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason*, 6:26–6:28.
[65] Allison, *Essays on Kant*, 101.

fundamental aspects.[66] On one hand, it enables us to view the moral law, as reasonable and rational, as an idea of pure practical reason. On the other hand, it enables us to respect the moral law as an incentive itself for our free power of choice. Rawls however is quick to add that in the absence of *moral feeling*, it is not even possible for us *to be motivated to act* (through moral feeling) in conformity with the moral law (respect for the moral law as an idea of pure practical reason). Rawls however argues that among the natural predispositions, it is "this" predisposition that "we cannot repudiate" and "that we cannot exempt ourselves from the moral law" —being the sufficient determining ground of our will (self-sufficient incentive).[67] Be that as it may, Kant interestingly characterizes this natural predisposition to *personality* as our "susceptibility" to respect the *moral law* (Rawls's first aspect) in us through our *moral feeling* (Rawls's second aspect) —as an incentive that we incorporate to the power of choice—something that is added to our predisposition to *personality*.[68] In Kant's view, it is by virtue of this predisposition, along with the *moral feeling* that we incorporate into the maxims of freedom, that we are capable of either good or evil. In general though, these three natural predispositions are all predispositions towards good, in so far as they are not antagonistic to and are deferent with the moral law itself.

On the contrary, although they are all predispositions towards the good, they are also capable of effecting the will (through motivation) to deviate from the moral law owing to human nature's *natural propensity* to evil.[69] In Kant's view, this natural propensity to evil arises because of the *frailty*, *impurity*, and *depravity* of our human nature.[70] This propensity to evil gives rise to our deviation from, if not violation of, the moral law when we are motivated to incorporate into our maxims any of those inclinations, desires, and temptations that we have (owing to our natural predispositions).[71] In other words, when the will, owing to our propensity to evil, is influenced to choose a maxim defined by a prior ground and determines itself (external incentive such as inclination to wealth, interest to fame/honor, or desire for physical pleasure) other than the moral law, our

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[66] Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy,* 292.

[67] *Ibid.,* 295.

[68] Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason,* 6:28.

[69] *Ibid.,* 6:29.

[70] *Ibid.,* 6:30.

[71] This is not to say that we are motivated to do evil for evil's sake. Instead, we do not see our conformity to the moral law as a positive incentive. Given that our propensity to evil is "innate" in our human nature, it can also be socialized or socializing. Allen Wood refers to this as "unsociable sociability" developed through the course of historical human relations. Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought,* 213–215. Henry Allison though provides a contrasting view by distinguishing two notions of our propensity to evil. Allison, *Essays on Kant,* 107.

[pure practical] reason becomes *heteronomous* and denies itself its own capacity to be *self-determining* or *autonomous*. That, while it remains good, in a general way, the resulting act loses its *moral worthiness* as an autonomous moral act. How then do we reconcile the autonomy of our will, our natural predispositions to good, and this radical evil in our human nature? In Kant's view, these can be resolved only through *moral education* and *ever-continuing striving* for the better—our moral vocation to build an essentially good character *worthy* of our humanity. Kant of course best explains the answer:

> For the judgment of human beings, however, who can assess themselves and the strength of their maxims only by the upper hand they gain over the senses in time, *the change is to be regarded only as an ever-continuing striving for the better,* hence as a gradual reformation of the propensity to evil, of the perverted attitude of mind. From this it follows that a human being's *moral education must begin*, not with an improvement of mores, *but with the transformation of his attitude of mind and the establishment of a character…*[72]

What underlies this *moral education* though, aside from the reconciliation that it seeks to achieve and the purity of the moral law that it seeks to restore, is no other than our concept of *freedom,* which we infer and discover from our immediate consciousness of the moral law itself—"*our original moral predisposition*" through practical reason.[73] This is to say that our striving for moral perfection through our chosen means of moral education is no other than our striving to achieve the *spontaneity* of our freedom, akin to the absolute spontaneity of our [pure practical] reason. This is essentially crucial since what the moral law seeks to articulate is no other than the *autonomy* of pure practical reason itself, i.e., freedom—the formal condition of all maxims.[74] That, although it may be influenced by factors *other* than those it gives to itself (imperative of skills or counsel of prudence) or those that may be derived from the natural predispositions for instance, it may also determine for itself, *spontaneously*, a set of moral ends and frame them according to their practical necessity, either in conformity with duty or for the sake it.[75] In Rawls's view, this spontaneity of freedom [practical reason] manifests itself in the way we arrange our predispositions according to the moral order we act from, owing to our moral personality, whose essential

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[72] Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason,* 6:48. Emphasis mine.
[73] *Ibid.*, 6:49. Emphasis mine.
[74] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:33.
[75] Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy,* 284.

nature is to be immediately conscious of the moral law.[76] Such that if it were true that it is by means of freedom that we deviate from the moral law, then, it is also true that it is *only* through freedom that can we *restore the purity of the moral law* itself, provided that we achieve the *spontaneity* of freedom through our moral striving.

In the section that follows, I lay down two suggestions, based on the aforementioned, to illustrate some considerations why we owe our obligation to be moral (moral sense) to our *humanity*. I suggest initially that our humanity takes *autonomy* as the basis of authority for legislating the moral law. Then, I suggest secondly as well, that our humanity takes our autonomy as a basis for a satisfactory account of moral responsibility. These two points suggest that our obligation to be moral arises, in fact, from the moral principles that we give to ourselves through our practical reason.

Appropriating Moral Sense: A Rereading of Kant's Ethics

The preceding section outlines a close approximation of the conceptual elements that we need to respond to the question "To whom do we owe our moral sense?" While they are able to provide hints, in a fundamental way, as to what may be a possible good answer, they also provide clues to the contrary. The natural propensity to evil, for example, notwithstanding our natural predispositions towards the good, complicates this point even further. Whether or not it is indeed possible to reconcile them through the autonomy of the will is an important philosophical question that remains puzzling even among contemporary Kant scholars. However, from a practical point of view, Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics seems to suggest another way out. Consistent with Kant's writings, he provides an alternative reading that may shed light to the seemingly irreconcilable difference between our natural predispositions and our natural propensity to evil. In my view, what Rawls offers is a form of moral theorizing (not a theory) which may be possibly called Kant's ethics of autonomy, whose starting point rests upon our *humanity*—our *moral personality*. Briefly put, our *humanity* is the basis of our *moral sense* and our *moral responsibility*. Let me however remark at the outset that *this* reading takes the following points as fundamental assumptions: Initially, it presupposes pure practical reason as fact of reason. Secondly, it takes both natural predispositions toward the good and natural propensity to evil as part of our *moral personality*. Thirdly, it regards *moral worthiness* as a defining characteristic of any moral act as it gives importance to the *restoration of the purity of the moral law*. Finally, it emphasizes the role of *moral cultivation* or *moral striving* towards moral perfection as a way

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[76] *Ibid.*, 306.

of balancing out the seeming inconsistent features of human nature between natural predispositions and our natural propensity to evil. In general however, Rawls's appropriation of Kant's ethics offers a *constructive moral ground*—a moral landscape where both may be possibly reconciled, the *construction* of which provides the necessary background material to respond to the question "to whom do we owe our moral sense." Let me then offer some reflections to show how the question may be responded to.

At the outset, I mentioned that we owe our moral sense to our *humanity* for two reasons. On one hand, our humanity takes *autonomy* as the basis of authority for legislating the moral law. On the other hand, our humanity takes our *autonomy* as a basis for a satisfactory account of moral responsibility. An important consequence of these reasons is that it enables us to discern the *moral worthiness* or *rightness* of a given act through the *autonomy of the will*—the ultimate object of the moral law. At this juncture, let me give some considerations as to how these reasons may account for our *moral sense.*

We may begin with the idea that there arises a *moral sense* in us owing to our *autonomy* as the basis of authority for [legislating] the moral law.[77] Here, our *moral sense* is our capability *to discern* whether or not a given act is *morally worthy*. The notion of *discern* here, however, is practically grounded upon and is suggestive of our natural predisposition to personality (as reasonable and rational). I begin with this idea in order to see whether or not *autonomy* may indeed be that basis. I suggest nevertheless that we may possibly give a rough approximation as to how it may be possible. Consider for instance the following passages from Kant's various writings:

1. Thus the moral law expresses nothing other than the *autonomy* of pure practical reason, that is, freedom, and this is itself the formal conditions of all maxims, *under which alone they can accord with the supreme practical law*.[78]

2. The *will* is not merely subject to the law but subject to it in such a way that it must be viewed as also *giving the law to itself*, and just because of this as first subject to the law (of which it can regard as the author).[79]

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[77] The manner of presentation here reflects the influence of Rawls's presentation of the fact of reason as he tries to deduce that the fact of reason is no other than our consciousness of the moral law as supremely regulative and authoritative for us. Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*, 258–261.

[78] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:33. Emphasis mine.

[79] Kant, *Groundwork*, 4:431.

3. *Morality* is thus the relation of actions to the *autonomy of the will*, that is, to a possible giving of universal law through its maxims. An action that can coexist with autonomy of the will is *permitted*; one that does not accord with it is *forbidden*.[80]

4. *Pure practical reason* […] *can determine the will* – and it does so by a fact in which pure reason in us proves itself actually practical, namely the *autonomy in the principle of morality* by which reason determines the will to deeds.[81]

5. We can quickly be convinced that the concept of freedom of the power of choice does not precede in us the consciousness of the moral but is only inferred from the determinability of our power of choice through this law as unconditional command. *We have only to ask whether we are certainly and immediately conscious of a faculty enabling us to overcome, by firm resolve,* every incentive to transgression, however great.[82]

Passages 1–4 articulate one central idea—the moral law presupposes *autonomy of the will*, whether in matters of formulation (1–2) or in relations—as to prohibition and permissibility (3) and even in its determination (4). Passage 5, while formulated differently, expresses nonetheless the same thing as if suggesting *that* our consciousness of the moral law is at the same time a consciousness of *an enabling faculty*, which I read, as referring to our *autonomy* in so far as it is intrinsic to our natural predisposition to *personality*—as part of our moral personality.

It is possible, on the contrary, to view each of these passages as essentially articulating different points or to view them as stand-alone passages. But such possibility seems too remote primarily because in all passages, reference is made to *autonomy* as primordial to the articulation of the moral law and central in the formulation of maxims that may be made into practical laws provided that they cohere with the *autonomy of the will*—being their formal condition which allows maxims to conform to or be in accord with the supreme practical law. Or it is also possible to take them as selective applications of passages to fit a preconceived idea of how our moral sense arises in us. But this may be easily dispensed with on the basis of passage 5, which articulates how our *consciousness of the moral law* leads us to our awareness of our *autonomy* as a fact of reason.[83] *Ceteris paribus*, we may

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[80] *Ibid.*, 4:439.

[81] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:42. Emphasis mine.

[82] Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason,* 6:50n. Emphasis mine.

[83] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:31.

then provide a shared formulation of the abovementioned passages in this way:

> Our moral personality is so constituted the way it is that it enables us *to discern the moral worthiness* of an act or its opposite, through the autonomy of our will, being the basis of authority of [legislating] the moral law as a formal condition and the sole articulation of the purity of the moral law itself.
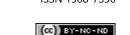
The idea here is to bring together the relevant features that make *moral sense* possible. We may, in some respects, provide a coherent view of this possibility on the basis of the following points.

Firstly, our *moral personality* consists of predispositions that enable us to understand the moral law as an idea of pure practical reason and respect the moral law as of itself a sufficient moral incentive for the autonomy of our will. This is the same as saying that there is, in us, an intrinsic capacity that allows us to discern whether or not a given moral law is *respectable* or *practically necessary*. We may suggest then, owing to this discerning ability, that there is, in us, an innate capacity for moral sense.

Secondly, our *moral personality* possesses as well an incomprehensible *enabling faculty* that we become immediately conscious of, owing to our consciousness of the moral law itself. This *enabling faculty* is what determines our moral ends and how we arrange them on the basis of their practical necessity for us. We may suggest then, that our moral sense *presupposes* this *enabling faculty* in its determination of our moral ends.

Thirdly, our *moral personality* is constituted for only one end— that of achieving moral perfection through the restoration of the purity of the moral law in us. The purity of the moral law, however, is possible only in so far as our will is autonomous. There is autonomy of the will though when "it is not necessitated to act through any sensible determining grounds."[84] This on the contrary demands discernment, since we have no direct intuition of freedom. We may suggest thus that our moral sense is a discernment towards achieving autonomy.

Finally, our *moral personality* may be *motivated* to act either internally (inner freedom) or externally (outer freedom).[85] On one hand, there is *internal motivation* through respect of the moral law as the sole moral incentive itself. To be internally motivated to act is to be *autonomous*—it is our freedom under the guidance of moral laws. On the other hand, there is *external motivation*

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[84] Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals,* 6:226.
[85] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:161.

through inclinations that arise from our natural dispositions. To be externally motivated is to be *heteronomous.* What the moral law *expresses* though is nothing other than (inner) freedom "under which alone maxims may be in accord with the supreme practical law."[86] We may suggest then, that since it is only through freedom that maxims may be in accord with the supreme law, *freedom* or *autonomy* may be made the basis of authority for legislating the moral law.

We may conclude therefore, based on the aforementioned, that our *moral personality* is so constituted the way it is that it enables us *to discern the moral worthiness* of an act or its opposite, through the *autonomy of our will*, being the basis of authority of [legislating] the moral law, as a formal condition of all maxims and the sole articulation of the purity of the moral law itself. Given the natural predispositions that we have and the *weakness* of our nature as human beings, it is only through the exercise of our *autonomy* that we may possibly regain the *dignity* that is due ourselves as autonomous human beings with moral personalities. Let me however quote Kant at length to amplify, in an indirect way, how this point may be made relevant. In the *Doctrine of Method* of the second *Critique* for instance, Kant writes:

> The heart is freed and relieve of a burden that always secretly presses upon it, when in pure moral resolutions, examples of which are set before him, *there is revealed to the human being an inner capacity not otherwise correctly known by himself, the inner freedom to release himself from the impetuous importunity of inclinations so that none of them,* not even the dearest, has any influence on a resolution for which we are now to make use of our reason. […] and this includes consciousness of an independence from inclinations and from circumstances and of the possibility of being sufficient to myself, which is salutary to me in general, in other respects as well. And now the law of duty, through the positive worth that observance of it lets us feel, finds easier access through the respect for ourselves in the consciousness of our freedom. When this is well established, […] then every good moral disposition can be grafted onto it, because this is the best, and indeed the sole, guard to prevent ignoble and corrupting impulses from breaking into the mind.[87]
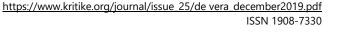
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[86] *Ibid.*, 5:33.

[87] *Ibid.*, 5:161. Emphasis mine.

A corollary idea that is developed here, interestingly, is the idea of *moral responsibility*. Early on, I mentioned that our humanity takes *autonomy* as a basis for providing a satisfactory account of moral responsibility. In the history of British moral philosophy, the idea of moral responsibility is usually associated with the notions of praise and blame.[88] Christine Korsgaard, on the other hand, seems to suggest that, in Kant's moral writings, moral responsibility is closely associated with rational agency—that it "arises from the perspective of the agent who is deciding what to do."[89] A contrary view though is found in Peter Strawson's *Freedom and Resentment,* where he seems to suggest that the *locus* of moral responsibility rests upon "the fact of our natural human commitment to ordinary inter-personal attitudes," thereby echoing a *determinist* view of moral responsibility.[90] Whether moral responsibility arises in us, through our *agency* or it arises outside us, through *external determining causes*, is a complex issue even in contemporary literatures on moral philosophy. Despite that, it is important to note that the question concerning moral responsibility is as crucially important as the questions surrounding the old-age problem of *free will* and *determinism*. It is not my intention though to address both. Instead, I lay down some ways that may give considerations as to why, owing to our *moral personality*, we may be held morally responsible or personally accountable. By going over Kant's account of the autonomy of the will and its connection to the moral law, we hope to shed some light on this point.

Consider the following passages in Kant's works:

(1) [As an auctor], it is [b.] absolutely necessary in addition, *that he act with freedom, indeed it is only when considered as a free being that he can be accountable*. For it is from laws of freedom that the duties arise, which he can fulfil or violate, and only to that extent is his action independent of nature.[91]

(2) Moral failures of all kinds, from the lesser ones of fragility and impurity to the worst extremes of wickedness and perversity of which we are capable, *must all arise*, not from the desires of physical and social nature, but solely from our exercise of our

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[88] Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends,* 189.

[89] *Ibid*.

[90] See Peter Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment," in *Free* Will, ed. by Gary Watson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

[91] Immanuel Kant, "Kant on the Metaphysics of Morals: Vigilantus' Lecture Notes," in *Lectures on Ethics*, ed. by Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind and trans. by Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 27:559.

free power of choice. And for this exercise we are held fully accountable.[92]

(3) The moral law commands compliance from everyone, and indeed the most exact compliance.[93]

(4) Consciousness of the fundamental moral law [...] forces itself upon us of itself as a synthetic *a priori* proposition.[94]

(5) He judges, therefore, that he can do something because he is aware that he ought to do it and cognizes freedom within him, which, without the moral law, would have remained unknown to him.[95]

We may think of these passages as possible pointers that may give hints as to how we may be made morally responsible. While we may think of them as too few and perhaps may not provide sufficient grounds to account for moral responsibility, we may nevertheless consider what commonalities they have which may be useful for our accounting of moral responsibility.

Passages 1 and 2 reference an element (if we may call it that) of moral responsibility—the element of freedom. One underlying reason here perhaps is the idea of an *auctor* (originator). Passages 3 and 4 suggest as well another element of moral responsibility—that there must be a *command* that is able to force itself upon us *unconditionally*. Passage 5 seems to add an element of judgment, which I read as referring to our personal appraisal as to whether it (command) "can" (freedom) be brought about. We may suggest then that there arises moral responsibility on the condition that there is an *auctor* (agent), a command and an appraisal of what it is that is brought about. *Ceteris paribus,* we may perhaps consider moral responsibility as follows:

> Our moral personality is so constituted the way it is that it holds us *morally responsible* for the fulfilment of or violation of the principles, maxims or laws that we ourselves regard as morally permissible, if not morally obligatory.

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[92] This is a paraphrase made by Rawls. See Rawls, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy,* 294. The original text is in Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere Reason,* 6:30.

[93] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 5:36.

[94] *Ibid.,* 5:31.

[95] *Ibid.,* 5:30.

Again, the idea here is to bring together what may be possibly called hints that may suggest how we can be made morally responsible. We may perhaps consider the following points in order to see whether or not we can give a coherent view of this formulation.

Firstly, intrinsic to our moral personality, in a general way, is an *enabling faculty* called freedom. Our freedom may be motivated to act either internally or externally. We are autonomous or self-determining when we are motivated to act internally. We are heteronomous if otherwise. Since an element of moral responsibility is the fulfilment of certain principles or commands we ourselves regard as morally obligatory or permissible, it follows that moral responsibility may be attributed to us only when such principle or command is brought into fulfilment.

Secondly, intrinsic to our moral personality as well is our capacity for moral sense. Our moral sense enables us to discern whether or not a given command deserves fulfilment or not. This is the same as saying that it is through our moral sense that we view ourselves as subject to a command; it attributes moral responsibility to the agent owing to the agent's capacity to fulfil it.

Finally, in the absence of a moral personality, it is not possible to recognize a command or a principle or a maxim, let alone the possibility of its fulfilment or non-fulfilment. This is the same as saying that there arises no moral responsibility in the absence of an *auctor*, recognizable command or an appraisal as to whether or not a command is morally obligatory or morally permissible.

In view of these points, we may suggest then, that it is only because we have a moral personality such as ours that we can be made morally responsible. That indeed, our moral personality is so constituted the way it is that it holds us *morally responsible* for the fulfilment of or violation of the principles, maxims, or laws that we ourselves regard as morally permissible and morally obligatory.

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Article

A Search for a Model of Critical Engagement with Technology: Feenberg's Instrumentalization Theory or MASIPAG's[1] Struggle against Corporate Control of Agricultural Technologies?

Benjiemen A. Labastin

Abstract: Steigler's "originary technicity," Latour's "actor network theory," and Ihde's "post-phenomenology" accentuate the entwinement of technology and human existence. To imagine a world devoid of technology and a technology without a human being is unthinkable. The integral relations between technology and human beings are irrefutable. But while it is so, human beings' attitude towards technology, particularly modern technologies, remains ambivalent. Recognizing their inescapable relations, however, suggests that human beings may opt to simply accept or negate, or develop a critical attitude towards technology. This paper presents two models of critical engagement with technology, Andrew Feenberg's instrumentalization theory and MASIPAG's development of alternative agricultural technologies. In sum, it argues that the MASIPAG model, given the current capitalist order, holds a more promising approach to technological development than Feenberg's.

Keywords: Philosophy of technology, critical engagement, critical theory, Andrew Feenberg, MASIPAG

Introduction

There has been a significant recognition of the entwinement between technology and human existence prompting Bernard Stiegler to speak of "originary technicity"—by which he means technology's proximal

[1] MASIPAG stands for Magsasaka at Siyentipiko Para sa Pag-unlad ng Agrikultura or Farmer-Scientist Partnership for Development.

and integral relations with human existence.[2] Indeed, various facets of human existence are closely interwoven and mediated by technology as exemplified in Don Ihde's post-phenomenology and Bruno Latour's actor network theory. For Ihde, technology mediates human beings with the world in three ways: "embodiment relations," "hermeneutic relations," and "alterity relations." In embodiment relations, or the "(Human-technology)→World," individuals perceive the world through the technology. In hermeneutic relations, or the "Human→(technology-World)," technology represents the world to the person. And, lastly, in "alterity relations," or the "Human→technology-(-World)," technology stands as a "quasi other" that invoke responses from the individual.[3] While Ihde highlights technology's role in human beings' relations with the world, some scholars accentuate technology's power to shape human relations and social organizations, practices, and values.[4] Undoubtedly, it is unthinkable to imagine a world devoid of technology and a technology without the human being. Reality, claimed Bruno Latour, has to be conceived within and between the axis of "human subjects" and "nonhuman objects." It is nothing but a network of relations between human beings and nonhuman objects—in this case, technology. This network of relations produces a kind of life a human being lives.[5] Indeed, it is suffice to say that the entwinement of technology and human existence is undeniable.

While there is an undeniable dimension of inescapability from technology, human beings' proper attitude towards it remains ambivalent. This ambivalence concerns whether technology is value-neutral or value-laden. As value-neutral, it is believed that technology remains to be tools subservient to and in the service of the person. As value-neutral, technology is used in a manner a person sees fit. As value-laden, technology is thought to shape human beings and human relations in ways that elude the person's agency. Rather than the person exerting power over technology, a value-laden position emphasizes that it is technology that exerts power over the person. Most scholars on technology believe that technology is value-laden. Recognizing technology's value-laden character implies that the person is

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[2] See Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[3] Don Ihde, "A Phenomenology of Technics," in *Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition – An Anthology*, ed. by Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek (Sussex: Blackwell, 2014).

[4] See Langdon Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Artifacts?" *Daedalus*, 109:1 (1980), 121–136; Albert Borgmann, "Focal Things and Practices," in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. by D. M. Kaplan (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 115–136; Peter-Paul Verbeek, "Resistance is Futile: Toward a non-Modern Democratization of Technology," *Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology*, 17:1 (Winter, 2013): 72–92.

[5] See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

never wholly in control over herself. At the least, a value-laden perspective accepts that technology influences the way the person lives. At the extreme, it is claimed that the person is totally under the mercy of technology. In either spectrum, technology is an "other" which cannot be simply left on the fringes of human existence. As a consequence, as some would have us believed, one has to accept or escape from it.

A reductionist position (simple acceptance or rejection), however, is an ill-informed view as it consigns one into either utopianism or dystopianism.[6] In the former, technology is ascribed with the power to redeem the person from her miserable conditions. With the latter, technology rules and strips the person of her humanity. On the other hand, an escapist view advocates a flight, as it implores that life is better away from the influences and vagaries of modern technologies.

The reductionist position is a sweeping position and it reduces the person's relations with technology into either/or. Tiles and Oberdiek, however, warn that a reductionist position does not help as it excludes a more nuanced and critical relation with technology. More often than not, the reductionist position springs from one's encounter with technology; insofar as a positive encounter brings a more accommodating and utopian attitude, a negative encounter leads to either nihilism or escapism. Any of those fails to see "various technologies for what they are."[7] Hence, a critical engagement is therefore needed.

In what follows, I present two models of critical engagement with technology: Feenberg's instrumentalization theory and MASIPAG's approach to farmers' empowerment through the development of alternative agricultural technologies. After which I argue that, given the current capitalist order, the MASIPAG approach is more promising than Feenberg's.

Feenberg's Instrumentalization Theory

Feenberg's instrumentalization theory is an attempt to go beyond the simple affirmation or negation of technology. Responding to the polarized divisions among philosophers and social theorists of technology, Feenberg seeks a middle approach which recognizes technology's invaluable presence in human existence but without succumbing to technological determinism.

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[6] See Langdon Winner, "Technology Today: Utopia or Dystopia," *Social Research* (1997), 989–1017; Trevor Pinch and Weibe Bijker, "The Social Construction of Facts and Artifacts," in *Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition*, ed. by Robert. C. Scharff and Val Dusek (Sussex: Blackwell, 2003), 221–232.

[7] See Mary Tiles and Hans Oberdiek, "Conflicting Visions of Technology," in *Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition – An Anthology*, ed. by Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek (Sussex: Blackwell, 2014), 257.

Banking on human agency and the democratic society, Feenberg claims that technology can serve human values and interests, and the ideals of democracy.

Particularly, the instrumentalization theory is explicitly conceived to critically deal with critical theory's ambivalent attitude towards technology. There are two such attitudes: the fearful and the neutral. The former is represented by Marcuse while the latter by Habermas. For Feenberg, both Marcuse and Habermas fail to understand the nitty-gritty of technology.[8]

"Scientific and technological rationality," Marcuse believes, underlies the logic of the capitalist social order. Through it, capitalist production is increased in unprecedented heights. Likewise, it shields the capitalist social order from various forms of resistance by effectively subsuming the whole society into the vortex of its own rationality—efficiency, productivity, profitability, and economic growth. It successfully attunes individual desires and aspirations to the very reason within which capitalism operates—the desire for profit and wealth and the perpetual attitude to consume. The subtle integration of individuals to capitalist logic results in the total incarceration of the society and any attempt to escape from it becomes a slim option.[9] The Marcusean path conceives technology as only one dimensional; hence it abrogates technology in its totality. It is, therefore, mistaken.[10]

Habermas proposes a value-neutral view of technology. His theory of modernity holds that society is constituted by two worlds: the system and the lifeworld. Each world is governed by a distinct medium. Systems such as politics and economy are coordinated by the media of power and money, while the lifeworld operates through the medium of communication. Each of these media is internally suited to its own logic—the systems for material reproduction, while the lifeworld for socio-cultural reproduction. Feenberg claims that Habermas's "system-lifeworld" distinction pictures a dualistic world—world separate from each other which imply that the operation of the system is neutral. In the Habermasian path, technology is beyond the operational limit of the lifeworld.[11] This is also a mistake.[12]

Instrumentalization theory advances a "double aspect theory of technology." It combines the insight of both "technological determinism" and "constructivism". The former view claims that the essence of technology is

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[8] See Andrew Feenberg, "The Mediation is the Message: Rationality and Agency in the Critical Theory of Technology," *Techné*: *Research in Philosophy and Technology*, 17:1 (Winter 2013): 7–24.

[9] See Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

[10] Andrew Feenberg, "The Critical Theory of Technology," in *Transforming Technology: A Critical Theory Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 164.

[11] Feenberg, "The Mediation is the Message," 7–24.

[12] Feenberg, "The Critical Theory of Technology," 164.

untainted by historical factors and that the social environment has nothing to do with its operation. The latter view posits that technology is wholly dependent upon its social context.[13] Instrumentalization theory, therefore, postulates that technology is constitutive of both aspects. Technology has two dimensions, the "primary instrumentalization" and "secondary instrumentalization." In primary instrumentalization, technology is conceived and made for the purpose of productivity and efficiency. Technology is decontextualized from the social milieu and hence it is oblivious to the social environment where it operates. Secondary instrumentalization points to the contextualized object. Technology enters the social world and is imbued with social meanings. As a result, it acquires social significance as it influences and shapes the person's relations with the world. Beyond productivity and efficiency, the contextualized object is evaluated as whether accommodating or excluding particular interests or whether it is sensitive or not to social values.

Feenberg holds that technology must be analyzed in two dimensions.[14] While Marcuse only considers the primary instrumentalization, Habermas maintains that the two dimensions are distinct from one another. Hence, the possible interactions of the two domains are considerably severed in both Marcuse and Habermas. As a consequence, there is an inevitable absence of feedback mechanisms, criticisms, and possible enrichments. As the level of primary instrumentalization is immune from the responses of the social environment, technology "can act on its object without reciprocity."[15] For technology to be truly at the service of society, the to-and-fro movement of primary and secondary instrumentalizations must be unhindered. Once this is done, the primary instrumentalization—the decontextualized object—is subjected to the analyzing and evaluating gazes of the social environment. In such case, there is enormous potentiality to alter the design of the technology to make it sensitive to social and cultural conditions. Technology would then be "embedded in a larger framework of social relations." Rather than serving the logic of efficiency and productivity alone, technology supports social values and public interests.
The capitalist social order, however, disconnects the reciprocal relations of the two domains, particularly, in the process of production through "decontextualization," "reductionism," "autonomization," and

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[13] See Andrew Feenberg, "From Essentialism to Constructivism: Philosophy of Technology at the Crossroads," in *Technology and the Good Life?* ed. by Eric Higgs, Andrew Light, and David Strong (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2000).

[14] See Andrew Feenberg, "Critical Theory of Technology: An Overview," *Tailoring Biotechnologies*, 1:1 (Winter, 2005), 47–64.
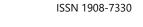
[15] *Ibid*., 48.

"positioning" of "the collective laborer and to nature as the object of production."[16]

Decontextualization abstracts the "technical elements" from "particular contexts [so] that they can be combined in devices and reinserted into any context."[17] Likewise, abstraction is done to the workers as capitalism forcefully removes individuals from the society within which they operate and inserts them into a system that technically organizes the production process into several domains—this process has come to us as the "division of labor." In reductionism, nature and human beings are only treated as a possible resource in the production process. Autonomization organizes the production process into highly specialized divisions—this is aptly described in Weber's bureaucratic model where each office is assigned with specific functions. But more than that, each office can dispose their function off without necessarily expecting a reaction from the other. Thus, in human relations, a manager commands his subordinates while expecting them to obey his orders. Positioning refers to the relation between the "technical subject" and the object wherein the former holds decisional or directional power over the other. In sum, the production of technical object (technology) and its production process is done in a highly controlled condition (technical action) for its optimal result. In other words, in the capitalist social order, technology and its production process are done with the end view of productivity and efficiency. The capitalist productive order is not, however, completely immune from feedbacks. It encounters social norms, values, and interests, making it vulnerable to social responses. Social acceptance, rejection, and criticism have important bearing to technological productions, particularly on technical designs to attain social functions. By responding to social and cultural peculiarities, the myth of technical isolation is demystified and the chasm between primary and secondary instrumentalizations is broken down.

Feenberg's opposition to technological determinism brings to light society's critical role to safeguard technology's alienating aspect. In his accounts of the disabled individuals for a "barrier-free design" of "sidewalk ramp," "French Minitel," and AIDS activists' struggle over the cure of AIDS, Feenberg shows how public interests is incorporated in technological design to address broader public needs.[18] In the case of the "sidewalk ramp," the interests of disabled people are given due consideration resulting to a more inclusive society, one that caters to individuals with disability, while the French Minitel altered its original design from purely "information

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[16] *Ibid*.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] See Andrew Feenberg, *Questioning Technology* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 134–136, 125–126.

distribution" to a "communication based" or dialogical based technology. In these instances, people's actions play a key role in transforming technologies to become more inclusive and responsive to social needs.

Feenberg relies on "micropolitics" where individuals at the local level directly confront technological problems through direct involvement in resistance movements or in dialogue with experts.[19] Feenberg's model rests on people's active involvement in influencing and shaping the level of primary instrumentalization. It hinges on greater public participation, democratization, and restoration of human agency against the destructive whirlpool of technology.

MASIPAG's Alternative Farming Technologies: Farmers Reclaiming Control over Their Farms

MASIPAG is a Philippine based national network of farmers and scientists working hand in hand to develop farming technologies and practices that support the interests of small-scale farmers. Its establishment preceded from a series of nationwide consultations on the impact of the Green Revolution in the Philippines. Moved by glaring rural poverty caused by the farmers' inability to cope with an agricultural technique developed and prescribed by the Green Revolution, MASIPAG seeks to improve farmers' quality of life by developing alternative farming practices and technologies that build farmers' strengths and capacities.

The Green Revolution is a set of strategy which aims to address food deficits by increasing food productivity through agricultural research and infrastructure developments through the combined efforts of governments and various aid agencies such as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. [20] Some scholars, however, claimed that it is more than that. Cleaver, for instance, emphasized that it was part of an overall strategy to transform the Third World as an "open profitable new market" and to integrate the agricultural sector as an important component of capitalism. The restructuring of the agriculture sector is, therefore, an imperative. By training agricultural technicians, economic managers, and policy-makers, agricultural policies in Asia, such as in the Philippines, are successfully shaped and defined by the ideals of the Green Revolution.[21] Hence, more than an agricultural technique, the Green Revolution is also a political approach to

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[19] *Ibid.*, 120.

[20] See Prabhu Pingali, "Green Revolution: Impacts, Limits, and the Path Ahead," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 109:31 (2012), 12302–12308.

[21] Harry M. Cleaver, "The Contradictions of the Green Revolution," *The American Economic Review*, 62: 1/2 (1972), 178–179.
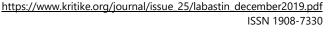
expand the capitalist market.[22] Several decades after it was implemented, the agricultural industry is now dominated by agrochemical giants like Bayer, Syngenta, BASF, Monsanto, and Dow DuPont—the world's leading manufacturer of fertilizers and pesticides, and producers of seeds like rice, maize, and wheat. Bayer and Monsanto alone account for "24 percent of the world pesticide market and 29 percent of the world's seed market."[23] Accordingly, there has been a growing concentration of the production of agricultural inputs to a handful of agricultural companies in the world. [24]

The Green Revolution is controversially paradoxical in many ways. After it was implemented in the 1960's, an unprecedented increase in food production followed in the following decades.[25] Increasing food productions means lower food prices, higher caloric intake, and better health and life expectancy.[26] Likewise, there was also evidence of adverse effects to ecological diversity and communal unity and cultural values. "Instead of abundance, [communities] *have* been left with diseased soils, pest-infested crops, waterlogged deserts, and indebted and discontented farmers. Instead of peace, [communities] have inherited conflict and violence."[27] Furthermore, in their study on the rice-growing villages in the Philippines, Estudillo, Quisumbing, and Otsuka attributed changes in household income to nonfarm rather than farm income sources.[28]

The Rockefeller and Ford foundations took the lead in agricultural research in the developing countries. In the Philippines, the founding of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) was made possible through a substantial funding from both foundations. IRRI was established to conduct scientific studies to develop high yielding varieties of rice that mature quickly and that are suited to changing weather conditions in order to guarantee uninterrupted production for the whole year. To supplement and hasten rice production, the government provided the necessary infrastructures like irrigations and farm to market roads. The *Masagana 99*, of the Marcos years,

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[22] Vandana Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology, and Politics* (London: Zed Books, 1991), 11.

[23] Juliette Leroux, "Food Security at Stake: What the Bayer-Monsanto Merger Means for Europe," in *Green European Journal* (7 March 2018), <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/food-security-at-stake-what-the-bayer-monsanto-merger-means-for-europe>.

[24] *Ibid*.

[25] Jonna P. Estudillo and Kiejiro Otsuka, "Lessons from Three Decades of Green Revolution in the Philippines," *The Developing Economies*, XLIV-2 (2006), 123–148.

[26] Robert Eugen Evenson, "Assessing the Impact of Green Revolution, 1960 to 2000," *Science*, 300 (2003), 758–762.

[27] Shiva, *Violence of the Green Revolution*, 11.

[28] Jonna P. Estudillo, Agnes R. Quisumbing, and Keijiro Otsuka, "Income distribution in rice-growing villages during the post-Green Revolution periods: the Philippine case, 1985 and 1998," *Agricultural Economics*, 25:1 (2001), 71–84.

was the embodiment of the Green Revolution in the Philippines. It was the brainchild of the Green Revolution.

Masagana 99's IR-8 was bred from seeds coming from China, Japan, Taiwan, and Indonesia and in highly controlled conditions in Los Baños, Laguna. It was the universal prototype propagated and distributed to Filipino farmers. Its cultivation requires a transformation of local farming practices to suit its needs and its demands. IR-8 necessitates that "[it] would be densely planted and amply supplied with water and fertilizer in meticulously weeded, pest-controlled fields."[29] In short, it requires proper irrigation and application of fertilizers and pesticides—modern farming techniques alien and unfit to the local and small-scale farmers. Its promise rests on intensive chemical inputs as it is only through it that the seeds thrive and produce higher yields. Its success hinges on the realization of certain ideal conditions. "Without fertilizer or without controlled irrigation the new varieties [HYV] usually yield no more and sometimes less than traditional strains."[30] IR8 was developed unmindful of the local conditions. Its development "epitomizes a theory-driven, disembedded approach to crop improvement."[31] The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) notes that benefitting from Green Revolution entails a lot of required conditions to succeed, such as: "*ensuring* that small farmers have fair access to land, knowledge, and modern inputs," infrastructure support like proper irrigations are provided, and possible negative impacts to environment are effectively safeguarded.[32] Indeed, Green Revolution was driven by farming practices within the framework of the market whose "focus has largely been on promoting large-scale, high-input agriculture."[33] But as Stone and Glover emphasizes, "…the heavy dependence on external inputs was part of what made the seed attractive to technocrats and American aid officials; it was not a drawback but a benefit." While Stone and Glover did not explicitly state what they meant, the "USAID distributed IR-8 in a package together with farm chemicals supplied by Esso and Atlas."[34]

The Green Revolution has impacted Filipino farmers in various ways. Traditional farming practices (diversified agriculture) were replaced with

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[29] See Glenn Davis Stone and Dominic Glover, "Disembedding Grain: Golden Rice, the Green Revolution, and Heirloom Seeds in the Philippines," *Agriculture and Human Values*, 33:1 (Spring, 2016).

[30] Cleaver, "Contradictions of the Green Revolution," 177.

[31] *Ibid*.

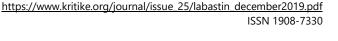[32] International Food Policy Research Institute, "Green Revolution: Curse or Blessing?" in *International Food Policy Research Institute* (2002), <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/64639/filename/64640.pdf>.

[33] See Lorenz Bachmann, Elizabeth Cruzada, and Sarah Wright, *Food Security and Farmer empowerment* (Laguna: MASIPAG, 2009).

[34] *Ibid*.

modern techniques (monocropping). Rather than producing for consumption, farmers were advised by agricultural technicians to produce cash crops which made farmers vulnerable to market fluctuations. More than this, the transformation of traditional farming to modern agriculture has positioned farmers at the nexus of the agricultural market. With modern agriculture, agricultural production is undertaken with the end view for profit. As the success of monocrop farming depends on the farmers' capacity to purchase, farmers have to sell in order to purchase farm implements. In all of these, a qualitative change in the farmers occur, they have become dependent on agrochemical companies not only for farm implements such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides but also for agricultural techniques. Now, they have to rely from agricultural experts and technicians, often trained by agrochemical companies. This has, unwittingly, stripped them of the knowledge and skills. Farmers were "deskilled."[35] Rather than producers of knowledge, modern agriculture made them consumers. By being so, they were dispossessed of their control over their farms and of their lives. In spite of these, IFPRI dubs the Green Revolution a success.[36]

With these contexts in mind, MASIPAG seeks to develop alternative farming practices by developing alternative farming technologies. By alternative farming practices we mean an agriculture system which tries to do away with capital-intensive and high-input agriculture prescribed by the Green Revolution. Often, this is referred to us as organic agriculture. By alternative farming technologies we mean the techniques employed for seed breeding, soil fertilization, and pest-control. To boost production, organic agriculture stresses the importance of the well-being of the agro-ecosystem which includes the promotion and enhancement of biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity as opposed to the synthetic agrochemical inputs touted by modern agriculture.[37] Alternative farming technologies, therefore, are integral to organic agriculture. Aside from health benefits and ecological well-being, organic agriculture forms part of an overall strategy to reclaim farmers' control over their farms. Control over the farmers' farm means that farmers no longer have to rely on agricultural inputs from agrochemical companies such as seeds, fertilizer, and pesticides. It means breaking dependency from corporate control of agricultural technologies. Organic agriculture, therefore, is not done for the sake of it. It is envisioned

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[35] Borrowed from Braverman's notion of deskilling. See Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974).

[36] *Ibid*.

[37] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "What is Organic Farming," in *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* <http://www.fao.org/organicag/oa-faq/oa-faq1/en>.

as an alternative approach to a farming approach prescribed by the Green Revolution. Furthermore, it is hoped to be a harbinger of a transformed individual (farmer) and of the relationships (collaborative) between scientists and farmers.

MASIPAG works on a presupposition that farmers can only regain their control over their farms when they become active producers not only of farm implements but also of knowledge. Hence, farmers' empowerment has been the crucial end of various MASIPAG's programs. One of its key approaches is to turn farmers to scientists or "farmer-scientists." In this approach, farming and inquiry are simultaneously done. The field is transformed into a site of inquiry and discovery. From seed breeding to the development of a fully sustainable agro-ecosystem, the farmer stands at the center as the source and the apex of transformation. In the "rice seed improvement program"—which comprises seed banking, seed breeding, and trial farming—the farmer takes cognizance of rice varieties which thrive in the local environment, resist pest infestations, and produce maximum yield. In this program, traditional varieties of rice are retrieved and bred with other varieties through trial farming. Successful varieties are reproduced for cultivation and production while other varieties are kept so that other farmers may use it for further breeding and trials. It is also in trial farming that farmers are initiated with the use of organic fertilizers and pesticides. In rice seed improvement program, as in other MASIPAG programs, theory is embedded with practice and practice is informed by theories. Continuous practice transforms the farmer from a consumer to a producer of knowledge. From being a farmer, she is transformed into a farmer-scientist. While the farmer gains knowledge and skills, she assists other farmers to convert from conventional farming (modern farming) to organic agriculture. Currently, MASIPAG has 273 rice crosses developed and produced by "farmer-breeders."[38]

A Search for Critical Engagement with Technology

Feenberg's model for critical engagement with technology is founded on a view that there is an inherent tension between human beings and technology. It is founded on the presupposition of technological dominance and social resistance. The instrumentalization theory clarifies technology's two-dimensionality, that is, technology is Janus-faced. It is meant to show that technological development is not immune from the social environment. While it served the logic of productivity and efficiency it can also be transformed or reconfigured to serve the interests of the public. The public,

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[38] *Ibid.*

however, should not be consigned at the receiving end. It must actively take part by suturing those who produce technology to be mindful of social values. Sensitivity to social values reduces technology's adverse effects to society. Indeed, technology is not necessarily inimical to society as technological determinism emphasizes. Hence, Feenberg calls for greater democratization of technology. Democracy and the democratization of technology ensure "that the power is with the people, not with technology."[39] It aims to reverse the asymmetrical relations between human beings and technology.

"[Feenberg's model], Verbeek notes, "rests upon a conceptualization of human-technology relations that is highly contestable."[40] It suggests a relation of struggle between human subjects and technology and hence a liberation from technology. Drawing from Latour's actor network theory and Ihde's post-phenomenology, Verbeek highlights that "[T]he human being cannot be understood in isolation from technology, just as technology cannot be understood in isolation from humanity. Conceptualizing [human-technology] relation in terms of struggle and oppression is like seeking resistance against gravity, or language."[41] In other words, insofar as technology is constitutive of human existence, liberation from technology is futile. Rather than resistance, what is needed is productive interaction. Rather than liberation, what is needed is "creative accompaniment."[42] By creative accompaniment, Verbeek means, "creative interpretations of technologies" by "*governing* technological developments" so that human beings are able to shape their existence through a productive interaction with technologies. Ultimately, for Verbeek, the question is not to bring power back to the people but on how individuals live meaningful lives in the midst of technological developments. In other words, the problem is not with technology per se but on how human beings have creatively employed technology in order to make sense of their existence.

Feenberg's emphasis on human-technology relations is silent about the corporate control of technology which consigns many individuals as passive consumers of an economy based on profit. It is true that powerlessness often results from people's inability to govern their lives but this is not so much because they are helpless victims of technology. Human beings have always the option to creatively interact with technologies to give new forms of existence. The problem is not so much on technological dominance but economic dominance hastened by technological innovations. Feenberg's account of the French Minitel does not really lead to a

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[39] Verbeek, "Resistance is Futile," 77.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] *Ibid.*

democratized technology, while it changes the technology from information based to a communicative one, its reconfiguration has "produce[d] a more marketable and lucrative technology."[43] In sum, its reconfiguration became more advantageous to corporate interests than to the people.[44] In the capitalist social order, it is profit and return of investment before social values and public interests. Hence, in the dispensation of power, whether to reform the technology or not, public interests are often subsumed in the name corporate gains.

Take for example, the rapid innovations taking place in communication and transportation technologies. While smart phones take on greater role to address the various needs of fast-faced lifestyles, it can hardly be considered as democratization. The same can also be said with the latest development in automobile technologies. While manufacturers take more active role in developing low emission and environment friendly models by harnessing renewable energies, they can hardly be said to be democratic. While addressing public needs and environmental problems, corporate interests were also crucial as a deciding factor. In other words, technological innovations and technological reconfigurations which are supposed to consider the interests of the public cannot be taken at face value because while there is significant projection to cater public interests, the public is also wallowed into the raging whirlpool of capitalism. This is evident on how corporations address the economic shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism or Neo-Fordism.

Fordism is a post-World War II economic paradigm, especially in Western societies, characterized by mass production and consumption of goods by utilizing "scientific management" in the organization of labor and industrial production techniques through a thorough employment of "time" and "motion studies." Likewise, Fordism also banks on "promotion" and "advertising" as an important aspect of marketing strategies.[45] Fordism is also characterized by significant state interventions through "social welfare provisions", "conflict mediation", and "economic management" by regulating corporate behavior in the national level and "inter-state cooperation."[46]Economic management and planning at the global level was coursed through international bodies like the International Monetary Fund-World Bank (IMF-WB) and World Trade Organization (WTO). Post-Fordism

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[43] See Gerald Doppelt, "What Sort of Ethics Does Technology Require?" *Journal of Ethics*, 5:2 (2001), 157–195.

[44] *Ibid*.

[45] See Frederick Winslow Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: Harper, 1911).

[46] See Clark Kerr, John T. Dunlop, Frederisck Harbison, and Charles Mayers, *Industrialism and Industrial Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

is a term used to describe the changes in the economic structure in the Fordist era to address its production and consumption problems, some of these are: overproduction and saturation of the western market, rising competition from Newly-Industrialized Countries, such as Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. To arrest the lurking economic disaster, corporations responded by reconfiguring the whole process of production and marketing chains, including the reorganization of labor. Thus, from mass production of goods, customization for specific market niche became the rule—making the design and quality more suited to market demands and more sensitive to consumer lifestyles and tastes. Furthermore, corporate giants also rely on technologies, such as computers, to implement the "Just-in-Time stock management scheme" where production and delivery of goods depend on market behavior which in turn necessitates flexibility in the manufacturing process paving the way for what we now know as subcontracting and off shore production.[47]

The point is that changes in productions and in the designs of consumer goods do not necessarily translate to democratization as can be gleaned in the economic transformations in the Fordist to the Post-Fordist era. Feenberg's examples on "sidewalk ramp," "cure for AIDS," and the "French Minitel" are undeniable instances where technological design and purpose are geared towards addressing the need of the public. But this is only one side of the story. In a social order where the production of goods is held by corporate giants, technological innovations are suspect to serve and further the interest of profit. In short, any technological reform which is only focused on making technology responsive to public needs without substantially questioning, opposing, or undermining corporate control and ownership can hardly be said to be democratic; it is corporatism.

Corporatism, "the power of business corporations over society," is primarily grounded on the research process or "experimentalism" whose ultimate purpose is to further "profit and power above all ends." [48] In this sense, the generation of knowledge is not intended for the sake of knowledge but in the service of capitalist interest.[49] But unlike prior researches which only takes place in the laboratory, experimentalism happens in the society itself where society becomes its whole laboratory and resource for new inventions and hence commodities. "Social mediation" performs this important function as it supplies the necessary information—especially to that which is valuable in the society. In this form of experimentation, truth is

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[47]See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

[48] Luis Suarez-Villa, *Technocapitalism: A Critical Perspective on Technological Innovation and Corporatism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 1.

[49] *Ibid.*, 8.

subordinated to that which has "commercial value."[50] In short, social mediation does not necessarily lead to democratization of technology. In fact, the opposite could be the case. It can further corporate control.

Successful capitalist technological developments and innovations happen when social values are turned into commodity. If such a case happens, the commodity's marketability is assured. Commodifying social values meant turning the whole society into a laboratory where people's desires and behaviors—cultural, religious, political, and economic—are observed, analyzed, and evaluated to draw out social values so that they be integrated in the production of commodities. In the Philippines, for example, the manufacturing of beauty products, from whitening soap to whitening lotion, capitalize on the cultural behavior of a people obsessed on becoming flawlessly white. The point is that, a critical engagement with technology should not focus on making technologies responsive to social needs without bringing into mind the corporate control of technology. Technological developments and innovations that serve public interests are praiseworthy but if they proceed on to giving corporations greater hold over the public by siphoning unprecedented profit and power, they must be viewed with suspicion, and if necessary, they must be questioned, opposed, and overturned. While Feenberg sees the infusion of social values as a functional imperative to democratize technology, it can also be used by corporations to have greater leverage over the public. Indeed, the people's participation in technological transformations does not necessarily lead to democratization.

The engagement of MASIPAG with agricultural technologies begins with a different presupposition. Unlike Feenberg's model, it does not see technology per se as adversary. Recognizing the negative impact of agricultural technologies promoted by the Green Revolution, MASIPAG developed alternative technologies that emancipate farmers from agrochemical corporations. Technological innovations, in MASIPAG's view, should be grounded on local conditions, developed by end users, and produce for social development and not for corporate interests. The way for people to take hold of their lives, MASIPAG believes, is to equip them with skills—to skill or reskill them so that they become producers of alternative knowledge and techniques. Here, knowledge and techniques still serve the logic of efficiency and productivity but it is put at the service of social development and not of capital and profit. For sure, MASIPAG farmers are also driven to increase production and efficiency in order to earn a leaving. But unlike the arrangements in the Green Revolution, MASIPAG farmers are no longer under the mercy of corporate giants.
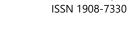
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[50] "Social mediation here refers to the intervention of society through … the kind of relations that stimulate the generation of new knowledge and creativity." *Ibid.*, 11.

While Feenberg's democratization works within the framework of primary and secondary instrumentalizations, the MASIPAG model believes that the primary and secondary instrumenatalization, to use Feenberg's language, goes simultaneously. Technologies, farming technologies in particular, ought to be developed in the context so that the end user, the farmer, is also the developer. In this way, the farmer ceases to be the object of capitalist production. She becomes a subject. Here, the development of agricultural technologies is consciously undertaken not only for efficiency and productivity but more so for social development and individual and environmental well-being. In MASIPAG, technological democratization means more than serving public interests, it means breaking away from corporate interests. Like Feenberg's model, it calls on people's participation in partnership with scientists to produce socially valuable knowledge. But unlike Feenberg's, MASIPAG is conscious that any production of knowledge and techniques must not be held hostage to corporate interests. Social mediation, MASIPAG believes, should not be at the expense of the public.

What the MASIPAG model offers is an alternative vision of technological development—one that is based on local needs and developed by the community. Furthermore, as opposed to Green Revolution where societies are organized to fulfill the needs of the technology, MASIPAG shows that individuals have the potential to organize technology at the service of society. But, whether the MASIPAG model is appropriate to a highly complex social organization—one that requires centralized planning and economy and hierarchical bureaucracy, surely not. But if we envision a decentralized society based on local economy and driven by social and economic well-being rather than profit and return of investments, surely the MASIPAG model offers a food for thought. What is at stake is whether the MASIPAG model remains to be an alternative to the status quo or a model of a future technological development. Recent developments tell that there remains the potential of modern technologies to serve decentralized forms of human organizations. This possibility, however, entails a "shift [from] the center of economic power from national to local scale and from centralized bureaucratic forms to local, popular assemblies."[51]

As a model of a future technological development, the MASIPAG model can be brushed aside as a romantic musing as it necessitates a dawning of a new society which is completely different from what we have today. Romantic imagining it may be, but it does not mean that it is not possible. Unless we forget that new forms of human existence and social organizations

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[51] See Murray Bookchin, "Towards a Liberatory Technology," in *The Anarchist Library* (May 1965), <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/lewis-herber-murray-bookchin-towards-a-liberatory-technology>.
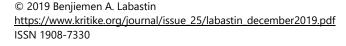
are products of hopes and imaginations. The best possible world is still yet to come.

While Feenberg's model remains in the threshold of primary and secondary instrumentalizations, the MASIPAG model shows that society need not beg from the powers that be so that technologies serve social values.

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The Naturalized and Dialectical Ontologies of Nietzsche and Nishida

Kelly Louise Rexzy P. Agra

Abstract: This paper brings together the ontologies of two philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche and Kitaro Nishida, in order to provide an alternative ontology different from the one that is founded in metaphysics. Nietzsche's philosophy provides a naturalized ontology, while Nishida's philosophy provides a dialectical ontology. Their philosophies are very different in form and objective, but they converge in at least two points: the ontological claims of (1) immanence and (2) transitoriness.

Keywords: Nietzsche, Nishida, naturalized ontology, dialectical ontology

"When your heart is ever open, and your spirit, free, your receptivity becomes infinite. Once you close it, it is the end of philosophical life."[1]

The experimental aim of this paper is to bring together the ontologies of two philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche and Kitaro Nishida, and see how they may provide an alternative ontology different from the one that is founded in metaphysics. In this paper, I present Nietzsche's philosophy as one that provides a naturalized ontology, and Nishida's philosophy as one that provides a dialectical ontology. After doing this, I then argue that although their philosophies are very different in form and objective, they nonetheless converge in at least two ontological claims: immanence and transitoriness.

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[1] This is a statement by Alfredo P. Co in one of his lectures on Chinese Philosophy during the first semester of academic year 2011-2012, at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines.

Nietzsche's World of Immanence

"The world … is in all eternity chaos,"[2] says Friedrich Nietzsche in his immanent critique of traditional metaphysics and western morality. His radical overturning of Plato's ontology of transcendence[3] brings to the fore a "new image of thought" that gives credence to the world's apparent materiality, anthropomorphism, temporality, and chaos. Gilles Deleuze calls this counter ontology, an ontology of immanence. As opposed to a metaphysics of Being and Permanence, Nietzsche dares to challenge the "last man" to face the post human condition, and recognize the death of "God"— the symbolic representation of metaphysics itself, its highest concept— signaling the end of metaphysics, in order to affirmatively embrace a de-deified reality, reality de-conceptualized.

Nietzsche violently beats the bell with a hammer in order to wake philosophy up from its illusion of transcendence.[4] In his *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks,* he speaks of the Parmenidean prayer which goes:

> Grant me, ye gods, but one certainty … and if it be but a log's breadth on which to lie, on which to ride upon the sea of uncertainty. Take away everything that comes-to-be, everything lush, colourful, blossoming, illusory, everything that charms and is alive. Take all these for yourselves and grant me but one and only, poor empty certainty.[5]

Nietzsche criticizes the Parmenidean escape from the world in order to attribute reality to the logical, empty, and pale concept of being, the sole arbiter of essence. He attacks Western philosophy's obsession with permanence and transcendence, celebrated in the notion of God, in the

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[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 109. To be cited as *GS* hereafter.

[3] Paolo Bolaños, in a thesis entitled "On Affirmation and Becoming: A Deleuzian Reading of Nietzsche's Critique of Nihilism" claims that the overturning of Platonic metaphysics is the other half of the cure Nietzsche offers to the predicament that is nihilism, with the other half being his ethics of affirmation. See Paolo Bolaños, "On Affirmation and Becoming: A Deleuzian Reading of Nietzsche's Critique of Nihilism" (Master's Thesis, Brock University, Canada, 2005).

[4] Paolo A. Bolaños, "Nietzsche and the Ethological Conception of Ethics," in *Minerva* 11 (2007), 114.

[5] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* trans. by Marianne Cowan (USA: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1998), 11. To be cited as *PTAG* hereafter.

Platonic world of forms[6], or the Cartesian[7] and Kantian[8] rational certainty. He goes against the 'Idea's' "triumph over the world and the claims of the senses"[9] in Western philosophy, that is, the valorization of the Idea at the expense of matter. In Western philosophy, matter had always been regarded as the reluctant, recalcitrant, and resistant element, it had often been regarded as that which obstructs the absolute actualization of ideas or forms.[10]

In addition to the Nietzschean declaration of the death of God, he speaks of the "Destiny of the Soul."[11] If Nietzsche attacks the highest ontological concept God, he is equally audacious in his criticisms towards the *soul*—one of the most valued concepts of subjectivity both in ethics and epistemology in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern philosophies. The reach of metaphysical thinking in ethics and epistemology, through the concept of the soul, has, for Nietzsche, made us forget about the nobility of the body. He stresses how the soul is so unknown and unreachable, and yet it reigns supreme in the realm of morality, in the kingdom of Reason,[12] in *meta-physika*.[13] What Nietzsche's counterculture intends to bring is the reversal of

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[6] In *Phaedo*, Socrates is presented saying, "I speak not of these [absolute beauty and absolute good] alone, but of absolute greatness, and health, and strength, and of the essence or true nature of everything." Plato, *Phaedo*, in *Dialogues of Plato*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2010), 65e.

[7] René Descartes was in search for "the first principle of philosophy" which no ground of doubt would be capable of shaking, and he found this in the certainty of his own existence, thus writing the famous phrase: "Cogito ergo sum." See René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of rightly conducting the Reason and seeking Truth in the Sciences*, trans. by Laurence J. Lafleur (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1956), Chapter IV.

[8] In Immanuel Kant's Preface for the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he writes, "It is ... a powerful appeal to reason to undertake anew the most difficult of its tasks, namely that of self-knowledge, and to institute a court of appeal which should protect reason in its rightful claims, but dismiss all groundless pretentions, and to do this … according to the eternal and unalterable laws of reason. This court of appeal is none other than the critique of pure reason itself. … Hence, I mean by this the decision about the possibility or impossibility of metaphysics in general, and the determination of its sources, its range and its limits – and all this according to principles." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* trans. Marcus Weigelt, based on the translation of Max Müller (London, England: Penguin Books, 2007), 7.

[9] Nietzsche, *PTAG*, 12

[10] See Christine Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[11] Friedrich Nietzsche, Preface to *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. by Walter Kaufman and R.J. Hollingdale in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. and ed. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1989), § 7. To be cited as *GM* hereafter.

[12] Bolaños comments, 'God,' is just another term for Reason. Bolaños, "Nietzsche and the Ethological Conception of Ethics," 114.

[13] Literally translated as beyond the physical. In *What is Called Thinking?*, Heidegger explains the transformation of the concept of metaphysics as the overcoming of what is physical or natural: "Man conceived as the rational animal is the physical exceeding the physical—that is, man raising himself above the animal, the sensual, the physical that he is, through reason,—in short: in the nature of man as the rational animal, there is the passing from the physical to the

the metaphysical overcoming of physical nature—to bring the body back to life, as well as to bring life back to the body. Rather than treating the body as the reluctant, recalcitrant, and resistant obstacle to the soul, Nietzsche's philosophy would go as far as to assert how there is only the body. He describes the body as "living and corporeal, through which and over and beyond which a tremendous inaudible stream flow."[14] It is, for him, "the most astonishing idea"[15] in which there is more wisdom than in the deepest philosophy. Nietzsche writes: "Body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body."[16]

The body for Nietzsche is "composed of a plurality of irreducible forces, a multiple phenomenon, a unity of domination."[17] Deleuze elaborates this and explains that it is a product of chance, an assemblage of forces that have thus affected, influenced, and shaped it. These forces are classified into two: active force and reactive force. The active force is what the noble or the master expends from its affirmative power. The reactive force is what the slave expends from its negative power. While the former is creative, the latter is reactive. The body as an assemblage of the forces that it expends and receives within radically contingent contexts makes it a dynamic composition, a singularity molded by other singularities. This is radically different from the soul, conceived as determined, atemporal, static, transcendent, complete, and immaterial; confined within a corporeal body that prevents its realization. At the same time, while it is open to being affected, it is also always and already affecting. Through this naturalized anthropological-philosophical claim, history and the world would be seen as an ever-dynamic immanent play of forces. It is on this account that Deleuze refers to Nietzsche's philosophy as a philosophy of "pure immanence."[18]

From this immanentization of bodies, history, and the world, one could already surmise how Nietzsche's thinking differs from dominant strands of philosophical thinking before his time. It is this discussion of the body which anchors Nietzsche's account of the immanence of *life* and *will to*

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non-physical, the supra-physical: thus man himself is the metaphysical." Martin Heidegger, *What is called thinking?* trans. by J. Glenn Gray (New York: Perennial, 2004), 58.

[14] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Will to Power* trans. Walter Kaufman and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 659. To be cited as *WP* hereafter.

[15] *Ibid*., 659.

[16] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* trans. by Walter Kaufman, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York: The Viking Press, 1954), I, 4. To be cited as *TSZ* hereafter.

[17] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* trans. by Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 40. Deleuze echoes here the Spinozistic bend of Nietzsche in relation to the body "that we do not even know what a body *can do*, we talk about consciousness and spirit and chatter on about it all, but we do not know what a body is capable of, what forces belong to it or what they are preparing for." To be cited as *NP* hereafter.

[18] See Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life,* trans. by Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2005).

power—towards which, according to him, all philosophies should be directed. He writes, "What are our evaluations and moral tables really worth? What is the outcome of their rule? For whom? in relation to what? – Answer: for Life."[19] For Nietzsche, life is the organic origin of all philosophizing. Even a philosophy of transcendence could only be the product of the internal dynamism of the play of forces within the pure immanence of life itself. The transcendent realm is in his rendering the world of fiction that falsifies, devalues, and negates reality,[20] created out of the longing for deliverance from the drudgery of meaningless suffering and the transitoriness of phenomena:

> Once the concept of "nature" had been invented as the opposite of "God," "natural" had to become a synonym of "reprehensible": this whole world of fiction is rooted in hatred of the natural (of reality!); it is the expression of a profound vexation at the sight of reality".[21]

If life for Nietzsche is the most basic ontological fact, the ground of our values and cogitations, the *raison d'être* of our necessary illusions—a life inseparable from a world[22]—he then adds that where there is life, so there is will to power.[23] Will to power, for Nietzsche, is the necessary condition of valuing in

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[19] Nietzsche, *WP*, 254.

[20] Deleuze elaborates: "Life takes on the value of nil insofar as it is denied and depreciated. Depreciation always presupposed a fiction: it is by means of fiction that something is opposed to life. The whole of life then becomes unreal, it is represented as appearance, it takes on a value of nil in its entirety. The idea of another world, of a supersensible world in all its forms (God, essence, the good, truth), the idea of values superior to life, is not one example among many but the constitutive element of all fiction." Deleuze, *NP*, 147.

[21] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, trans. by H.L. Mencken (Auckland: Floating Press, 2010), 15.

[22] Martin Heidegger speaks of this inseparability of life and world, he writes, "The phenomenological category, 'world,' immediately names *what* is lived, the content aimed at in living, that which life holds to...'life' and 'world' are not two separate self-subsistent Objects. … World is the basic category of the content-sense in the phenomenon life." Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, trans. by Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 65.

[23] Nietzsche, *TSZ*, II, 12: "Where I found the living, there I found will to power. Only, where Life is, there is too will: though not will to life, but so I teach you – will to power!" See also Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (London, England: Penguin books, 1990). To be cited as *BGE* hereafter. "The world seen from within, the world described and defined according to its 'intelligible character' – it would be 'will to power' and nothing else" (Nietzsche, *BGE*, 36); "A living thing desires above all to vent its strength – life as such is will to power" (*ibid*., 13); "… it will have to be the will to power incarnate, it will want to grow, expand, draw to itself, gain ascendancy – not out of any morality or immorality, but because it lives, and because life is will to power"(*ibid*., 259). "But what is life? Here we need a new, more definite formulation of the concept life. 'My formula for it is: Life is will to power'" (Nietzsche, *WP*, 258);

general. It is what makes possible every willing, such that every commanding and obeying that occur within the arena of social interaction and cultural life is the reflection of the interplay of wills to power:

> In all willing, it is absolutely a question of commanding and obeying, on the basis…of social structure composed of many "souls".[24]

> "Life" would be an enduring form of process of establishment of force, in which the different contenders grow unequally. To what extent resistance is present even in obedience; individual power is by no means surrendered. In the same way, there is in commanding an admission that the absolute power of the opponent has not been vanquished, incorporated, disintegrated. "Obedience" and "commanding" are forms of struggle.[25]

Deleuze describes the will to power as the principle of synthesis of forces. It is never separable from force but is neither superior nor identical with it, and is always changing.[26] If chance is the bringing of forces into relation, the will to power is the determining principle of this relation.[27] It is "the *plastic* principle that is no wider than what it conditions, that changes itself with the conditioned and determines itself in each case along with what it determines."[28] What such conception of will to power stresses is the plasticity of the body and even life itself. The body, as a synthesis of forces, is never fixed; it is a living struggle of forces whose relation is that of domination. What dominates is the active force. What is subjugated is the reactive force. These two qualities of force, Deleuze interprets, emanate from the two qualities of power: affirmative or negative. As explained earlier, an affirmative power expends an active force that creates and sustains an ascending mode of life. Meanwhile, negative power expends a reactive force that creates and sustains a descending mode of life. Deleuze writes,

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"a new definition of the concept life as will to power" (*ibid.*, 617). Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *La Volente de Puissance*, trans. by G. Bianquis (from the edition of F. Wurzbach), I 204, II 54 in Deleuze, *NP*, 49: "Who therefore will power? an absurd question, if being is by itself will to power."

[24] Nietzsche, *BGE*, 19.
[25] Nietzsche, *WP*, 642.
[26] *Ibid.*, 50.
[27] *Ibid.*, 53.
[28] *Ibid*., 50.

> Affirming and denying, appreciating and depreciating, express the will to power just as acting and reacting express force. (And just as reactive forces are still forces, the will to deny, nihilism, is still will to power: "… a *will to nothingness,* an aversion to life; but it is and remains a will!"[29]) … Affirmation is not action but the power of becoming active, *becoming active* personified. Negation is not simple reaction but a *becoming reactive*.[30]

This emphasis on the body and life, which are dialectically determined by will to power, gives birth to a chance-driven conception of the world, or a world without a preordered, predetermined transcendent essence. From the Nietzschean frame of thinking, transcendence is an illusion, the soul is an illusion. For him, these are symptoms of our anthropomorphization of reality. The body as a singularity, dynamically formed by the struggle of all the forces involved in the determination of an individual's being, character, and outlook, becomes a unique and *irreplaceable unity of force*. What this idea signifies is the destruction of the age-old belief in the universality of the *soul* that does not exist, or its modern version, *reason.* We are always and already differently demanded, enticed, restrained, and provoked by the "common mode of nutrition, we call life."[31] Nietzsche demands the realization that "there is no *knowable* world, and that what we purport to apprehend when we talk about the world is nothing but a relation of perspectives or a constellation of concepts"[32] borne out of our singularities. Truth, as he declares "is nothing but an anthropomorphic army of metaphors and metonymies!"[33] For Nietzsche, if there is anything real in our invented, anthropomorphized conceptions of the world, it is their material and contingent genesis from life itself. Our philosophical ruminations are the confessions and manifestations[34] of how we understood and were made to understand our world, not as souls, but as bodies.

Nishida's World of Dialectical Singularities

If Nietzsche provides a picture of a world of chance and immanence in contrast to a world of permanence and transcendence, the Japanese

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[29] Nietzsche, *GM*, III, 28.

[30] Deleuze, *NP*, 54.

[31] Nietzsche, *WP*, 641.

[32] Paolo Bolaños, "From Rigidity to Receptivity: Articulating an Ethics of Thinking via Nietzsche and Adorno," in *Representation and Contestation: Cultural Politics in a Political Century*, ed. by John McSweeney and Ching-Yu Lin (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2010), 171.

[33] *Ibid.*, 174.

[34] Nietzsche, *BGE,* 5-6.

philosopher Kitaro Nishida meanwhile paints a world of dialectical singularities in contrast to a unified world, determined and supported by absolute being. If Nietzsche declares the death of the absolute being God, Nishida substitutes absolute being itself with absolute nothingness. Except that for Nishida, absolute nothingness is not a substance of reality. To be precise, it is not a substance, but a place.

Nishida, in his writings, shows that reality is not ultimately determined nor perfectly formed and is rather found always in the place of absolute nothingness.[35] The place of absolute nothingness, he describes, is the final "place of coming-to-be and passing away,"[36] in which all reality is, all that is constituted and determined, and the wherein of contradictories. In his paradox-ridden characterization, he describes absolute nothingness as nothing other than reality, but is not reality[37]—a "determination without determinant,"[38] a "form of the formless,"[39] "a predicate that can never be a subject."[40] Absolute nothingness is that which makes possible the co-existence of things, but it has no existence in-itself distinct from the myriad manifestations of the historical world.[41] Its circumference is nowhere but its center is everywhere.

Nishida sketches the world as a world of countless individual beings "standing-opposite-to-one-another,"[42]   a   "mutually-acting-upon-one-another,"[43] and a "reciprocally-determining-one-another."[44] He explains this through the Buddhist notion of *dependent origination* and interconnectedness of things which asserts the impossibility of an ultimate grounding for the determination and constitution of the world. What Nishida presents is the relational emergence of a self with other selves, or a singularity with other singularities:

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[35] Elmar Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitaro and Martin Heidegger," trans. by John Krummel and Douglas Berger, in *Philosophy East & West*, 55:2 (April 2005), 235. [Quotations from Nishida coming from his *Collected Works* are copied from this article and Lucy Schultz's "Nishida Kitaro, G.W.F. Hegel, and the Pursuit of the Concrete: A Dialectic of Dialectics," in *Philosophy East & West*, 62:3 (July 2012), unless stated otherwise.]

[36] Nishida Kitaro, *Collected Works of Nishida Kitaro* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1979), 4:219. To be cited as *CW* hereafter.

[37] Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitaro and Martin Heidegger," 235.

[38] Nishida, *CW*, 8:11

[39] *Ibid.*, 4:6

[40] James Heisig, *Philosophers of Nothingness: An essay on the Kyoto School* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 79.

[41] Schultz, "Nishida Kitaro, G.W.F. Hegel, and the Pursuit of the Concrete," 324.

[42] Nishida, *CW*, 8:17

[43] *Ibid.*, 9:147

[44] *Ibid.*, 8:65

> … the self is itself through the fact that it is mediated through an other.[45]
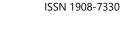
> It is not the case that there are initially independent singular things, which then connect. A singular thing is singular insofar as it stands against singular things.[46]

A singular thing is grounded in the reciprocal self-determination of countless singular things.[47]

In phenomenological terms, this could be understood as something similar to the concept of intersubjectivity, where subject and identity formation are reciprocally and dialectically achieved. With Nishida's reference to dependent origination, what arises is a dialectical self-determination, characterized by discontinuous continuity and contradictory self-identity. It makes possible a singularity's openness towards and recognition of other singularities that are not merely distinct from itself, nor merely occurring side by side with it, but are related with it in the form of a recognition of togetherness characterized by a reciprocal concern, consideration, appreciation and attention. It is a relation that is at the same time an acknowledgment of contingency, dependence, and transitory relational emergence. Elmar Weinmayr explains this Nishidan point on transitory relational emergence:

> … through this transition it discovers itself in the other and the other in itself; both suffering a rupture and finding itself anew in this rupture … there results a creative mediation—whether it is in mutual fitting together or in reciprocal self-determination—when neither of these individual worlds insists on mere "continuity" or the "boundless stubbornness of expanding into the merely persisting continuation" of its own tradition and form. Rather, in awareness of its "absolutely contradictory self-identity" in regard to its own lingering awhile and transitoriness in the encounter of its own continuity, it risks its "identity" and its self-understanding and thus in sum its own unforeseeable transformation and new determination.[48]

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[45] *Ibid.*, 8:85-86

[46] *Ibid.*, 8:65

[47] *Ibid.*, 8:56

[48] Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitaro and Martin Heidegger," 244.

Weinmayr notes that Nishida proceeds from the Buddhist doctrine that describes the fundamental way of existence of all beings: *pratityasamutpada* (Sanskrit) or *engi* (Japanese). The character *en* roughly means relation, dependence, connection; the sign *ki* or *gi* means origination, literally, "dependent origination" or "relational emergence." This means that no being can exist only for itself; it is always only in relation to all the others.[49] What these countless interdependent singularities form is a world, a universal that preserves and embraces their self-negating determination. In the thought of Nishida, this is possible only because what supports the manifold is not absolute being but absolute nothingness, the empty in-between of singularities that separates and holds them together at the same time.

In talking about life in relation to dependent origination, Nishida once again uses a counter intuitive phrase "living by dying."[50] This idea rests on the appreciation that "all things alter and pass away" and that "nothing is eternal or infinite."[51] What this means is that nothing can ever persist without negation. No singularity can discover itself without losing itself. Everything requires the dialectical coexistence of the self and other selves. For Nishida, it is a contradiction, but our existence consists exactly of the contradiction that our way of persisting is through dying.[52] Lucy Schultz explains this dialectical take on life:

> The lives of individuals are dialectical because they persist through negation, and one way that negation is lived out is through the passage of time. For Nishida, the individual becomes individual through the negation of itself and, temporally speaking, negation can be understood as a kind of death.[53]

In this account of life, negation and contradiction become a constitutive process to the coming to presence and existence of things. To exist, from the word *existare* which means to "stand-out," means to arise from a negation, to be the retroactive result of negation—but where negation itself is that which does not exist, or exists only as that which comes to pass but is never directly visible or present. Negation is not an entity, instead, it is the movement, the

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[49] *Ibid.*

[50] "The individual … has life. But the true individual not only has mere life. It lives by dying." Nishida Kitaro, *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*, trans. by David Dilworth (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970), 155.

[51] Nishida, *CW*, 11:408

[52] *Ibid.*, 11:396

[53] Schultz, "Nishida Kitaro, G.W.F. Hegel, and the Pursuit of the Concrete," 327-328.

activity, the being in transition of that which exists.[54] And this dialectical negation that brings entities into presence and existence takes place in absolute nothingness.

Naturalized and Dialectical Ontology

Argument on Immanence

Looking at the underlying theme that directs the philosophies of both Nietzsche and Nishida, one gets a sense of thinking that veers away from the traditional philosophy of Being, permanence, essence, and transcendence. In both of their philosophies, thoughts and the world are not claimed to be constituted by something that is beyond, ecstatic, and complete. For both Nietzsche and Nishida, thoughts and the world are immanently conditioned and determined. As Nishida writes:

> When one speaks of acting, one starts from the individual subject. But we do not act from outside the world. Rather we find ourselves, when acting, already within the midst of the world. Our acting is being-acted.[55]

Meanwhile, Nietzsche writes:

> It is essential that one should not make a mistake over the role of "consciousness": it is our relation with the "outer world" that evolved it …. Usually, one takes consciousness itself as general sensorium and supreme court; nonetheless, it is only a means of communication: it is evolved through social intercourse –"Intercourse" here understood to include influences of the outer world and the reactions they compel on our side; also our effect upon the outer world. [56]

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[54] This is almost similar to G.W.F. Hegel's view of negation in *Science of Logic*: "against contradiction, identity is merely the determination of the simple immediate, of dead being … contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality; it is only insofar as something has contradiction within it that it moves, has an urge, and activity." G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic* trans. by A.V. Miller (New York: Humanity Books, 1969), 439.

[55] Nishida, *CW*, 9:167

[56] Nietzsche, *WP*, 524.

The world as a discontinuous continuity becomes, what Deleuze calls, the *chaosmos*—an understanding of the world as something characterized by contingency rather than necessity, and by the absence of a pre-determined order. In Nishida's philosophy, one understands that "historical reality transforms itself without an underlying substance or ground."[57] The environing world with its dialectical matrix brings about the "concrete reality of life."[58] Meanwhile, for Nietzsche, the world *appears* chaotic based on the testimony of the senses. It "lacks order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever names there are for our aesthetic anthropomorphisms; it is neither perfect nor beautiful, nor noble, nor does it wish to become any of these things; its total character, is in all eternity chaos."[59]

In Nietzsche's naturalized ontology, we become bodies that must be awakened from our transcendental delusions and "despair of the earth."[60] For him, there is no other-world, a world of forms, or a world in-itself. We only have a perspectival image of it.[61] "Depending on where we are coming from, we may interpret the world as 'deified' (descending) or 'naturalized' (ascending). As opposed to the deified view which sees an ordered, well organized universe, Nietzsche's naturalism sees the world as basically chaotic."[62]

On the other hand, for Nishida, the world is the absolutely contradictory self-identity of the one [world] and the many [singularity]. "As one and universal, the world embraces the many singulars, mediates them mutually among themselves, and thus offers to all singulars a place within which they stand in relation to one another, affect one another, are mutually constituted, and thus first able to be as singulars."[63] This world has no center; its unity and continuity are perpetually destroyed.[64] Nishida emphasizes the non-separability of the human subject and the objective world and affirms the world and the self's dialectical determination. He writes:

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[57] Nishida, *CW*, 11:389. Nishida writes, "… no matter how much a man born into a certain society were rich in originality, he would always receive the control of its particular social spirit." Kitaro Nishida, *Zen no Kenkyu*, in Lothar Knauth "Life is Tragic. The Diary of Nishida Kitaro," in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 20:3/4 (1965), 347. Nishida, *CW*, 8:27: "… our life is a constitutive act in which the world constitutes itself." *Ibid.*, 8:86: "Our acting is a constitutive act of the historical world."

[58] Nishida, *CW*, 8:19.

[59] Nietzsche, *GS*, 109. Citation modified.

[60] Nietzsche, *TSZ* I, 3.

[61] Bolaños, "On Affirmation and Becoming," 109.

[62] *Ibid*.

[63] Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitaro and Martin Heidegger,"241.

[64] *Ibid*.

> The broken self-identity of the world means that the one world "has its identity in the many singulars."[65] In other words, what the world is, the form of the world, is determined out of the reciprocally constituting occurrence of all beings and their connection of effects. Alternatively, the continuous self-determination and self-constitution of singulars is none other than a self-determination and self-constitution of the placially mediating, the world.[66]

For Nietzsche, bodies are assemblages of forces. For Nishida, singularities are interdependently determined. For Nietzsche, the dynamic intercourse of forces take place in immanent life. For Nishida, dependent origination take place in absolute nothingness. Their views are not exactly parallel, but they are, to a certain level, compatible.

Argument on Transitoriness

What is furthermore significant to point out in the different descriptions of the world found in the writings of Nietzsche and Nishida, as naturalized and dialectical respectively, is not only their common recognition of immanent reality, but also its transitory character. To an extent, Nishida could be said to be describing the place of becoming, while Nietzsche describes the process of becoming; both, nevertheless, highlight the place and the movement of becoming as transitory.

Instead of *absolute being*, Nishida refers to the place of *absolute nothingness*, which he describes as the place of coming-to-be and passing away, or what he refers to as the "placial mediation"[67] of life (being) and death (nothingness). Life and death, being and nothingness, for Nishida, exist not in a fused concurrence, but as completely independent, contrasting, and thoroughly discontinuous singulars. The image of the Chinese concepts of *Yin* and *Yang* is almost analogous to what Nishida describes. However, despite the distinction between life and death, being and nothingness, Nishida stresses their dialectical interdependence. He explains that their interdependence comes to light through their dialectical movement, which in a "radical and fathomless sense" is an open and creative "movement from form to form,"[68] and in which "the world of the contradictory self-identity of

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[65] Nishida, *CW,* 11:398.
[66] Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitaro and Martin Heidegger," 241.
[67] Nishida, *CW,* 8:41.
[68] *Ibid*., 9:157.

the one and the many is completely groundless and endlessly constituted."[69] Within Nishidan philosophy, one cannot speak of being without immediately presupposing its dialectical relation with nothingness, and one cannot speak of life without immediately presupposing its dialectical relation with death, and these, being-nothingness and life-death is what constitute a reality that is forever in transition. Such transitoriness is manifest precisely because being and life are considered distinct from death and nothingness, and the relational movement of one form to another is what brings into presence [dialectical] reality.

This resonates well with Nietzsche's emphasis on the affirmation of passing away and destroying, of opposition and war, i.e., of *becoming*, along with a radical repudiation of the very concept of *being*.[70] He echoes Heraclitus in saying that "Out of the war of opposites all Becoming originates; the definite and to us seemingly persistent qualities express only the momentary predominance of the one fighter, but with that the war is not at an end; the wrestling continues to all eternity."[71] Nietzsche further writes: "If the universe were capable of permanence and fixity, and if there were in its entire course a single moment of being in the strict sense it could no longer have anything to do with becoming, thus one could no longer think or observe any becoming whatever."[72] It must be noted however that, for Nietzsche, being and becoming are not opposites per se. Nor do they stand side by side, like being and nothingness. For Nietzsche, everything is becoming, but this becoming "returns," is repeated, it "recurs," though never in the same way. This is another reference to the Heraclitan phrase of not being able to step into the same river twice. This is referred to in Nietzsche's philosophy as "eternal recurrence." Deleuze explains: "*Returning is the being of that which becomes*: It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself is what constitutes being insofar as it is affirmed of becoming and of that which passes."[73] In a similar fashion to Nishida, the concept of eternal recurrence gives the insight that being seems to come into presence only because it is becoming, it is flux.

What is important to note here is how Nishida's "place of absolute nothingness" beautifully supplements this Nietzschean position of eternal recurrence. If we are to risk an interpretation of the implication of their thoughts, we can say that being recurs in the place of absolute nothingness. The place of absolute nothingness, the place of coming to be and passing

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[69] *Ibid.*, 11:400. 243

[70] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, trans. and ed. by Walter Kaufman, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), III, 1.3.

[71] Nietzsche, *PTAG*, 5.

[72] Nietzsche, *WP*, 322. See analogous text 1062.

[73] Deleuze, *NP*, 48.

away, *is* the place of becoming. It is referred to as a "place" and not a "state", since again, for Nishida, reality is groundless. In addition, Nishida quite interestingly speaks of a concept almost similar to Nietzsche's eternal recurrence, that of the "eternal now/present." He writes:

> In each and every action [the individual] faces the absolute [eternal now] …. Generally, the moment is thought of as a linear point passing from past to future. But such an idea is simply an abstraction. From the perspective of time, as the self-determination of the eternal now, the present becomes an arc of an infinitely large circle. The passing moment exists at the ultimate point of such an arc. Therefore, the present has a breadth. Human existence is also like this.[74]

> The world of reality is the self-determination of the eternal present.[75]

This powerful statement from Nishida, "the world of reality is the self-determination of the eternal present" echoes well with Nietzsche's references to eternal recurrence: "That everything recurs is the closest approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being."[76] Reality's self-determination is akin to the process of becoming itself. Meanwhile, the eternal recurrence of things is translated in temporal terms as the eternal present. This self-determination and becoming that eternally recurs and appears as the eternal present is the approximation of being. It is what seems to give it some form or consistency despite, but also in lieu of, its transitoriness. But again, *being* here is used differently from *Being* as the absolute principle of reality, or the notion of Being as the alpha and omega of all things. Being, in their sense, is not the origin or destination of things; it is only the *chimerical effect* of the recurrence of becoming—like the consistency of a flowing river, it is the same river, but different in every moment. It is the continuity of discontinuity and the discontinuity of continuity.

Nietzsche's naturalized and Nishida's dialectical ontologies, through eternal recurrence and the eternal present, both lead to a notion of time as circular. Eternity as temporal is another concept in their philosophies that is different from atemporal eternity in traditional philosophy. The eternal present coexists with the past and what is yet to come.[77] This creates an idea

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[74] Nishida, *CW*, 7: 231-232.

[75] *Ibid.*, 7: 231.

[76] Nietzsche, *WP*, 617.

[77] Deleuze, *NP*, 48.

of historical time as the eternal self-determination of the world whose movement is circular rather than linear.

Conclusion

Despite the difference in their language and approach to metaphysics, both Nietzsche's and Nishida's thoughts converge in at least two main points. First, the world and life are immanently constituted. Second, reality is transitory. Bringing these points together results to a view of existence as temporal, and of history as the eternal self-determination or becoming of the immanently constituted world. In addition, for both Nietzsche and Nishida, the world lacks justification. In fact, it doesn't need one. It is de-deified/ naturalized and it is groundless. These two points are the ultimate consequences of their naturalized and dialectical ontologies. They provide an alternative, this-worldly, and magnanimous view of life and reality, which, in the words of Nietzsche, is symptomatic of the ascending/affirmative mode of life.

At the beginning of this paper, I have alluded to the argumentation's experimental nature. The objective was to bring together the ontological claims of two philosophers from different philosophical traditions in order to determine whether they could be instructive to our general philosophical understanding of the world, history, and ourselves. As argued, their two ontological positions complement one another. As Nietzsche asserts for a de-deified/naturalized reality, Nishida explains that this reality, constituted by multiple singularities, comes into presence through these entities' dialectical movement. As Nietzsche emphasizes becoming, Nishida provides elucidation for the place of becoming, such that de-deified/naturalized reality resonates with absolute nothingness, and dialectics resonates with becoming. Finally, this is supplemented by their almost similar notions of temporality, namely, eternal recurrence and eternal now/present.

Criticisms and counter interpretations aside, what these similarities bring to light is the possibility of agreements between thinkers from different cultural traditions, temporal time frame, and religious convictions. This, I assert, is the ethical commitment of comparative approaches in philosophy. In the spirit of Alain Badiou's philosophy, I argue that to mark and emphasize that difference does not require much thinking, for alterity is simply *what there is*.[78] What requires effort and moral commitment, however, is the establishment of forms of unity. As Badiou stresses: unity is a result and never
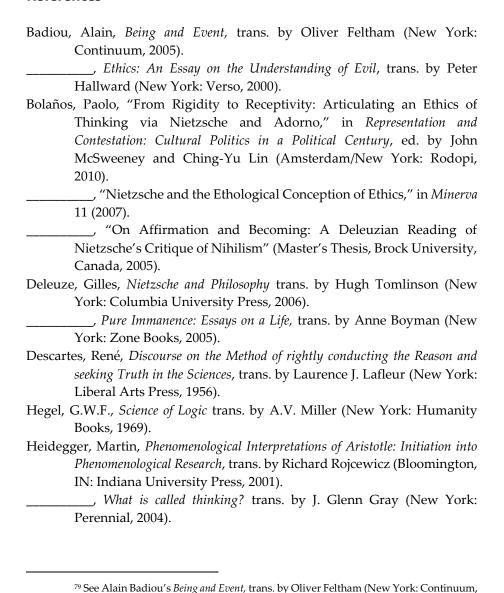
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[78] Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. by Peter Hallward (New York: Verso, 2000), 26. In French, the expression "what there is" is translated as "q'est il y a" which refers to a 'state of being.'

a given.[79] Thus, to be able to see that unity is possible, even at the level of pure thought, must be a source of hope. Philosophizing must at least be able to provide such hope. Bringing Nietzsche's and Nishida's philosophies together is an attempt to realize exactly this philosophical desire.

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[79] See Alain Badiou's *Being and Event,* trans. by Oliver Feltham (New York: Continuum, 2005).

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Article

Self-Deception in Belief Acquistion

Mario R. Echano

Abstract: Attempts to analyze self-deception ("SD," from here on) have produced a series of articles and books trying to characterize the phenomenon and to resolve the problems involved in it. None has been found to satisfy the inquisitive minds as no analysis has been able to embrace all cases of SD. Alfred Mele is one of the leading scholars on SD. In the course of his works from 1982 to 2012, he has offered different formulations of SD, all aiming to accommodate all its instances. In this work, I examine Mele's latest version of analysis of SD. I argue that his formulations exclude cases of twisted SD. Moreover, by his appeal to PEDMIN (Primary Error Detection and Minimization) that is involved in Lay Hypothesis Testing theory (LHT), he is courting a contradiction. Before delving into his set of conditions, I first situate the analysis in the problems that are involved in SD with desiderata {1}. In section {2}, I present the problem with Mele's formulations of the analysis. In section {3} I dwell into why SD is acquisition of false belief. Section {4} is my justification of additional condition to Mele's set of conditions. From sections {5} to {8}, I explain the relevance of the added condition to Mele's existing set.

Keywords: Cognitive Bias, Motivated Believing, Self-Deception, Lay-Hypothesis Testing

Introduction

Attempts to analyze self-deception ("SD," from here on) have produced a series of articles and books trying to characterize the phenomenon and to resolve the problems involved in it. None has been found to satisfy the inquisitive minds as no analysis has been able to embrace all cases of SD. Alfred Mele is one of the leading scholars on SD. In the course of his works from 1982 to 2012, he has offered different formulations of SD, all aiming to accommodate all its instances. In this work, I examine Mele's latest version of analysis of SD. I argue that his formulations exclude cases of twisted SD. Moreover, by his appeal to PEDMIN (Primary

Error Detection and Minimization) that is involved in Lay Hypothesis Testing theory (LHT), he is courting a contradiction. Before delving into his set of conditions, I first situate the analysis in the problems that are involved in SD with desiderata {1}. In section {2}, I present the problem with Mele's formulations of the analysis. In section {3} I dwell into why SD is acquisition of false belief. Section {4} is my justification of additional condition to Mele's set of conditions. From sections {5} to {8}, I explain the relevance of the added condition to Mele's existing set.

{1} **Desiderata**

Plato seemed to have equated SD to 'lying to oneself.' In his *Cratylus*, Socrates speaks of self-deception as the worst kind of deception since the deceiver and the victim are one and the same: "… there is nothing worse than self-deception—when the deceiver is always at home and always with you…."[1] Indeed, 'lying to oneself' is the traditional ascription to SD. But equating it to SD implies contradiction or, at least, paradoxes.[2] Because lying is intentional, it seems impossible to intend to deceive oneself. [3] In the recent

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[1] Plato, *Cratylus*, trans. by Benjamin Jowett, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), 428d.

[2] Two paradoxes are involved in such an SD, namely: *dynamic* and *static*. The former consists in the difficulty of imagining how the self-deceiver can succeed in deceiving herself when she already knows what she is up to, and the latter is about the psychologically questionable state of the subject's holding of two contradictory beliefs. See Mario R. Echano, "The Motivating Influences on Self-deception," in *Kritike: Online Journal of Philosophy*, 11:2 (December 2017), 104-120. See also Alfred Mele, "Real Self-Deception," in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 20:1 (1997), 91-102.

[3] To see the problem with equating 'lying to oneself' to SD in its plainest form, consider the case of my scheme of lying to a friend, Antonio. When I lie to Antonio that tomorrow is my birthday, my deceptive intention can be fulfilled only if it remains unknown to Antonio. He must not know that I intend to deceive him. If he does realize that I have such a plan, then I will not succeed on my attempt to lie. To push through my project of lying, I should be careful then not to give away my deceptive intention to Antonio. Moreover, if ever I succeed in convincing him of my lie, I now believe that tomorrow is not my birthday while he believes that tomorrow is my birthday. Once this scenario is applied to lying to oneself, the puzzles follow through. As in the case of lying just mentioned above: first, if I am going to lie to myself that it is my birthday tomorrow, I must not let myself know that I intend to deceive myself. Otherwise, once I discovered that I intend to deceive myself, I won't succeed. It seems to be an impossible feat for it is hard to keep from myself the knowledge of my deceptive intention, and the knowledge that what I have to convince myself about is false. Second, if ever I succeed in lying, I now believe that it is not my birthday tomorrow while at the same time I also believe that it is my birthday tomorrow. And this is simply a contradiction. Holding two contradictory beliefs at the same time, i.e. that *p* and that not-*p* (where '*p*' is the proposition expressed by 'it is my birthday tomorrow') seems intuitively impossible.
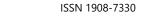
decades, the debate on SD centers on whether SD is 'lying to oneself' and consequently, on whether it involves deceptive intention.

I take the side of those who claim that most cases of SD do not involve deceptive intention. I do not exclude that 'lying to oneself' is a case of SD. Only that if indeed, it is possible, it could only be one of SD's various kinds.[4] Besides, most instances of SD are not lying to oneself.[5] For instance, we can accuse a jealous husband as self-deceived for being convinced that his wife is cheating (despite having no evidence to back up that belief), while professing that he does not want to believe that his wife is unfaithful.[6]

The consideration that most cases of SD are non-intentional is the best way to avoid the paradoxes. Since SD is not limited to lying to oneself, it is not necessarily intentional; and that it is not also necessary that a self-deceiver both believes p and not-p.[7] With this, the conditions to qualify as SD would be less demanding. For SD to occur, it is sufficient that (1) one is motivated, and (2) that she believes something that is false.[8]

Setting aside that debate, another problem has cropped up in the theorists' characterization of SD, especially that both parties agree that (1). It is a problem when we see that there are cases of SD where, despite p being undesirable, the self-deceiver still believes it. Philosophers called them

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[4] Cited examples of lying to oneself are usually from popular literature, such as Aesop's *The Fox and the Grapes*, and Anderson's *The Emperor's New Clothes*, Shakespeare's *Tragedy of Othelo,* etc. Here I use Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata.* Some authors argue, however, that these cases can also be explained as non-intentional.

[5] On the one hand, 'lying' has generally been considered intentional. See, for example, the following: Augustine, "Lying," trans. by Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney, in *Treatises on Various Subjects*, ed. by Roy Deferrari, Vol. 16 of *The Fathers of the Church* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1952), 53-110; Raphael Demos, "Lying to Oneself," in *Journal of Philosophy*, 57:18 (1960), 588-595; Sisela Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life* (New York: Random House, 1978); J. E. Mahon, "The Definition of Lying and Deception," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 edition), ed. by Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/lying-definition/>. For a contrary claim, see D. Fallis, "Are Bald-Faced Lies Deceptive After All?" *Ratio,* 28 (2015), 81-96. Most of these authors subscribed to the dictionary definition that 'to lie' is 'to make a false statement with the intention to deceive' (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989). On the other hand, deception is not necessarily intentional. OED, 1989 says of "to deceive" as to cause to believe what is false," what matters in deception (of others) is the falsity of belief. For a thorough review of the differences between lying and deception, see Mahon, "The Definition of Lying and Deception."

[6] He does not intend to believe that his wife is cheating but believes it anyway. Vasyla Pozdnishef, the husband who killed his wife out of jealousy in Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* may be such a case.

[7] Here "p" refers to the proposition and *"S"* refers to the subject.

[8] This position is called deflationary SD. For further explanation on how deflationary SD avoids the paradoxes, see Echano, "The Motivating Influence of Emotions on Self-deception," 108-110. See also Alfred Mele, "Self-Deception and Delusion," *Delusion and Self-Deception: Affective and Motivational Influences on Belief Formation*, ed. by T. Bayne & J. Fernandez, (New York: Psychology Press, 2009), 55-56.

twisted cases to contrast them with the straight ones where one believes *p* because of the desire for *p*.[9] The main question is: how can something undesirable be desired after all? The problem of twisted cases of SD puts into question that SD is motivated by desire.

I still maintain that SD is like most phenomena of motivated biased believing that are considered in social and cognitive psychology. By being motivated (also called 'hot') SD is distinguished from the cognitive ('cold') biased believing which are adaptive and unconscious. In this approach to SD, I am following the path trod by Talbott,[10] Johnston,[11] Lazar,[12] Mele,[13] Scott-Kakures,[14] Bermudez,[15] Nelkin,[16] and Dolcini,[17] among others. The influence of motivation on cognitive biasing processes is crucial in these philosophers' approaches to SD.

One application of motivated biasing process that is parallel to belief acquisition in SD is that of Lay Hypothesis Testing (LHT) theory.[18] LHT theory claims that people tend to confirm their favored hypothesis by the mere fact of it being proposed as a hypothesis.[19] This is thus an application of the confirmation bias.[20] It assumes that before *S* ends up believing *p*, she must

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[9] See Echano, "The Motivating Influence of Emotion on Self-deception, 104-117, for the characterization of such cases of SD.

[10] See William, J. Talbott, "Intentional Self-Deception in a Single Coherent Self," in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 55:1 (1995); and José Luis Bermúdez, "Self-Deception, Intentions, and Contradictory Beliefs," in *Analysis*, 60:4 (2000), 309-319.

[11] See Mark Johnston, "Self-deception and Nature of the Mind," in *Perspectives on Self-deception*, ed. by Brian McLaughlin and Amelie Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 63-91.

[12] See Ariela Lazar, "Deceiving Oneself or Self-Deceived? On the Formation of Beliefs Under the Influence," in *Mind*, 108: 430 (1999), 265-290.

[13] Alfred Mele, *Self-deception Unmasked* (United States: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[14] See Dion Scott-Kakures, "Motivated believing: Wishful and Unwelcome," in *Nous*, 34:3 (2000), 348-375

[15] Bermúdez, "Self-Deception, Intentions, and Contradictory Beliefs."

[16] Dana Nelkin, "Responsibility and Self-Deception: A Framework," in *Humana Mente Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 20 (2012), 384-406.

[17] Nevia Dolcini, "The Pragmatics of Self-Deception," in *New Directions in Logic and the Philosophy of Science,* ed. by Laura Felline, Antonio Ledda, and Francesco Paoli (United Kingdom: College Publications, 2016), 67-76).

[18] In contrast with scientific (statistical) hypothesis testing, LHT or everyday hypothesis testing in social psychology is the usual unconscious way of making up one's mind. See Ziva Kunda, *Social Cognition: Making Sense of People* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), 109-121.

[19] A recent version of this theory can be seen in A. P. Gregg, N. Mahadevan, and C. Sedikides, "The SPOT Effect: People Spontaneously Prefer Their Own Theories," in *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 70-6 (2017), 996-1010. They claim that people tend to spontaneously favor their own hypothesis by mere association that it is theirs or that they can relate to it.

[20] For further discussion on this, see J. Klayman and Y. Ha, "Confirmation, Disconfirmation, and Information in Hypothesis Testing," *Psychological Review*, 94, (1987), 211-228; James Friedrich, "Primary error detection and minimization (PEDMIN) strategies in social

first posit it as a hypothesis. Once posed, it activates positive test strategies which are already biased towards its confirmation.[21] My approach to SD is an application of LHT to explain that SD is non-intentional, and that it is motivated by desires and/or emotions.

Mele always maintains that in entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p*, desire for *p* is the main motivation, even in twisted cases. As stated above, this is problematic. I[22] argued that both desire for *p* and/or emotion towards *p* are motivating influences in the acquisition of belief that *p*. This explains how a self-deceiver ends up believing that *p* despite its undesirability. In this work, I do not intend to present my own list of conditions for SD-belief acquisition. Rather, I will comment and introduce a modification on Mele's set of conditions for entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p*.[23] I argue that without this modification, his list of conditions for entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p* would still exclude the twisted cases.

Some words of caution before going through the coming sections. In this work, I limit myself with SD in belief acquisition. Being self-deceived in feelings, aspirations, dreams, desires, etc., is beyond its scope. Second, entering SD in acquiring or retaining a belief that *p* must be distinguished from perpetuating oneself in the state of SD. I limit this work in the consideration of entering SD in belief.[24] Third, of the two ways on entering SD, I further limit this work into examining the conditions for entering SD in belief acquisition.[25] The list of conditions that will be examined in this work pertains only to that of entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p*.

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cognition: A reinterpretation of confirmation bias phenomena," in *Psychological Review*, 100:2 (1993), 298-319; and Gregg, Mahadevan, and Sedikides, "The SPOT Effect."

[21] For example, once asked whether *p*, we asked that *p* (e.g., that the lecture is boring, we tend to verify whether it is boring, not whether it is not boring?) We are 'wired' to ask questions leading for confirmation.

[22] See Echano, "The Motivating Influence of Emotion on Self-deception."

[23] Having written about twenty articles/papers and two books on the topic, Mele is one of the leading authorities on SD.

[24] I am following Mele in these aspects. See Alfred Mele, "When are we self-deceived?" *Humana Mente Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 20 (2012), 1-16.

[25] There are two ways of entering SD: that of acquiring a belief that *p* and that of retaining a belief that *p*. Here is an illustration from Mele: "Sam has believed for many years that his wife, Sally, would never have an affair. In the past, his evidence for this belief was quite good. Sally obviously adored him; she never displayed a sexual interest in another man; . . . she condemned extramarital sexual activity; she was secure, and happy with her family life; and so on. However, things recently began to change significantly. Sally is now arriving home late from work on the average of two nights a week; she frequently finds excuses to leave the house alone after dinner; and Sam has been informed by a close friend that Sally has been seen in the company of a certain Mr. Jones at a theater and a local lounge. Nevertheless, Sam continues to believe that Sally would never have an affair. Unfortunately, he is wrong. Her relationship with Jones is by no means platonic." Mele, "Real Self-Deception," 95–96.

In this case, Sam did not acquire a new belief which is false. He acquired it as a true belief. Later, however, there was a change of situation as Sally is no longer faithful. And yet,

{2} Jointly Sufficient Conditions for Entering Self-Deception

According to Mele, *S* enters SD in acquiring a belief that *p* if:

(1) The belief that *p* which *S* acquires is false

(2) S treats data relevant, or at least seemingly relevant, to the truth value of *p* in a motivationally biased way

(3) This biased treatment is a non-deviant cause of S's acquiring the belief that *p*

(4) The body of data possessed by S, at the time, provides greater warrant for not-*p* than for *p*

(5) S consciously believes, at the time, that there is a significant chance that not-*p*

(6) S's acquiring the belief that *p* is a product of reflective, critical reasoning, and S is wrong in regarding that reasoning as properly directed.[26]

The above list aims to provide jointly sufficient conditions for entering all cases of SD. Condition (1) states that SD is about the falsity of the belief that *p* which *S* acquired; conditions (2), and (3) pertain to the motivationally biased treatment of data regarding *p*; and conditions (4), (5) and (6) stress the characteristics of tension.

Since I claim that this list is not enough to address the problems raised by SD's twisted cases, I am suggesting a modification on the list. I add another condition to more conveniently accommodate the cases of twisted SD, and to provide stronger support for the intuition that SD is motivated. This added condition is formulated thus: *S*, triggered by desire or emotions, generates a hypothesis that *p*. And so, the modified list will look like this:

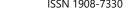
despite evidence to the contrary, he still wants to maintain the former belief. He is self-deceived in retaining the belief that Sally is faithful.

[26] Mele, "When are we self-deceived?"

[1] The belief that *p* which *S* acquires is false

[2] *S*, triggered by desire or emotions, generates a hypothesis that *p*

[3] *S* treats data relevant, or at least seemingly relevant, to the truth value of *p* in a motivationally biased way

[4] This biased treatment is a non-deviant cause of *S*'s acquiring the belief that *p*

[5] The body of data possessed by *S*, at the time, provides greater warrant for not-*p* than for *p*

[6] *S* consciously believes, at the time, that there is a significant chance that not -*p*

[7] *S*'s acquiring the belief that *p* is a product of reflective, critical reasoning, and *S* is wrong in regarding that reasoning as properly directed.[27]

As could be observed above, I maintained Mele's list except for [2]. Indeed, it is understandable that his list would be more focused on setting up conditions for straight cases because twisted cases were not an issue in his earlier writings where he presented prior versions of the list.[28] Still, when the problems raised by the twisted cases cropped up, he insisted that they are also complying with the conditions. In trying to fit those cases within the conditions in the list, he resorted to the Primary Error Detection and Minimization theory (PEDMIN)[29] which is, for him, an essential aspect of LHT theory in showing that such cases are as motivated as the straight ones. This move, however, is problematic. The main reason is that if twisted cases merely rely on the desire to avoid the cost of being mistaken, as the PEDMIN

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[27] To differentiate the modified list from the original, I use "[#]' sign instead of Mele's "(#)."

[28] From Alfred Mele's "Self-deception," in *Philosophical Quarterly*, 33 (October 1983), 366-377, to his "Approaching Self-Deception: How Robert Audi and I part company" in *Consciousness and Cognition*, 19:3 (2010), 745-750, the original four-point jointly sufficient conditions are presented. Amidst objections to this four-point conditions, he introduced the last two in Mele, "When are we self-deceived?"

[29] PEDMIN was first proposed by Friedrich, "Primary error detection and minimization (PEDMIN) strategies in social cognition." It explains why we tend to confirm a hypothesis. It claims that we have this adaptive tendency to avoid being mistaken about a hypothesis. People's tendency to confirm hypothesis is motivated by the basic desire to avoid costly error.

theory claims, then such explanation runs in conflict with his condition (3). There would only be a sort of deviance causality involved in such cases of SD as the desire to avoid the cost of error would be the main motivation in confirmatory testing of the hypothesis. If that is so, then twisted cases cannot be counted as SD. Furthermore, this desire in PEDMIN could also be a threat to his claim that all cases of SD (twisted and straight) are products of the desire for *p*. Cases of SD could all just be reduced to being a product of that basic desire in PEDMIN, and thus, would be violating the non-deviance condition.

To further see where Mele's list falls short, let us test some of the known twisted cases against his list of conditions. Let us look at the cases of Vasyla Pozdnishef, the jealous husband who murdered his wife in Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata*,[30] and of Adonis's fear of ghosts, as examples. It would be incomprehensible to take the desire of those subjects to avoid the cost of being mistaken about their respective hypotheses that *p* (e.g. that the wife is unfaithful; or that there is a ghost) as the main motivations for their confirmation. In the first place, without being generated, how can those hypotheses come about? It would also appear that the desire in PEDMIN is disassociated with the desire for *p*. As such, the desires, of which jealousy or fear is a component, are no longer the causes of the self-deceiver's acquiring the belief that *p*. And so, those cases do not really conform to the non-deviance condition. There is another problem with Mele's reliance with PEDMIN; Haselton and Buss's Error Management Theory (EMT) claims that, at least, some cases of error minimization and management are but adaptive, and has nothing to do with any motivation to avoid error.[31] It is premature to install PEDMIN as the main reason for *S*'s tendency to confirm the hypothesis that *p.* The introduction of the additional condition (i.e. my condition [2]), avoids this problem. Moreover, it assures that the process of self-deceptive belief acquisition is non-deviant.

Before dwelling with this modification further, I will first comment on the condition [1] in the next section, and then I will discuss the role of condition [2] in sections 4. To set the direction of the rest of this work, it is convenient to point out at this juncture that the process of acquisition of a self-deceptive belief begins with the added condition [2]: *S*, triggered by desire or emotions, generates a hypothesis that *p.* The process, eventually,

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[30] Leo Tolstoy, *The Kreutzer Sonata* (Greenwich, CN: Fawcett Publications, 1960).

[31] M. Haselton and D. Buss, "Error Management Theory: New Perspective on Biases in Cross-Sex Mind Reading, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78:1 (2000), 522-523. Like PEDMIN, the Error Management Theory (EMT) can also be applied in LHT theory. However, it claims the opposite of PEDMIN. According to EMT, there are cases where there is no such basic desire to avoid costly error is involved in LHT. Hence, at least some cases of error minimization or management is merely adaptive and purely cognitive.

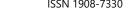ends up with *S* believing that *p.* I will discuss the rest of the conditions in the remaining sections.

{3} The False Belief Condition

Condition [1] puts SD opposite to that of knowledge traditionally analyzed as justified true belief (JTB) in the sense that it indicates that SD is not concerned with knowledge acquisition. Although Dolcini disagrees with this condition, she rightly expresses SD's opposition to knowledge as JTB by saying that SD is a failure to acquire knowledge:

> Indeed, C^{FB} (or false belief that *p* condition) is a condition about the truth value of *p*, so that it shifts the observer's attention from a doxastic level to an epistemological level of analysis: entering self-deception looks like a process by which the subject fails to acquire knowledge, where knowledge is intended in the traditional sense of (at least) justified true belief.[32]

Condition [1] also has nothing to do with the dynamics of self-deceptive belief acquisition.[33] It is independent of the processes leading to SD. And yet, it is the most basic of all jointly sufficient conditions. In one of Mele's earliest articles in SD, he posed this question: "What must be added to false belief in order to yield a condition of self-deception?"[34] This implies that even if *p* is acquired in a motivated fashion, if it happens that *p* is true, there is no SD.

There are at least three groups of theorists who disagree with this condition. The first group pertains to those who maintain that SD is an analogue of interpersonal deception, and thus, considers that condition (1) is not enough.[35] They require that the self-deceiver both believe that *p* and that not-*p*. The self-deceiver's possession of contradictory beliefs is a consequent of having interpersonal deception as model for SD. The second group

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[32] Dolcini, "The Pragmatics of Self-Deception," 6

[33] Nelkin's version of this condition is simply formulated as "*p* is false." Such formulation would be more preferable if one is concerned with the etiology of the self-deceptive belief acquisition. See Nelkin, "Responsibility and Self-Deception: A Framework."

[34] Mele, "Self-Deception," 371

[35] Donald Davidson, "Deception and Division," in *The Multiple Self*, ed. by Jon Elster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and Francis Pears, "The Goals and Strategies of Self-Deception," in *The Multiple Self*, ed. by Jon Elster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Amelie Rorty, "The Deceptive Self: Liars, Layers, and Lairs," in *Perspectives on Self-deception,* ed. by Brian McLaughlin and Amelie Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); and Bermúdez, "Self-Deception, Intentions, and Contradictory Beliefs," in *Analysis,* 60:4 (2000).
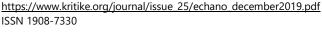
pertains to the accounts of SD that treat *p* independent of its truth value. Talbott and Dolcini hold such an account.[36] For Talbott, what matters in SD is for the self-deceiver to be motivated to believe that *p* whether it is true or not. For Dolcini, one can still be considered self-deceived even if she is in possession of a true belief that *p*, provided she also meets the deviation condition (C_D), tension condition (C_T) and motivation condition (C_M). The third group is constituted by those who claim that the false belief condition is too much of a demand for SD. A few of them are Audi, Bach, Funkhauser, Gendler, and Rey.[37]

In support of the condition [1], it would also be helpful to mention here a survey, conducted by Mele among his philosophy students in Florida State University, which aims to establish that SD, pre-theoretically understood, includes cases where the self-deceived holds a false belief. He used this survey against Audi's claim that *p*'s falsity is not required for SD. The survey provides an empirical support to his claim that self-deceived persons do hold the false belief that *p*.[38]

In sum, condition [1] does not imply that the falsity of *p* has special importance for the processes of SD. It is independent of the motivationally or emotionally biasing dynamics. It immediately discounts as SD the improbable belief that *p* if it is arrived at because of *S*'s motivationally biased treatment of the data. Perhaps the subject might be self-deceived about some beliefs supporting the belief that *p*. We can recall the case of Laocoön; he merely got 'lucky' that his belief was true. All the elements of the sufficient conditions for entering SD were present except for the condition [1].

Just as in in the case of knowledge, however, it is not enough for a belief that *p* to be true to yield knowledge; it is also not enough for *p* to be false for one to yield SD. Whereas in the case of knowledge, the justification of true belief is required to eliminate lucky guesses that happen to be true as knowledge, other conditions must also be set up for false belief to be considered SD-belief. The rest of the conditions assures that inadvertent false belief that *p* is a kind of SD.

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[36] See Talbott, "Intentional Self-Deception in a Single Coherent Self" and Dolcini, "The Pragmatics of Self-Deception."

[37] Robert Audi, "Self-deception, rationalization, and reasons for acting," *Perspectives on Self-deception*, ed. by Brian McLaughlin and Amelie Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 92-120; Kent Bach, "An Analysis of Self-Deception," in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 41 (March 1981), 351-37; E. Funkhauser, "Do the Self-Deceived Get What They Want?" *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 86:3 (2005), 295-312.
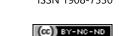
[38] Mele, "Approaching Self-Deception: How Robert Audi and I part company."

{4} Generation of the Hypothesis that *p* Condition

Adding the condition [2] to Mele's list has at least three advantages. First, this condition specifies how desire and emotions exert a motivating influence on the acquisition of self-deceptive belief. While desires trigger desirable hypothesis, emotions are triggers for the undesirable ones. Condition [2] aims to show that straight cases are products of the desire for *p.* At the same time, it attempts to demonstrate that cases of twisted SD are products of the motivating influences of emotions. Such explanation is clearly distinct from Mele's account where he assumed that twisted cases can be explained through that basic desire to avoid the cost of being mistaken in LHT. Second, condition [2] is important in showing that the process of SD is motivated against the doubts on whether all the confirmatory tendencies of testing the hypothesis are motivated. In section 2, I mentioned that EMT purports that some cases of avoidance of costly errors in testing the hypothesis have nothing to do with desire to avoid the cost of being mistaken. Condition [2] assures that SD's being motivated does not altogether rely on the actual testing of the hypothesis but on its generation. Lastly, this condition assures that the process of self-deceptive belief acquisition is non-deviant. In the sub-sections that follow, I will attempt to elucidate on those first two reasons. And, I will discuss in subsequent section the last advantage where condition [2] offers a guarantee that the process is non-deviant.

{4.1} The Role of Desires and Emotions

Like Mele, I also take the LHT theory as a model for explaining how motivation becomes responsible for *S* ending up with false biased belief that *p*.[39] Unlike him, I prefer to stress, through condition [2], the respective hypotheses that either emotions or desires trigger. Below, I sketch briefly the arguments for the motivating influence of emotions in twisted SD, and of desire in the acquisition of straight self-deceptive belief.[40]

The LHT theory, used by Mele[41] and Scott-Kakures,[42] implies the motivating influences of desire and emotions on the acquisition of biased (false) beliefs. The theory has been commonly used in social psychology; and it attempts to explain how people tend to confirm, rather than reject,

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[39] See Mele, *Self-deception Unmasked*.

[40] In a recent paper, Lauria and Preissmann attempts to provide a unified account of SD through the role of emotions which is thus a more radical claim than mine. See Federico Lauria and Delphine Preissmann, "What Does Emotion Teach Us About Self-Deception: Affective Neuroscience in Support of Non-Intentionalism," in *Les Ateliers de L'Ethique,* 13-2 (2018), 70-94.

[41] Mele, *Self-deception Unmasked*.

[42] Scott-Kakures, "Motivated believing: Wishful and Unwelcome."

hypothesis once it is posed for testing, mostly through the use of the positive test strategy. According to Trope and Liberman, LHT theory has two parts, namely the generation of the hypothesis, and its testing.[43] This condition [2] refers to the first part, that is, the generation of a hypothesis that *p* following LHT theory. I argue that to enter SD in acquiring a belief that *p*, it is necessary that *S* first generates a hypothesis that *p*. Thus, 'whether *p*?' is prior to the acquisition of the belief that *p*. Trope and Liberman suggest some instances on how hypotheses are generated:

> Sometimes, others provide hypothesis by asking questions or making assertions that raise possibilities the individual is then motivated to test. For example, a direct question or an assertion regarding an acquaintance's friendliness may lead one to test the hypothesis that this person is actually friendly ….
>
> In many real-life situations, however, hypotheses are spontaneously generated by the hypothesis tester. In deciding whether and how to pursue their goals people often want to know if necessary preconditions have been met. Therefore, people formulate hypothesis about these preconditions. For example, someone trying to hire a sales-person may try to determine whether an applicant is extroverted, believing that extroversion is important for success in sales.[44]

Mele also mentions these two ways by which hypothesis generation is made possible: first, others can generate it for *S* by suggesting *p*; and second, *S* may have generated *p* by herself.[45] Other than mentioning them, he seems to ignore the relevance of the generation of hypothesis in the process. My claim is that in cases of entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p*, *S* forms the proposition because of desire and/or emotions. Whether it is suggested by others or generated by *S* herself, what is important is that *p* has an appeal to emotion or desire so as to trigger the process that leads to self-deceptive acquisition of the belief that *p*.

Mele's list of the conditions lacks my proposed condition [2] because, although he makes use of the LHT theory, his primary goal is to explain how

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[43] Y. Trope and A. Liberman, "Social Hypothesis Testing: Cognitive and Motivational Mechanisms," in *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principle*, ed. by E. Higgins and A. Kruglanski (New York: Guilford Press, 1996), 239.

[44] *Ibid*, 240.

[45] Cf. Mele, *Self-Deception Unmasked*, 33

motivation leads one to confirm, rather than reject, the favored hypothesis. It is his non-intentional alternative explanations to the intentionalists' accounts. At the same time, he is concerned with providing a unified explanation of the phenomenon of SD. He has been preoccupied with giving a homogenous explanation for all cases of SD through the desire that *p*. This is, in turn, the reason why he found it hard to locate a place for an independent role of emotions in twisted cases. Hence, even though he also considered several hypotheses regarding the role of emotions, he argued mostly for emotions' role as constituent of desire. Against this, I[46] have argued that while desires trigger desirable hypothesis, emotions are triggers for the undesirable ones. Condition [2] aims to point out that straight cases are products of the desire for *p*; it also shows that twisted cases are products of emotions towards *p*.

As noted above, Mele's list of conditions is suited more for explaining straight cases of SD. It tries to accommodate twisted cases by a recourse to PEDMIN. Again, such approach makes the basic desire to avoid the cost of being mistaken to be the immediate cause of one's acquisition of self-deceptive belief. As a result, desire for *p*, as Mele purports, is not the cause of the acquisition of twisted self-deceptive belief.
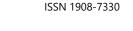
If the initial phase of generation of the hypothesis that *p* condition has been considered seriously enough, twisted cases could be offered a better explanation other than being subsumed under that basic desire not to commit costly errors in PEDMIN. This additional condition [2] aims to better accommodate the cases of twisted SD. It specifies, from the very beginning, the motivating influences in the acquisition of self-deceptive belief, thereby, assuring that the process of self-deceptive belief acquisition is either motivated by desire or by emotions. The next sub-section discusses further the relevance of the condition [2] in Mele's list.

{4.2} The Role of Generation of Hypothesis that *p* in Self-Deception

Again, the generation of the hypothesis that *p* is the initial phase in the process that leads to the acquisition of the biased belief that *p*. The added condition [2] states that for *p* to settle on *S*'s mind, it must first come as a hypothesis.

In his earlier discussions of the problems of SD, Mele was not using the LHT theory,[47] thus, the belief that *p* which starts in being a hypothesis that *p* has not yet been formulated. But even when he began to use the LHT theory, he did not pay much attention to the generation of hypothesis phase of LHT in the process of self-deceptive belief acquisition. In contrast, Scott-Kakures

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[46] Echano, "The Motivating Influence of Emotions in Self-Deception."

[47] From 1993 to 1997, Mele has not considered the LHT in his works on SD. It was only after 1997, that he considered the importance of that theory in SD.

emphasized this initial phase, when arguing that the generation of the hypothesis that p also determines S's goals and values that direct hypothesis testing. The workings of this initial phase could be understood in this way: if the proposed belief that p has been motivationally or emotionally loaded from the very start, then the hypothesis tester's confirmatory tendency follows spontaneously. The subsequent job of motivation in the biased confirmatory testing of p follows on cue.

It is true that my additional condition to Mele's list is already implied in his formulation of the list. In fact, it is assumed in his conditions (1) and (2) because in order for S to treat the truth value of the belief that p and to acquire it, belief that p must come first as a hypothesis that p. As I have pointed out already, there is a need to put this explicitly. The added condition not only specifies the kind of motivating influence involved in SD, it also assured that there is a non-deviant causal connection between the motivating influences of desire and emotions and the acquired self-deceptive belief.

The importance of desire and emotion at this stage is crucial whether a proposition is suggested by others or generated by the self-deceiver herself. Following the model of LHT, desire and emotion trigger the generation of belief that p. Take again the case of the emperor in Anderson's *The Emperor's New Clothes*. His is an example of the first instance of hypothesis generation of p. The tale is a case of other-deception that involved SD. The emperor's desire for new and unique dress leads to his belief that he is indeed wearing one, when in fact he is naked. The swindlers tricked him into embracing the false belief that he is wearing a new and unique dress by appealing to his desire for a new dress. Though the swindlers are responsible for the deception, he shares the responsibility by overlooking the evidence for his nakedness in favor of his desire for the dress. He is deceived by the swindler, and at the same time, he is self-deceived. He desired it even before it was suggested to him. Otherwise, he would not have fallen into believing that he is wearing a new suit if, for him, wearing the new suit was not desirable.

In brief, when p is generated by S or suggested to S, it has to come as a hypothesis. There may be evidence for and against p. But more often than not, there are more evidence for not-p rather than for p. As in the case of the emperor, there are evidence for his nakedness and only the testimony of the swindlers for his being wonderfully dressed. Or in the case of the Vasyla, there are more evidence for his wife's fidelity rather than for her infidelity. Still, in these cases, S has to weigh up the opposing evidence in order to finally believe or reject that p once their respective thresholds have been reached. And because of the influence of desire and/or emotions, she may easily reach the acceptance of p threshold. We say that she immediately jumps to conclusion without properly reviewing the evidences whereby in the absence of these motivating influences, she could easily realize that p is false.

Whichever way it is, she still has tested the hypothesis that not-*p* albeit with a bias towards its rejection (condition [3]).
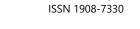
The hypothesis that *p* may be about something unpleasant would still be confirmed not only due to this tendency to avoid being mistaken about the hypothesis that *p*, but because it is, in the first place, triggered by emotions. And so, with this added condition [2], even if the evaluation of the hypothesis in LHT turns out to be adaptive and mere cognitive, as Haselton and Buss proposed in their EMT, the motivated character of SD would be assured since the generation of the hypothesis has been motivationally charged to sustain its subsequent evaluation.[48]

Sometimes, subjects generate their self-deceptive belief out of desire/emotion, and independently of others' suggestion. We can conjecture that, in typical cases of straight SD, *S*'s desire for an object would spur him to form *p*. Thus, desire generates *p*-hypothesis. Once generated, it is no longer a mystery that he would desire that *p* since it was formed by desire in the first place. Such may be the example of the emperor whose desire for a new suit leads him to form a hypothesis that he has a wonderful suit on despite the utter evidence of his nakedness. Again, once the motivated hypothesis is running, the tendency would be to confirm it. Same could be said of the jealous husband, Vasyla. His jealousy triggers the hypothesis that his wife is unfaithful. Then, the tendency to confirm it was in the bag, not only because of the inherent motivation to confirm the hypothesis but also, because of the jealousy which prevents him from being objective or rational and could also be boosting the adaptive tendency to favor the motivationally or emotionally charged hypothesis. In the case of fear, as that of Adonis, a child who believes that there is a monster lurking under his bed, the attack of fear could spur the imagination to create a vision of a monster or a ghost. Because of that, the hypothesis that there is a monster or a ghost could be formed. The end-product is a self-deceptive belief that there is a ghost or a monster. It would be hard to explain that the belief on a monster under his bed has been triggered by desire. In all these, condition [2] renders cases of twisted SD fitter within the motivational explanation.

{5} Treatment of Motivationally and Emotionally Generated Hypothesis

The condition [3] is what follows after the generation of the hypothesis that *p*. In LHT, it pertains to the actual testing of the hypothesis. When the emotionally or motivationally charged belief that *p* is suggested to

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[48] M. Haselton and D. Buss, "Error Management Theory and the Evolution of Misbeliefs," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 32:6 (2009), 110-111.

S, the expected outcome will be a biased treatment of data relevant, or at least, seemingly relevant to the data favoring the confirmation of the hypothesis. Following the processes of the LHT theory as explained above, condition [3] is mainly a work of motivation. Above in {4}, we have seen how the LHT theory helped in showing the processes in the acquisition and retention of the false belief that *p*. There, I discussed how the motivated and non-motivated processes lead to the acquisition (or retention) of the false belief that *p*. I noted that the confirmation bias which underlies the theory of LHT is usually unmotivated. The acquired biased false belief, resulting from cold biases and heuristics, such as confirmation bias, does not qualify for SD precisely for lack of the motivating influence. However, if in the first place, the proposition is already motivationally or emotionally charged, the treatment of data relevant to the proposition will be motivationally and emotionally charged as well.[49] Both EMT and PEDMIN theories would also be affected by such prior motivating influences. Tendencies to confirm a hypothesis would be boosted because of those motivating influences.

Condition [3] points to the fact that once we are motivated by desire or emotions, we usually end up believing something that is motivationally charged. It makes us vulnerable to false belief acquisition. Desire and emotions color how we treat the data relevant to its truth value. And since most cases of twisted SD involved beliefs which are emotionally charged when they are proposed to *S*, they are also strong candidates for confirmation. The task of confirming even those unpleasant propositions would be facilitated by those motivating influences that boost the sources of confirmation bias. This condition, like the next one, heavily relies on the added condition [2]. This additional condition does not only direct the successive confirmatory testing of the hypothesis, it also assures that the process is non-deviant.

{6} The Non-Deviance Condition

Condition [4] refers to the non-deviance of the causal connection in the biasing process and the acquisition of belief that *p*. To count as SD, the biasing process which starts from condition [2], i.e., the cause of *S*'s hypothesizing about *p*, must also be involved in *S*'s acquiring of the belief

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[49] It is also true that the sources of cognitive biases such as that of confirmation bias, availability heuristic, and other judgmental heuristics can result to the biased conclusions without the aid of desire or emotion as in the cases proposed by Martha Knight, "Cognitive and Motivational Bases of Self-Deception: Commentary on Mele's Irrationality," in *Philosophical Psychology*, 1:2 (1998) 179–188. However, they are not cases of SD by the mere fact that they are not motivated.

that *p*. In other words, if the process deviated or if the belief that *p* (which is false) is acquired apart from the biasing process, there will be no SD.

An example of deviant causality would be the case of Khloe who favors a belief that a fire that torched a house was caused by electrical short circuit. She sought evidence to support this belief. She consulted Mariah whom she believed is a fan of the theory that burning buildings are usually caused by electrical short-circuit. As it happened, Mariah believed that somebody set the house on fire. She ended up believing Mariah's theory. It was, however, caused by electrical short-circuit. Even if it is false that somebody burned the house, the case is not SD. Khloe's belief is not causally connected to her favored belief. Strictly speaking, SD does not just happen by chance, for we can be misled to believe without being self-deceived. Neither beliefs which are caused by alcohol, hypnosis, torture, accidental blow in the head, can count as cases of SD unless they have a non-deviant connection from the desire and/or emotions. SD might be non-intentional but there remains a connection between self-deceptive belief acquired and its motivational influences.

For the examples of non-deviant causality involved in SD, it would suffice to consider the cases of SD already mentioned in this work. The emperor's belief that he is naked, for instance, is non-deviantly connected to the desire to have worn the magnificent dress as its cause. He is fond of fine suits. This leads him to treat, in a biased way, that a magical suit which only wise men can see is at his disposal. He believes he is wearing one. Adonis' fear of ghost is the non-deviant cause of his belief that there is ghost. Vasyla's jealousy triggers the hypothesis that his wife is unfaithful. It leads him to treat the data in a biased way leading to the acquisition of the false belief that his wife is unfaithful.

This condition about the non-deviant causality assures that to be truly attributable to the subject, it must originate from her as the cause, which is either the self-deceiver's desire or emotions. Cases where there is a deviant causality cannot be properly attributed to her. If twisted cases, as Mele argues, are products of that adaptive or basic desire to avoid the cost of being mistaken, then those cases are violating this condition [4].[50] For then neither the desire nor emotions towards *p* is really the immediate cause of the self-deceivers' acquisition of the belief.

Again, in condition [4], I appeal to the role of the motivating influence of desire and emotions in the generation and sustenance of hypothesis in its evaluation as implied in condition [2]. In this view, our LHT theory supports the causal non-deviance of the processes leading to SD. If all goes in accordance with the theory, the hypothesis tester would be seeking for the

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[50] Mele, *ibid.*

confirmation of the proposed hypothesis sustained by desire and/ or emotions. There is thus a continuing causal link from these triggering influences of the hypothesis that *p*, through its confirmatory biased testing of *p*, to the belief that *p*.

{7} The Tension Conditions

The thrust of the conditions [5] and [6] is to highlight the tensions that self-deceiver experiences when he believes against the weight of the evidence available to her. Mele,[51] in formulating his condition (5), is responding to objections against his early set of conditions regarding the lack of tension condition for SD. These theorists have valid reasons to point out the lack of tension in Mele's deflationary account.[52] Indeed, Mele dismisses that tensions are necessary for SD.[53] According to him, there are some cases where one can enter SD in acquiring a belief that *p* where apparently the self-deceiver does not experience a tension when acquiring the belief that *p* and yet she can still be regarded as self-deceived. Mele states that:

> In some instances of motivationally biased evidence-gathering, for example, people may bring it about that they believe a falsehood, *p*, when not-*p* is much better supported by evidence readily available to them, even though, owing to the selectivity of the evidence-gathering process, the evidence that they themselves actually possess at the time favors *p* over -*p*. Such people are naturally deemed self- deceived, other things being equal."[54]

His example of this case is Don, who believed that the rejection of his article was not justified as the referees may have misunderstood his point. When he read the comments after a few days with an impartial mind, he found out that the rejection was warranted. According to Mele:

> … he is free of psychic conflict during the process of acquiring the belief that his article was unjustly rejected and while that belief is in place, he is self-deceived and

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[51] Mele, "When are we self-deceived?"

[52] See Robert Audi, "Self-deception vs. self-caused deception: A comment on professor Mele," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 20:1 (1997) 104-104 and W. M. Martin, "Self-Deceiving Intentions," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 20:1 (1997), 122-123.

[53] See Mele, "Real Self-Deception" and Mele, *Self-Deception Unmasked.*

[54] Mele, *Self-deception Unmasked*, 52.

> he enters self-deception in acquiring that belief. The same is true of bigots who, without psychic conflict, satisfy my four conditions in acquiring a bigoted belief that p.[55]
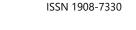
He has no qualms, however, with stressing that tensions are important. Thus, in the latest version of his jointly sufficient condition for entering SD in acquiring a belief that p, aside from the tension condition (4): "The body of data possessed by S at the time provides greater warrant for not-p than for p,[56] he includes another condition that validates the importance of tensions in SD in his latest article on SD: "S consciously believes, at the time, that there is a significant chance that not-p."[57] Due to those objections above, he conceded that it would be useful for SD to count this condition in his list. But still, he does not make tension a necessary condition. It does, however, help in recognizing supposed cases of SD for tensions usually accompany the phenomenon.

In all this, I agree with Mele when he counted that tension conditions are among the jointly sufficient conditions for entering SD in acquiring a belief that p. However, I have an objection as to the cases of Don and the bigots who acquire beliefs without psychic tension. It seems that there is a psychic tension in Don's acquisition of the belief that p which is shown by the fact that the news about the rejection of his article has triggered the acquisition of the belief that the rejection was not justified. There could be a psychic tension in Don's case after all, which can be inferred from the fact that the evidence against the belief that the rejection was not justified was the rejection itself. The tension is between the belief that his paper was unjustly rejected and the evidence that supports that it was justly rejected given by the fact that he received a rejection notice.[58]

Again, LHT theory is useful in elaborating Mele's condition (5). The theory also pits the evidence for p and not-p against one another. The self-deceiver is somehow aware of the evidence to the contrary, but being motivationally loaded, she is more focused on the ones favoring her hypothesis. Following the design of LHT, we can see the self-deceiver gathering data in favor of her hypothesis until she reaches the acceptance

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[55] *Ibid*, 53.

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] Mele "When are we self-deceived?" 11

[58] It might be argued that some cases of SD where there would be no apparent tensions on the part of self-deceiver is imaginable. Consider the case of chronic or habitual self-deceivers. It might be possible for people to enter SD in acquiring a belief that p without undergoing any psychological tension at all if they do self-deceiving as a habit. Once SD becomes second nature to a person, it also becomes tension-free. However, if it is a habit it might not be a case of SD anymore, but of a serious pathology.

threshold. She may gather the data in a biased, confirmatory way. In doing so, she would need to be open only to the evidence favoring her hypothesis, which would not discount her awareness of the contrary evidence. It is not a tension as strong as the kind of SD that puts belief that *p* vis-a-vis belief that not-*p*; but it is a tension which is also a source of instability for if the motivational force waned in sustaining the confirmatory testing of the hypothesis that *p*, the hypothesis tester may end up being unbiased.

{8} Lay-Hypothesis Testing Theory and the Psychological Tension Condition

Mele's formulation of his condition (6) is triggered by Scott-Kakures' objection that the former's formulation of the conditions for entering SD are not satisfactory.[59] Scott-Kakures points out that Mele, in *Self-Deception Unmasked*, neglects an important element in self-deceiver's attitude. In particular, it appears that in his motivated biased belief acquisition account (also of other non-intentionalists' accounts), the self-deceiver is just a passive participant of the processes that surely end to the confirmation of the belief that *p.* Were it the case, there would be no way of distinguishing SD from wishful thinking. Scott-Kakures illustrates this danger in the case of Bonnie, the feline:

> To see the issues in stark form, consider Bonnie, the cat. Like most felines, Bonnie can make fine aural discriminations. She can, for example, distinguish the sounds of the removal of her own medication from the cupboard from the sounds of the removal of other objects—she promptly disappears only when her own medication is removed. Bonnie is also exceedingly fond of her food. She is apt to scamper into the kitchen when she hears her food being opened. She rarely so scampers into the kitchen when some non-cat-food item is being opened. Yet, on occasions upon which Bonnie is very hungry she does certainly appear to mistake non-cat-food sounds for cat food sound ….
>
> Bonnie comes to have a false belief as a result of a desire …. Should we say that Bonnie is self-deceived? A deflationist account has scant basis for denying such a characterization.[60]

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[59] Dion Scott-Kakures, "At 'Permanent Risk': Reasoning and Self-Knowledge in Self-Deception, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 65:3 (2002), 576-603.
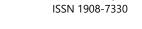
[60] *Ibid*, 578-579.

This is quite a humorous way of considering the limitation of deflationary accounts like those of Mele's earlier formulations. It is because of this objection that the latest formulation of Mele revised his earlier list of four-point jointly sufficient conditions. As a response, he provided condition (6): "*S*'s acquiring the belief that *p* is a product of reflective, critical reasoning, and *S* is wrong in regarding that reasoning as properly directed."[61] This condition which is the 6th in his list is set to limit what counts as motivationally biased treatment of data suitable for SD, since some simple motivationally biased misperception cannot count as a case of SD. Accordingly, Mele modifies the previous list to avoid misinterpretation:

> Imagine that a hungry cat misperceives a noise as the sound of her food being shaken into a bowl and runs into the room from which the noise is emanating. Those who are happy to attribute beliefs to cats may be happy to say that the cat has a belief to the effect that food is available, and that belief may be a relatively direct product or a constituent of her motivationally biased misperception of the noise. If feline SD is out of the question and if --- treats data has a broader sense than I intended, then something should be done about treats in condition 2.[62]

This justifies his inclusion of the sixth condition that acquiring a belief that *p* should be a product of reflective, critical reasoning, and *S* is wrong in regarding that reasoning as properly directed.

The evaluation part of LHT involves steps that entail reflective critical reasoning. The automatic pragmatic considerations of the costs of acceptance or rejection of the data involved such kind of reasoning. The hypothesis tester (being motivated) would always tend to prefer that which is less costly. In this sense, the costlier the belief for the self-deceiver, the more that a reflective critical reasoning is involved, particularly, because so much is at stake if he is mistaken. Scott-Kakures claims that SD also involves failure of self-knowledge, in the sense that the self-deceiver justifies her self-deceptive belief by way of acknowledging that she does not know how she comes to hold such a belief; or that she does not understand at all, but she believes *p*.[63]

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[61] Mele, "When are we self-deceived?" 12

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] Dion Scott-Kakures, "Can You Succeed in Intentionally Deceiving Yourself?" *Humana Mente Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 5:20 (2012), 17-40.

Whereas condition [6], which states that the self-deceiver must be aware that there is a big chance he is wrong, pertains to the cognitive tension; the psychological tension can be seen more in the condition [7]. Seen within the critical reasoning involved in LHT theory, the psychological as well as the cognitive tensions that the self-deceiver is undergoing are more apparent. While the self-deceiver/hypothesis tester is considering the hypothesis that p, she is experiencing the said tensions.

In the condition [7], we can see that the self-deceiver as a hypothesis tester is not just a passive participant of her own deception. She weighs evidences for and against p. However, because she is more inclined to confirm, rather than reject, the hypothesis that p, she automatically activates the heuristics: for example, she is selective in gathering the data in favor of the preferred hypothesis; she misinterprets data to favor the favored hypothesis; and she attends more to the data supporting the hypothesis. There are evidences that would crop up pointing to the other direction. She may become more aware that she might be wrong which would make the hypothesis testing more intense in confirming that p.

This use of the LHT theory for SD favors the supposition of psychological tension which the self-deceiver might have been undergoing as to the desirability of p in straight cases and undesirability of p in twisted cases. In the straight types the driving force for the self-deceiver is the desire for p to be true against the odds that it might not be the case. It is full of tension and unstable because the desire for p may not be enough to sustain the belief that p. For the twisted cases, it is unlikely that desire for p is the driving force for the belief that p. Rather, it is emotions, such as fear or jealousy, that are pushing for the undesirable belief that p. In these cases, the tension may be more overwhelming. Aside from the question on how such emotions could be pit against the desire, emotions must also be strong enough to sustain the belief that p.[64]

Conclusion

I argued that Mele's list of conditions for entering SD in acquiring a belief that p is more appropriate for cases of straight SD. To accommodate twisted cases of SD, I added a condition to his list. The condition pertains to the motivated generation of hypothesis. This condition not only sets the direction of the actual testing for confirmation of the hypothesis (as in LHT theory) but also guarantees that the processes are motivated. I also explored
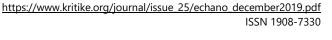
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[64] These workings of desire and emotions in LHT theory correspond with the tension brought about by dynamic paradox in intentional SD model. In this model, the tension is undeniably strong as the self-deceiver is expected to have find a way to lie to herself that p even if she believes that not-p.

the significance of the added condition to the rest of the jointly sufficient conditions for entering SD in acquiring a belief that *p*. Without this added condition, twisted cases could hardly qualify as SD. With the current list of jointly sufficient conditions, all cases of SD are duly accounted for as motivated biased false believing.

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Article

The [O]ther *Analogia* and the Trace of 'God'

Mark Joseph T. Calano

Abstract: Quite broadly, *analogia* can be understood as a mode of presenting and (re)presenting the play between similarity and dissimilarity, being and other, and identity and difference. While Thomas Aquinas might have started the possibility of speaking of (and about) God analogically, this mode of (re)presenting can be better understood within a metaphysical system that gives primacy to being; in relation to this, recent emphasis in philosophy of the ethical relationship with the other seems to have put into question not only the metaphysical primacy of being but (by association) the analogical possibility of referring to God. Within this context and in this paper, I argue for the possibility of still (re)presenting God in an analogical way by understanding the play between being and difference that is constitutive of the movement of *analogia*. The paper is divided into three parts. The first part discusses *analogia* in relation to both the metaphysical privileging of 'being' and its possible applications to God. In the second part, we investigate the [other] possibility of understanding *analogia* in terms of an ethical relationship with an 'other' and its consequence of im/possibly naming God. The third part engages the dynamics between the two aforementioned emphases in *analogia* in its attempt to (re)present the metaphysical 'being' and the ethical 'other.' It further situates the trace of God within the need to re-understand *analogia* within this possible overcoming of metaphysics.

Keywords: Thomas Aquinas, Levinas, Derrida, *analogia*

Introduction

A	*nalogia*, since Thomas Aquinas and as pushed further by Thomas Cajetan and Francisco Suárez, plays a significant role in the determination of and in the understanding of the relationship between the metaphysical system that privileges 'being' and God. But paradigm shifts and emphasis on the ethical relationship with the 'other' has complicated further any analogical discourse about the im/possibility of

(re)presenting God. Etymologically, the word *analogia* comes from two Greek words *ana* and *logos*, which refers to 'repetition' and to 'a relation' or 'a ratio', respectively.[1] But based on this etymological articulation of the meaning of *analogia*, it can be inferred that understanding the word necessitates understanding the movements between convertibility and reversibility. Put simply, 'convertibility' refers to the possibility of conversion and change, while 'reversibility' refers to the process of reversal and repetition. This means that the initial relation can be repeated on the one hand; on the other hand, the initial relation can also be reversed and repeated.[2]

But the movements of convertibility and reversibility can also be understood in relation to articulating the relationship between God and beings, which *analogia* makes linguistically possible. Bonaventure argues, for example, that the similarity or *similitudo* between the Creator and the creature can be understood as a proportionate one; the creature is related to the Creator in a similar way that an *exemplar* is related to the *exemplatum*.[3] This makes every creature (and, thereby, every being) a *vestigium Dei*.[4] Thomas Aquinas supports the similarity between creatures and Creator and refers to this similarity as the *arche* of *analogia*. This means that understanding being is a necessary component in our analogical understanding of God. As Thomas Aquinas explains: "… our intellect, since it knows God from creatures, in order to understand God, forms conceptions proportional to the perfections flowing from God to creatures, which perfections pre-exist in God unitedly and simply, whereas in creatures they are received and divided and multiplied."[5]

If the thinking of God is made possible by an *analogia* that is always connected to the metaphysics of 'being,' what becomes of *analogia* and of our understanding of God in the context of the overcoming of metaphysics and

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[1] It is worth pointing out that Aristotle's use of the Greek *analogia* and its cognates, and Thomas Aquinas's use of the Latin *analogia*, *analogice*, *secundum analogia*, and others are different, even if the Latin is a loan word from Greek. Since the paper is interested with Thomas Aquinas's use of *analogia* (especially in relation to God), it refers to passages in Aristotle where *analogia* is discussed and whether or not it is relevant to Thomas Aquinas. While there is an Aristotelian counterpart to Thomas Aquinas's *analogia*, it is worth emphasizing that he might not be using that term, and (perhaps) when Aristotle uses that term, it is not identical with the Thomistic understanding we are interested with.

[2] See John R. Betz, Translator's Introduction to Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics: Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, trans. by John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Michigan/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 30–43.

[3] See Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of Saint Bonaventure*, trans. by Dom Illtyd Trethowan and F.J. Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1938).

[4] Bonaventure, *The Journey of the Mind to God*, trans. by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M., ed. by Stephen F. Brown (Indiana/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1990), 11–17.

[5] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica (All Complete and Unabdriged 3 parts + Supplement & Appendix + interactive links and annotations)*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Kindle edition: e-artnow, 2013), Ia. q.13, a.5.

in relation to the ethical shift towards the face of the 'other'? How can we therefore speak of God (who is understood more as 'other' than as 'being')? The paper argues that *analogia*, understood as convertibility and reversibility, does make possible the retrieval of the meaning of God beyond the overarching metaphysical understanding of 'being' and the ethical conception of the 'other; *analogia* makes possible an understanding of God as trace. This paper is divided into three parts. The first part discusses *analogia* as it is understood in relation to the metaphysical 'being' and in terms of the Catholic understanding of the *analogia entis*. In the second part, we investigate into the possible understanding of *analogia* as it is understood in relation to the ethical 'other' and the im/possibility of God. The third part engages the dynamics within *analogia* especially as it addresses the play between the metaphysical understanding of 'being,' the ethical conception of the 'other,' and the implication of this play towards an im/possible articulation of God understood as trace.

Analogies of being

Originally conceived as a mathematical concept by the Greeks, *analogia* refers to the proportionate relationship of four different terms. Despite its mathematical origin, the first traces of *analogia* in philosophy can be seen in the distinction and the play between 'being' and 'difference' and Parmenides and Heraclitus, respectively. It is within this tension and play between 'being' and 'difference' that *analogia*, especially as it is articulated in the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle, constitutes the attempt to arrive at a mean; it is not accidental, therefore, that Aristotle speaks of *analogia* as an intermediate (*mesotes*).[6] This understanding of *analogia* as an intermediate is also discernible in Plato's discussion of the changing world as something in between being and non-being (Form and the formless) at the end of *Republic* Book V.[7] Moreover, in his treatment of the divided line, Plato analogously refers to the similarity and proportionality between the order of knowledge and the order of being; this is the same as saying that opinion and knowledge are analogous to the distinction between an image and an archetype. The distinction is further made possible by Plato's metaphysical understanding of participation; this means that they are different only in so far as they are related. Plato does not take sides between 'being' or 'difference' (Parmenides and Heraclitus); rather, he uses the distinction between these two ideals to show the superficiality of their supposed oppositions. Difference is a constant

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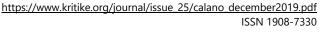[6] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by J.A. K. Thomson (London: Penguin Books, 2004), V, 3, 1131b.

[7] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. by Desmond Lee (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 479a–480a.

desire for being; this is saying that there is an analogous relationship between being and becoming and it is a relationship of a difference grounded in difference.

Like his teacher, Aristotle uses *analogia* as a proportion of four terms. *Analogia* allows us to compare and contrast beings that are just different, and this relationship that *analogia* facilitates cannot simply be reduced to a figure of speech.[8] Aristotle explains that there are three kinds of unity: in number, in species, and in genus. But to these three kinds of unity, he adds a fourth kind; this fourth kind of unity is the proportional unity of things. For Aristotle, this fourth kind of unity can only be possible if there is an indirect relation among things.[9]

Aristotle's *analogia* is never directly used in relation to being.[10] But, in arguing that we can speak of being in many ways, he seems to have already used *analogia* in relation to being. This is discernible in Aristotle's development of what is to be known as a *pros hen* analogy in the context of health. In this context of health, the 'primary analogate' is the health of the person and all the other senses of the word 'healthy' is a mere derivative. Aristotle compares this analogously to being:

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[8] Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by I. Bywater, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2, ed. by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1457b16–17. There is a need to create a distinction at this juncture. Metaphor and *analogia* are not the same. While metaphor is justifiable in poetry and in Scripture, Thomas Aquinas refers to it as the least informative form of discourse (*infirma doctrina*) (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.1, a.9, obj. 1.). So, while Aristotle in *Poetics* speaks of four species of metaphor in which analogy belongs, any resolution that can arise on the opposition of metaphor to analogy as proper usage cannot still enlighten us on the nature of the metaphor as such. While Thomas Aquinas (in *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.13, a.3 ad 3, Ia, q.13, a.6, and Ia, q.13, a.6) seems to support the view that metaphor is a kind of analogy, there are simply other texts that distinguish the two. For a more thorough treatment of the distinction between metaphor and *analogia* refer to Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 116–136. Based on this *aporia*, it is best not to confuse *analogia* with the those referred to by Paul Ricoeur [in Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. by R. Czerny (London: Routledge, 1978) and in Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory, Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, trans. by David Pellauer (Forth Worth: The Texas Christian University Press, 1976)] and Jacques Derrida [in Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 207–271.].

[9] See Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, trans. by Armand Maurer, 2nd rev. ed. (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1968).

[10] Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. by R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1, ed. by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), III, 200b32–201a3. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. by W.D. Ross in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), IV, 2, 1003a33–b16 & VII, 4, 1030a16–27. G.E.L. Owen, "Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle," in *Logic, Science and Dialectics: Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, ed. by Martha Nussbaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 180–199.

> Some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substance, others because they are a process towards substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of some of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we even say of non-being that it is non-being.[11]

This makes us speak of a series of analogies among the different senses of being. If there is a horizontal analogous relation in being, then there is also a vertical understanding of *analogia*.

The *analogia* of being, although implicit in Plato and Aristotle, is clarified and developed further by Thomas Aquinas (and his followers). In his commentary on *Metaphysics* (116b–1017a), Thomas Aquinas seems to speak of two kinds of *analogia*. On the one hand, he speaks of a *pros hen* type of *analogia* where two different things are being related to a third and again different thing; this type of *analogia* is also called the *analogia attributionis* by other Thomistic commentators, who further elaborated the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic attribution. On the other hand, Thomas seems to refer to a second type of *analogia* made possible by comparing two different things that are proportionally similar to two different other things. He writes:

> In this way certain things are said analogically and not purely equivocally of God and creatures. Since we can only name God from creatures, as was said earlier, what is said of God and creatures is said insofar as there is some order of the creature to God, as to a principle and cause in which all perfections of things preexist in an excellent manner.[12]

There is no third way. It seems that for Thomas Aquinas, you are either a creature or a Creator. Other Thomistic commentators refer to this type of *analogia* as the *analogia proportionalitas*. Undeniably, *analogia proportionalitas* is very similar to the Greek origin of *analogia* as a mathematical concept. It is worth pointing out that between these two types of *analogia*, the second type or *analogia proportionalitas* properly constitutes what is metaphorical because it implies greater dissimilarity between the different things that are being compared. This is true even when the two types of *analogia* in Thomas

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[11] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1457b16–17., IV, 2, 1003b6–11.

[12] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.13, a.5.

Aquinas are really ways of expressing the relationship between different things.[13]

When *analogia* is used to comprehend the relation between creature and God, Thomas Aquinas seems to speak again of two types of *analogia*. On the one hand, he seems to have applied *analogia* within the hierarchy of knowing (*ordo cognoscendi*); this type of *analogia* allows us to speak of God epistemologically without really determining and defining God. On the other hand, he also seems to have applied *analogia* in terms of the hierarchy of being (*ordo essendi*); this means that we are able to approach God metaphysically without really determining and defining God. These two types of *analogia* allow us to speak of God without really determining or defining God in a metaphysical and epistemological way.

More concretely, question XIII of the *Summa Theologica I* presents the *analogia* that governs the possibility of naming God. In this question, God is given different attributes that do not properly and strictly apply to God because these attributes are drawn from the concrete and created world. These modes of signification that properly apply to creatures but is also applied to God includes, for example, wisdom, life, and goodness. Further in this question, *analogia* is also used to determine the intermediate (*mesotes*) between the pure similarity and oneness or 'univocity' and the pure ambiguity and plurality or 'equivocity' of predicated meaning. In understanding *analogia* within Aristotle's understanding of *mesotes* as a moving target between two extremes, *analogia* is able to speak of God within the dynamics (and tension) of univocity and equivocity without reducing God to either/or. This means that the qualities that are used to refer to God cannot be understood in the same way that it is understood when used to creatures. In this sense, we are able to speak of God by possibly referring to God without reduction to the words that used to predicate our understanding of God. As Thomas Aquinas explains: "no name is predicated univocally of God and of creatures," but "neither, on the other hand, are names applied to God and creatures in a purely equivocal sense."[14] *Analogia* allows us to assert

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[13] In referring to God's knowledge, *Quaestio disputata de veritate* argues that univocity entails pantheism. "Hence it must be said that the word 'knowledge' is predicated of God's knowledge and ours, not wholly univocally, not purely equivocally, but according to analogy, which is to say nothing else than according to proportion. Similarity according to proportion, however, can be twofold, thanks to which there is a twofold community of analogy" (q.2, a.11, c.). Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, Vol. 1 (Questions 1-9), trans. by Robert W. Mulligan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1994). In arguing for the similarity of creature to God/Creator, Thomas Aquinas further writes: "There is a kind of similarity where there is among things a proportion, in that they have a determinate distance or other relation between them, as two is twice one. But there can also be a similarity of two things between which there is no proportion, but rather a similarity of two proportions to one another, as six is like four in that six is twice three as four is twice two." *Ibid*.

[14] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I. q. 13, a.5.

that God is revealed in His creation and that He is neither totally unknown nor foreign to us. So, when God is referred to as wise, life, and good, as it was stated above, we do refer to our concrete experiences of wisdom, life, and goodness, but also at the same time, as an overcoming of our concrete experiential references. This means that when we make sense of our experience of God, it is only possible if we refer to realities that are similar to our concrete experiences; but we also know that these concrete references, although similar to our experience of God, is not sufficient to refer to God. This means that although the similarities allow us to speak of God, these similarities still point to a greater dissimilarity between our selves and God. In short, although we are similar to God in many ways, it is also true that, in even greater ways, we are dissimilar to God; no creature can fully resemble God.[15]

When it is a question of a creature resembling God, other Thomistic commentators refer to it as *analogia entis*.[16] While Thomas Aquinas never used the term to directly refer to the aforementioned similarity, he seems to have intimated it. In question IV of the *Summa Theologica I*, Thomas Aquinas responds to the question whether creatures can be considered to be like God.[17] In responding to the objections in this question, Thomas Aquinas draws his justification from two revealed sources. From the Old Testament, he cites Genesis 1:26 that states, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness;" and from the New Testament, he cites 1 John 3:2 where we read, "when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is."[18] Although initially grounded in Sacred Scriptures, Thomas Aquinas argues that every created thing is an effect of the Creator. This means that as long as the effects bear some similarity to their cause, then this likeness does constitute the basis for arguing a relationship between creation and God. It is worth noticing, however, that the relationship between creation and Creator is not a relationship between equals; it is obviously an unequal relationship between the cause and the effect. The unequal relationship between Creator and creatures are further distinguished by the fact that God does not share

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[15] In relation to the human mind's capacity to know God, it can be argued with Thomas Aquinas that: "Proportion, it should be noted, is sued in two ways. In one way, to mean a certain relation of one quantity to another, insofar as double, triple and equal are species of proportion. In another way, any relation of one thing to another is called a proportion. And thus there can be a proportion of creature to God, insofar as it is related to Him as effect to cause and as potency to act. Because of this, the created intellect can be proportioned to know God." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, 12, 1, 4m.

[16] See, Przywara, *Analogia Entis*.

[17] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.4, a.3.

[18] All scriptural references in this essay are drawn from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

any genus; God is neither being nor beings.[19] Despite this significant difference, God remains to be related to being "according to some sort of analogy; as existence is common to all. In this way, all created things, so far as they are beings, are like God as the first and universal principle of all being."[20]

Despite the aforementioned difference between God and being, an *analogia* of being can still be asserted because of Thomas Aquinas's understanding of creation as an effect of God. As an effect of God, creation can be understood as a trace of God. This means that being as a trace is not totally alien to God; this claim is grounded on the metaphysical understanding that the effect must in some way resemble the cause. But as a trace of God, being cannot totally be like God; this means that the effect is still not the cause. The trace is not God because the trace falls short "not merely in intensity and remission, as that which is less white falls short of that which is more white; but because they are not in agreement, specifically or generically."[21]

In short, being or creation is both similar and different to God, our Creator; our relationship with God can only be understood analogically. This analogical relationship cannot simply be understood Thomistically in terms of the similarity between creature and Creator as it can be understood in terms of their dissimilarity. The relationship between God and creature is not reducible simply to God's perfection that is shared and participated by creation. It is worth asserting that God does not have any genus. This means that God can neither be classified nor be understood simply as an instance of something that is commonly shared by both creature and Creator. God transcends every conceivable genus; in Latin, it is stated as *Deus non est in genere*. Thomas Aquinas explains that while:

> it may be admitted that creatures are in some sense like God, it must nowise be admitted that God is like creatures; because, as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. IX): 'A mutual likeness may be found between things of the same order, but not between a cause and that which is caused.' For we say that a statue is like a man, but not

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[19] Martin Heidegger, "The Onto-theological Constitution of Metaphysics," in *Identity and Difference*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 71. See Jean-Luc Marion, "Thomas Aquinas and Onto-theo-logy," in *God without Being*, trans. by Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 199–236.

[20] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.4, a.3.

[21] *Ibid*.

> conversely; so also a creature can be spoken of as in some
> sense like God; but not that God is like a creature.[22]

As it was stated in the passage above, Thomas Aquinas recognizes a similarity between cause and effect—between God and creature; but he also recognizes a greater dissimilarity between the two. While the trace of God allows us to intuit God in a way, it does not, however, allows us to intuit God in a definitive and final way. This means that the *analogia* of being allows us to speak of being and God only in an indirect manner by means of traces. In an age characterized by the 'overcoming of metaphysics,' what becomes of this possibility of referring to being and (even) of engaging God? In broad strokes, it can be said that the *analogia* of being seems to point to another *analogia*. This leads us to another possibility within Thomistic scholarship—the articulation of an *analogia* that is rooted and grounded in difference.[23] I call it the *analogia* of the other, which is the concern of the second part of this paper.

Analogies of other

In Thomas Aquinas's intimation of the *analogia* of the other, I interpret the *analogia* used by Emmanuel Levinas and discussed by Jacques Derrida.[24] Quite differently, Levinas discusses his brand of *analogia* by relating thought to speech.[25] Instead of determining proportional relationships by means of vision and/or sight, Levinas points to something auditory. If thought is always already linguistic, according to him, then it follows that thought can be equated with speech. From this, Levinas jumps to arguing that thought is, in fact, able to hear the invisible. If thought is able to capture the invisible, then it also follows that speech constitutes a conversation with the invisible; every speaking is therefore a speaking with the invisible. This *analogia* between thought, speech, and the invisible constitutes the ethical relationship with the invisible other and this is made

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[22] *Ibid*.

[23] John Caputo, *Heidegger and Aquinas: An Essay on Overcoming Metaphysics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), 147–184.

[24] Derrida's understanding of *analogia* is embedded, but is not limited, to the following texts: Jacques Derrida, "Ousia and Grammē: Note on a Note from *Being and Time*," in *Margins of Philosophy*, 29–68; *Idem*, "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson (London and New York: The Athlone Press, 2004), 67–186; and *Idem*, "To Speculate—on 'Freud,'" in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 257–410.

[25] Jacques Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas," in *Writing and Difference*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 99.

possible by speech and discourse.[26] For Levinas, the other can only be encountered in the context of speech.[27] Speech makes possible one's relationship to the other; this means that speech makes possible the revelation of the other as an interlocutor. The other is presented as an 'expression' that makes sense only within the context of a linguistic relationship. This linguistic relationship that is always constituted in language is also at the same time constituted by a series of expressions—*analogia*. It is these series of expressions that facilitate the self-manifestation of the face as a *kath' autó*. According to Derrida, the self-manifestation and presentation of the Levinasian face is only possible because of the series of similarities and resemblances between our very humanity and God.[28] In citing a conclusion from *Totality and Infinity*, Derrida asserts that the "the other resembles God."[29] Arguably, it is within these similarities between humanity and God, and within these resemblances between the human face and the Face of God that humanism and theology draw their impetus.[30]

While Levinas argues that these similarities and resemblances with the other are not always theological and even goes beyond metaphysics, the analogical relationship (as a relating to and with the other) can only be ethical.[31] This means that in exchange for a metaphysical understanding of the other, Levinas seems to push forward a more ethical relationship. Due to the ethical nature of this analogical relationship, God can only be encountered in the human face by means of his traces; and this encounter cannot simply be reduced to a theological relationship. As such, and going beyond Thomas Aquinas, this ethical relationship cannot be understood (and must never be understood) simply as an analogical knowledge of the different attributes of God.[32] "There can be no 'knowledge' of God," Levinas argues, "separated from the relationship with men. Other is the very locus of metaphysical truth, and is indispensable for my relations with God."[33] In this sense, Levinas asserts the inseparability of our knowledge of God from our knowledge of the other; our knowledge of God is only possible in and only in our

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[26] Throughout *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas clarifies that the absolutely other is *Autrui* or totally other: "The absolutely other is *Autrui* [L'absolument Autre, c'est Autrui.]." Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. by Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 39. However, Derrida in "Violence and Metaphysics" uses *autrui* and *l'autre* interchangeably; and because Derrida consistently uses the term *l'autre* in the lowercase, *Autrui* does not seem to belong to Derrida's vocabulary.

[27] *Ibid*., 43.

[28] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108–109.

[29] *Ibid*., 108; Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 293.

[30] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108.

[31] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 42.

[32] *Ibid*., 78.

[33] *Ibid*.

relationship with others. It is not possible to arrive at our knowledge of God apart from our relationship with the other—that is, alone and speculatively. While God can only be revealed because of our relationship with the other, Levinas clarifies that the "other is not the incarnation of God, but precisely by his face, in which he is disincarnate, is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed. It is our relations with men… that give to theological concepts the unique signification they admit of."[34] Put simply, the other is not God; the other cannot be an incarnation of God. It is this difference between God and the other, however, that makes possible the very revelation of God. In the difference between other and God, God is made manifest. This means, that it is in the context of our ethical (and analogical) relationship with the other, can God and all other theological concepts make sense. While the other is not reducible to God and God is not reducible to the other, God and the other are always related in an analogical and an ethical relationship, which cannot be separated. This means that the revelation of God can only be understood and approached from the perspective of our relationship with the other. Levinas explains this relationship between God and the other in this way: "I cannot describe the relation to God without speaking of my concern for other." He cites Matthew 25:45, where the relation to God is made visible because of our relationship with an other; in the words of Levinas, in the other "is the real presence of God."[35]

  While Levinas qualifies the relationship between God and the other, Derrida sees and articulates what seems to be a disturbing and a complicitous relationship.[36] "The face-to-face is thus not originally determined by Levinas as the vis-à-vis of two equal and upright men. The latter supposes the face-to-face of the man with bent neck and eyes raised toward God on high."[37] Derrida accuses Levinas of recognizing that the relationship between God and the other is never of equal and upright partners; instead, it is a relationship between master and his subordinates (or between two different groups). I wish to emphasize two points in this Derridean understanding of the relationship between God and the other. On the one hand, it is worth noting that Derrida agrees with Levinas, and accepts the given and the dependent relationship between God and the other. Derrida criticizes, on the other hand, that this relationship between God and the other is an unequal relationship. But more than a matter of inequality, as if they were always already the same, I agree with Thomas Aquinas and Derrida that this is a

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[34] *Ibid.*, 77.

[35] Emmanuel Levinas, "Justice and Love," in *Entre nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. by Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 109–110.

[36] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108–109.

[37] *Ibid.*, 107.

matter of difference.[38] In the similarity and the resemblance between God and the other, God seems to command the other as he conceals God-self; in this sense, it is in the very concealing of God-self, in his very difference, that God unconceals (or reveals) God-self.
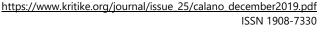
Derrida recognizes some evocations of YHWH in Exodus 33:20–23, where speaking with Moses, God says: "But you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live … you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen." Moses is only allowed to see God's back, but never his face. It is in relation to this scriptural passage that Derrida argues: "[t]he face is neither the face of God nor the figure of man: it is their resemblance. A resemblance, which we must think before, or without, the assistance of the same."[39] The above passage puts into question the possibility of the Levinasian face-to-face relation and argues for the impossibility of seeing the face of God. If it is impossible to see the face of God, then it is also impossible to see the true figure of the humanity.[40] If what is seen is neither the face of God nor the figure of humanity, then what is revealed in the Levinasian face-to-face relation? Derrida clarifies that the face-to-face relation constitutes a similarity or a resemblance between the different God and the other; this *analogia* is made possible even before the determinations and categories of being.

The analogous relationship between the face of humanity and the figure of God makes possible prayer as a discourse with God. This means that the face-to-face relation between God and the other does not only make ethics possible; it also makes possible speech and prayer as the very condition for the possibility of our relationship between God and the other. Derrida explains:

> Via the passageway of this resemblance, man's speech can be lifted up toward God, an almost unheard of *analogy* which is the very movement of Levinas's discourse on discourse. Analogy as dialogue with God: "Discourse is discourse with God …." Discourse with God, and not in God as *participation*. Discourse with God, and not discourse on God and his attributes as *theology*.[41]

The passage argues that prayer—or one's discourse with God—is only made possible by our resemblance with God. This resemblance allows us to speak

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[38] See John Caputo, *The Prayers and tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997).

[39] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 109.

[40] Jean-Luc Marion, *Negative Certainties*, trans. by Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 8–50.

[41] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108.

of prayer as "an almost unheard of *analogy*." In this case, *analogia* is understood as the condition for the possibility of our discourse with God. But, this is not a discourse that takes place in God; it is not reducible to a mere participation in God-self. Derrida further clarifies that this prayer is not about God and his attributes; it is not merely and purely theological. Prayer is a discourse and an encounter with God, and this discourse is made possible by our resemblance between humanity and God.

But what is the face (or presence) of God like when understood in terms of this resemblance? Derrida argues that this face (or presence) is a very strange presence. He writes:

> Presence as separation, presence-absence as resemblance, but resemblance which is not the "ontological mark" of the worker imprinted on his product, or on "beings created in his image and resemblance" (Malebranche); a resemblance which can be understood neither in terms of communion or knowledge, nor in terms of participation and incarnation. A resemblance which is neither a sign nor an effect of God.[42]

This very strange presence comes to us as a resemblance or a trace. As a resemblance (and also a trace), this very strange presence is not the 'ontological mark' of the cause or of the Creator. In fact, it is not even the product of communion or even of knowledge; it is further not the result of participation or of incarnation. This very strange presence or resemblance or analogous relation is not a sign; it is also not an effect of God. This resemblance (which is not everything that has been said so far) situates, positions, and puts us in the 'Trace of God.'[43]

This trace or resemblance between humanity and God, which makes possible the determination and revelation of the other, also prohibits the face from appearing in relation to other beings. Why is this so? Derrida clarifies it in this way:

> But it is the analogy between the face and God's visage that, in the most classical fashion, distinguishes man from animal, and determines man's substantiality: 'The Other resembles God.' Man's substantiality, which permits him to be face, is thus founded in his

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[42] *Ibid.*

[43] *Ibid.*

resemblance to God, who is therefore both The Face and absolute substantiality.[44]

For Levinas, the resemblance between God and the human face distinguishes us from the rest of creation. The identification of the God as an other distinguishes us from the rest of creation (living or nonliving). This means that the human face is only possible because of our resemblance with the face of God. This is only possible because what gives humans our face is our resemblance to God; God, in this sense, is understood as absolute substantiality. And when Levinas uses the language of 'substance,' according to Derrida, he is referring to the scholastic problematic of *analogia* understood as participation, and we are addressing this in the next part.[45]

Trace of God and *analogia*

In the second part of the paper, we read that God is better not reduced to a substance or as an ineffable being; God is better not thought of as the final anchor term or as mere presence. God is better understood as an other, in fact—as a totally other. What we know is that God is the most proper of all proper names; as such, God is better thought of as the name of the "endless desertification of language."[46] By referring to the name of God as the "endless desertification of language," we are asserting that the name of God manifests and reflects the analogical nature of language. Because of the analogical nature of language, God's name represents the process and the product of the "movement of the effacement of the trace in presence."[47] Constantly under erasure, the name of God is what remains as traces. This is the same as saying that the name of God can be understood as "a determinant moment in the total movement of the trace."[48] This means that whatever can be said of God remains intelligible only within the play between what is left behind and presented as traces and what is eradicated (if not corrected) by erasure. This is what the statement that God is an "*effect of the trace*"[49] means; the proper name of God is not and cannot be the trace, it is the effect of the trace. For Derrida, the name of God is the linguistic effect of the endless resemblances

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[44] *Ibid.*, 142.

[45] *Ibid.*, 143.

[46] Jacques Derrida, "*Sauf le nom* (Post-Scriptum)," in *On the Name*, ed. by Thomas Dutoit and trans. by David Wood, John P. Leavey, Jr., and Ian McLeod (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995), 55–56.

[47] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108.

[48] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976), 69.

[49] Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," 108.

and references of names.[50] It is the name that replaces and substitutes an other for another other; in this case, even the name of God, as *analogia* and as a product of it, can only be subjected as in all other names to the endless play of *différance.*

The very possibility of infinite and endless substitution constitutes the very possibility for the name God to even become a proper name. The name of God becomes one of the many valid substitutable manifestations of the invisible and unsubstitutable one. The very movement that makes possible this naming of God is responsible for creating the traces that cracks, breaks, or fissures the theological and God concepts of uniqueness, singularity, and unsubstitutability. So while it is said that YHWH cannot be subjected to *analogia*, it is this very refusal, this uniqueness, and this singularity that any *analogia* begins. Quite contrary to conceptions of *analogia* as always related to God and being, Derrida argues that God refuses and denies any *analogia* with beings. But in this very refusal, in this very interruption, and in this very denial, *analogia* is initiated, reestablished, and resumed. Just as there is an analogous relationship between the Face of God and the figure of humanity, Derrida continues, there also exists an analogical relationship between every proper name and all attempts to name God. All these names of God and all these proper names are, in their turn, really just analogous between and among themselves.[51] So, when we argue in this paper that the relation to the other does, in fact, resemble the relation of being to God, what we are not saying is that there is a formal *analogia* between the two; this is not only an analogical relation with being/same as it is not only an analogical relation with the other. Instead, the play between the other and being resembles a number of attributes and characteristics with who we call God. This is the same as saying that there is an implicit structural relationship (or *analogia*, if you will) between being, the other, and God.

Analogia constitutes, for Immanuel Kant, a "perfect resemblance or similarity of two relations between two quite dissimilar things."[52] The emphasis is no longer on the similarity (or sameness or identity) as it is on the dissimilarity (or difference). *Analogia* is understood as a resemblance between two dissimilar things and is concerned with the relations between these two different realities. In the *Critique of Judgement*, Kant describes *analogia* as responsible for bridging the abyss between the two absolutely dissimilar and

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[50] Derrida, "*Différance*," in *Margins of Philosophy*, 26–27.

[51] Jacques Derrida, "At This Very Moment in This Work Here I am," in *Re-reading Levinas*, ed. by Robert Bernasconi and Simon Critchley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 11–48.

[52] Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. by James W. Ellington and Paul Carus (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hacket, 1977), 98.

different worlds—the world of Nature and the world of the Ethical.[53] As Jacques Derrida comments on this understanding of *analogia* as a bridge, we read: "the recourse to analogy, the concept and the effect of analogy," in Kant "are or make the bridge itself."[54] This means that *analogia* does serve as a bridge that connects the gap between a non-negotiable space and distance. Derrida further explains the connection between humanity, God, and *analogia*: "the principle of analogy is here indeed inseparable from an anthropocentric principle. The human center also stands in the *middle*, between nature (animate or inanimate) and God."[55]

Analogia is anchored on the understanding of a proper name, where it operates as "the nonmetaphorical prime mover of metaphor."[56] As a non-metaphorical prime mover of every metaphor, *analogia* restores causality while at the same time it establishes the ground for all other possible relations. This is what Derrida refers to as "ana-onto-logy." Ana-onto-logy refers to a type of analogy that is governed and dominated by the necessity of and impetus to "the appearance as such of the *as such*, of the *as*." Because of this impetus and necessity to phenomenality, this type of *analogia* is governed by the proper name of the *logos*. The proper name of the *logos*, aside from determining and articulating the different categories and possibility of thinking, governs externally and, even, beyond language. In this case, the origin of *analogia* has always already been the *logos*; for Derrida, this *logos* "regulates all analogy and which itself is not analogical."[57]

Conclusion

At the beginning of this paper, we inquired into the im/possibility of analogically (re)presenting God in the context of the overcoming of the metaphysics of 'being' and the advent of the ethics of the 'other.' At this point and as it has been demonstrated broadly in the parts above, we can say that the relationship between being and the other, being and God, and other and God are analogous. But by analogous, we refer it further to something analogous. Being, other, and God all share a certain functional *analogia* and, thus, can only be inscribed in an open series that contains many other analogous openings and relations. The analogous relationship between the three terms can only remain as something singular, unique, and irreducible,

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[53] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. by Werner Pluhar (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hacket, 1987), 356.

[54] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 36.

[55] *Ibid*., 117. Emphasis mine.

[56] Derrida, "White Mythology," 243.

[57] Jacques Derrida, "Economimesis," trans. by Richard Klein, *Diacritics*, 11:2 (Summer, 1981), 19.

while, at the same time, offering no guarantee of a perfect resemblance. There is no such thing as a perfect *analogia* of being, other, and (perhaps) God. It seems that for Thomas Aquinas, Emmanuel Levinas, and Jacques Derrida, the other, being, and God can only be understood as a part of a series of differences and deferences that is also able to comprehend the one, even if they still represent the many. If there is an *analogia*, therefore, between the relations between and among being, other, and God, then this *analogia* can only be understood differently. This different *analogia* can only allow us to combine the economy of *analogia* (understood as the same that is differed, and deferred) with the rupture of all *analogia* (or absolute heterology). In this sense, it can only be understood as an *analogia* that is always interrupted and disturbed. But once this interrupted *analogia* is further interrupted, it resumes again as an *analogia* between two or three or more absolute and incommensurable heterogeneities in a continuous movement of convertibility and reversibility.

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Book Review

Mouffe, Chantal, *For a Left Populism*[1]

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My main interest on populism stems largely from my desire to make sense of the Philippines's homegrown populism, specifically, its origins and the potential responses with which such phenomenon may be addressed. My foray into this topic began with Jan-Werner Müller's *What is Populism?* (2017) which I reviewed for *Kritike* in the previous issue.[2] Müller's book is important in the way it provides a comprehensive account of populism both as a historical episode and as a sociopolitical fact. Readers looking for an introductory material on populism will surely find in Müller's work an excellent resource due not only to the wealth of information it offers but also to the engaging narrative with which such pieces of information were woven. Despite its merits however, *What is Populism?* is simply not the type of material that one goes to for alternative perspectives on populism within the context of the contemporary political discourse. My turn, then, to Chantal Mouffe's *For a Left Populism* (2018) was motivated by my aim to find this missing link and enrich my understanding of this phenomenon with a recourse to political theory. Mouffe's name, of course, became a byword among scholars of radical democracy first as a conduit of Ernesto Laclau (*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 1985) before she found her own voice and built a reputation on her own via her recent and previous works most notably *Agonistics: Thinking The World Politically* (2013), *On The Political* (2005), *The Democratic Paradox* (2000), and *The Return of the Political* (1993). To date, Mouffe is widely acknowledged as one of the leading theorists of democracy or more precisely, one of the staunchest and most vocal advocates of leftist politics. Mouffe's take on populism, unlike that of Müller, is presented against a more restricted background, that is, the political landscape of Western Europe, or to be more specific, the post-Cold War Great Britain, stretching from Margaret Thatcher to Tony Blair down to the contemporary rising star of British politics, Jeremy Corbyn. The centrality of British political scene in Mouffe's *For A Left Populism* is not a surprise for anyone who has

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[1] London: Verso, 2018, 98pp.

[2] See Jovito V. Cariño, Review of *What is Populism?* by Jan-Werner Müller, *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy*, 13:1 (June 2019), 161-163.

followed Mouffe's intellectual career. Great Britain after all is where Mouffe has spent most of her time the last thirty years, teaching and writing as a political theorist at the University of Westminster although she was by birth a Belgian national. Mouffe considered populism as a manifestation of the widespread discontent over the failures and undelivered promises of liberal economy. The earlier gains by the liberal order, forged by the ingenious attempt of the conservatives to marry labor with capital, led to the subordination of democratic politics in favor of an efficient system for the creation and management of wealth. The initial success of this new hegemony, described by Mouffe as "post-democracy," contributed to the spread of popular myth that liberal democracy cannot exist independently of financial capitalism.[3] When this hegemonic order began showing cracks in the early 1990s before climaxing to the collapse of US financial system in 2008, one of the most immediate reactions came in the form of a consensus between the right and the left which paved the way not just for the blurring of the ideological divide between the two but also for the intensification of financial institutions' encroachment into the dynamics of democratic politics. The preservation of this new hegemonic arrangement became the prime advocacy of the social democrats and is at the heart of what Mouffe described as "post-politics."[4] One of the core insights propounded by Mouffe in this book is her straightforward refutation of the post-democratic and the post-political fiction identifying liberal democracy with liberal economy and her calling out of Marxism for peddling the same blunder. Mouffe pointed out that "there is no necessary relationship between capitalism and liberal democracy. It is unfortunate that Marxism has contributed to this conclusion by presenting liberal democracy as the superstructure of capitalism."[5] Mouffe believed there is always a way to contest the excesses of capitalist hegemony without abandoning the project of democratic politics, in particular, the two ethical principles which fuel democratic politics forward, to wit, liberty and equality.[6] The retrieval of these principles and their reinstatement within what Mouffe termed a "chain of equivalence," a recreated social relations built on a notion of radical democratic citizenship[7] are at the core of Mouffe's articulation of a left populism. If one sums up Mouffe's idea of a left populism, it would amount to an attempt to radicalize democracy via a reconstitution of political subjectivity (Ernesto Laclau's creation of "people") and the enlargement of spaces that would make room for agonistic forms of political action towards the retrieval and inscription of the ethical principles

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[3] *Ibid.*, 12-13.

[4] *Ibid.*, 17.

[5] *Ibid.*, 48.

[6] See *Ibid.*, 40-46.

[7] *Ibid.*, 66.

of liberty and equality into the democratic imaginary. In brief, it is an alternative to a populism propagated by the right with its flirtations with authoritarianism and wholesale subscription to neoliberal economic hegemony while maintaining a token adherence to a residual democracy. Mouffe punctuated her point with a quote from the eminent Marxist scholar David Harvey: "It is the profoundly anti-democractic nature of neoliberalism backed by the authoritarianism of the neo-conservatives that should surely be the focus of the social struggle."[8] The preceding sentence may not have the word "Philippines" in it but it sure reads like Rodrigo Duterte's Philippines to me. *For a Left Populism* might have been written by Mouffe with the British politics as a background and a perspective that was patently Western European but its emphatic message on the cause of radical democracy surely has global resonance. That a left populism is possible, that is, that democracy can be recovered from the neoliberal hegemony, should be a welcome news for anyone who believes in the resurgent potential of the political.

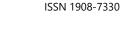*Department of Philosophy, University of Santo Tomas, Philippines*

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[8] David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), as quoted in Mouffe, *For a Left Populism*, 50.

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